



# DATA FIRST FORMS GENERAL INFORMATION

Institution Name:

Worcester State University

? 00219000

OPE ID:

			Annua	al Audit
	?		Certified:	Qualified
Financial Results for Year Ending:	? 06/30		Yes/No	Unqualified
Most Recent Year	2021		Yes	Unqualified
1 Year Prior		2020	Yes	Unqualified
2 Years Prior		2019	Yes	Unqualified
Fiscal Year Ends on:	June 30		(month/day)	

Budget / Plans Current Year Next Year

Contact Person: Title: Telephone No: E-mail address

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2022

2023

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## Institutional Characteristics Form Revised September 2009

This form is to be completed and placed at the beginning of the self-study report:

### Date: 22 May 2022

- 1. Corporate name of institution: Worcester State University
- 2. Date institution was chartered or authorized: 1874
- 3. Date institution enrolled first students in degree programs: 1874
- 4. Date institution awarded first degrees: 1876
- 5. Type of control:

Private
□ Independent, not-for-profit
□ Religious Group
(Name of Church)
□ Proprietary
□ Other: (Specify)

 By what agency is the institution legally authorized to provide a program of education beyond high school, and what degrees is it authorized to grant? <u>Commonwealth of Massachusetts</u>; <u>baccalaureate and master's degrees</u>.

## 7.

Level of postsecondary offering (check all that apply)

- $\Box$  Less than one year of work
  - $\Box$  At least one but less than two years
  - Diploma or certificate programs of at least two but less than four years
  - Associate degree granting program of at least two years
  - X Four- or five-year baccalaureate degree granting program

- □ First professional degree
- X Master's and/or work beyond the first professional degree
- □ Work beyond the master's level but not at the doctoral level (e.g., Specialist in Education)
- □ A doctor of philosophy or equivalent degree
- $\Box$  Other doctoral programs
- $\Box$  Other (Specify)

8.		Type of undergraduate programs (check all that apply)					
		Occupational training at the crafts/clerical level (certificate or diploma)	Х	Liberal arts and general			
		Occupational training at the technical or semi-professional level (degree)	Х	Teacher preparatory			
		Two-year programs designed for full transfer to a baccalaureate		Professional			
		degree	Х	Other <u>Nursing</u>			
9.	The cal	endar system at the institution is:					
	Х	Semester 🗆 Quarter 🗆 T	rimester	X Other <u>Summer</u>			

- 10. What constitutes the credit hour load for a full-time equivalent (FTE) student each semester?
  - a) Undergraduate <u>12–15</u> credit hours
  - b) Graduate 6-9 credit hours
  - c) Professional \_\_\_\_ credit hours
- 11. Student population:
  - a) Degree-seeking students:

2021–22	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Full-time student headcount	4,086	219	5,083
Part-time student headcount	952	107	1,926
FTE	4,400	254	5,719

- b) Number of students (headcount) in non-credit, short-term courses: \_188\_\_\_\_\_
- 12. List all programs accredited by a nationally recognized, specialized accrediting agency.

Program	Agency	Accredited since	Last Reviewed	Next Review
Education	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)	2004	2021	2028

r				
	Council of Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP)	2014 - 2021	Not currently accredited	NA
		NA		
	Association for		NA	2024
	Advancing		1 1 1 1	2024
	Quality Educator			
	Preparation			
	(AAQEP)			
	Commission on	2008	2013	2023
Nursing	Collegiate	2000	2015	2020
	Nursing			
	Education			
	(CCNE)			
0	Accreditation	1988	2021	
Occupational	Council for			
Therapy	Occupational			
	Therapy			
	Education			
	(ACOTE)			
Speech	Council on	1984	2019	2026
Speech Language	Academic			
	Accreditation of			
Pathology	the American			
	Speech-Language-			
	Hearing			
	Association			

13. Off-campus Locations. List all instructional locations other than the main campus. For each site, indicate whether the location offers full-degree programs or 50% or more of one or more degree programs. Record the full-time equivalent enrollment (FTE) for the most recent year.

	Full degree	50%-99%	FTE
A. In-state Locations			
Sagamore Road Studios	0	0	0
Off-Campus Nursing Site	0	0	0
B. Out-of-state Locations			
N/A			

14. <u>International Locations</u>: For each overseas instructional location, indicate the name of the program, the location, and the headcount of students enrolled for the most recent year. An overseas instructional location is defined as "any overseas location of an institution, other than the main campus, at which the

institution matriculates students to whom it offers any portion of a degree program or offers on-site instruction or instructional support for students enrolled in a predominantly or totally on-line program." **Do not include study abroad location**.

Name of program(s)	Location	Headcount
N/A		

15. Degrees and certificates offered 50% or more electronically: For each degree or Title IV-eligible certificate, indicate the level (certificate, associate's, baccalaureate, master's, professional, doctoral), the percentage of credits that may be completed on-line, and the FTE of matriculated students for the most recent year. Enter more rows as needed.

Name of program	Degree level	% on-line	FTE
M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education	Master's	100%	15.6
M.Ed. in Elementary Education	Master's	100%	13.5
M.Ed. in Moderate Disabilities	Master's	100%	18.1
M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and Administration	Master's	100%	N/A (launched Spring 2022)
MSN in Public and Population Health	Master's	100%	8.8
MSN in Nurse Educator	Master's	100%	5.6

16. <u>Instruction offered through contractual relationships</u>: For each contractual relationship through which instruction is offered for a Title IV-eligible degree or certificate, indicate the name of the contractor, the location of instruction, the program name, and degree or certificate, and the number of credits that may be completed through the contractual relationship. Enter more rows as needed.

Name of contractor	Location	Name of program	Degree or certificate	#of credits
Academic Partnerships	Online	Early Childhood Education	Master of Education	34
Academic Partnerships	Online	Elementary Education	Master of Education	34
Academic Partnerships	Online	Moderate Disabilities	Master of Education	37
Academic Partnerships	Online	Educational Leadership and Administration	Master of Education	33
Academic Partnerships	Online	Nursing - Public and Population Health	Master of Science	35
Academic Partnerships	Online	Nursing – Nurse Educator	Master of Science	35

- 17. List by name and title the chief administrative officers of the institution. See Table A below.
- 18. Supply a table of organization for the institution. While the organization of any institution will depend on its purpose, size and scope of operation, institutional organization usually includes four areas. Although every institution may not have a major administrative division for these areas, the following outline may be helpful in charting and describing the overall administrative organization:
  - a) Organization of academic affairs, showing a line of responsibility to president for each department, school division, library, admissions office, and other units assigned to this area;
  - b) Organization of student affairs, including health services, student government, intercollegiate activities, and other units assigned to this area;
  - c) Organization of finances and business management, including plant operations and maintenance, non-academic personnel administration, IT, auxiliary enterprises, and other units assigned to this area;
  - d) Organization of institutional advancement, including fund development, public relations, alumni office and other units assigned to this area.

See Table B below. For all University organizational charts, see Appendix 1.

- 19. Record briefly the central elements in the history of the institution:
  - 1. Established as a Normal School in 1874.
  - 2. Pioneered a new approach to professional teaching preparation in 1878 with the introduction of apprentice teaching in the Worcester Public Schools.
  - 3. Inaugurated the "Child Study Movement," a precursor to the science of child psychology, in 1884.
  - 4. Became Worcester State Teachers College in 1932.
  - 5. Earned professional accreditation from the American Association of Teachers Colleges in 1941.
  - 6. Developed a Program of Continuing Education in 1947, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees.
  - 7. Became Worcester State College in 1960.
  - 8. Established the first college-operated Speech and Hearing Clinic in the area in 1971.
  - 9. Launched the areas' first Master of Science degree program in Speech-Language Pathology in 1977.
  - 10. Established a Center for Health Professions in 1998.
  - Initiated a physical facilities improvement program, resulting in the completion of a new athletic facilities (1995), the new Kalyan K. Ghosh Center for Science and Technology (2000), and the renovation of the Sullivan Academic Center (2002) and the Administration Building (2002).
  - 12. Founded the Latino Education Institute through the partnership of community leaders in 2000.
  - 13. Appointed the first provost, Charles Cullum, in 2010.
  - 14. Established the School of Education, Health, and Natural Sciences and the School of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences, each with its own dean, in 2011.
  - 15. Granted university status, becoming Worcester State University, in 2012.
  - 16. Acquired the May Street Building, previously known as Temple Emanuel, through The Worcester State Foundation in 2013.
  - Awarded the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching's elective Community Engagement Classification, one of only 25 colleges and universities in the Commonwealth so recognized, in 2015.
  - 18. Established The Honorable John J. Binienda Center for Civic Engagement in
  - 19. Launched the first of many planned Accelerated Online Programs ("AOP") in 2020.
  - 20. Launched the RASE Plan, designed to revamp the academic program, in 2021
  - 21. Inaugurated the School of Interdisciplinary Studies and appointed a dean for it in 2021.

# Table A

# **CHIEF INSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS**

Function or Office	Name	Exact Title	Year of Appointment
Chair Board of Trustees David Tuttle		Chair, Board of Trustees	2022
President/CEO Barry Maloney		President	2011
Chief Academic Officer	Lois Wims	Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs	2015
Dean	Linda Larrivee	Dean of the School of Sci- ence, Technology, and Health	2013
Dean	Raynold Lewis	Dean of Education, Lib- eral, and Interdisciplinary Studies	2021
Dean Russ Pottle		Dean of the School of Hu- manities and Social Sci- ences	2017
Dean Roberta Kyle		Associate Vice President for Continuing Education and Dean of Graduate School	2008
Chief Financial Officer Kathleen Eichelroth		Vice President of Admin- istration and Finance	1998
Chief Student Services Officer Julie Kazarian		Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Stu- dents	2014 (as Dean of Stu- dents; promoted to Vice President in 2021)
Planning	Sarah Strout	Assistant Vice President of Assessment and Planning	2017
Institutional Research Kenneth Smith		Director of Institutional Research	2006
Development Thomas McNamara		Vice President of Univer- sity Advancement	1998
Library	Library Matthew Bejune		2015
Chief Information Officer Anthony Adade		Associate Vice President and Chief Information Of- ficer	2013

Grants/Research	Nicole Scott	Director of the Office of Grants and Sponsored Re- search	2021
Admissions	Ryan Forsythe	Vice President for Enroll- ment Management	2014
Registrar	Julie Chaffee	Director of Student Rec- ords and Registrar	1994
Financial Aid	Jeremy Greenhouse	Director of Financial Aid	2021
Public Relations Maureen Stokes		Assistant Vice President for Communications and Marketing	2018
Facilities	Sandra Olson	Assistant Vice President of Facilities	2003



## University Organizational Chart



# Table of NECHE Actions

# Fifth-Year Interim Report January 16, 2018

Area of Concern	Standard(s) Cited	Self-study Standard & Page
The implementation and evalua- tion of the strategic plan	Standard 2.5	Pages 1112
The alignment of annual resource allocations with strategic goals and initiatives	Standard 2.4 Standard 7.6	Page 12
The assessment of student learn- ing outcomes and the improve- ments made from the results	Standard 2.8 Standard 8.3 Standard 8.6 Standard 8.8	Pages 8182
The evaluation of organizational changes and governance structures	Standard 3.13	Pages 2226

Worcester State University's self-study report for the New England Commission of Higher Education is the result of an open, collaborative process involving the entire university community. The provost and vice president for Academic Affairs facilitated the self-study work, which was overseen by two co-chairs of the self-study Steering Committee. In summer 2020, the Steering Committee co-chairs were appointed, and both attended NECHE's Self Study Workshop that fall. Soon thereafter, the nine subcommittees were established, one dedicated to each standard, with two co-chairs appointed to lead each. The selfstudy Steering Committee comprised the two Steering Committee co-chairs; the co-chairs of each standard subcommittee; the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs; the assistant vice president for Assessment and Planning; and two representatives of the institution's Board of Trustees. The committee met twice per semester in spring and fall 2021 and in spring 2022. In January 2021, the senior vice president of NECHE led a virtual kick-off event introducing the campus community to the accreditation process and the work required for a successful self-study.

Data First Forms provided much of the data used by the standards subcommittees. In addition, several surveys were conducted to gather information from all major constituents of the university, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Each subcommittee was invited to submit questions for these surveys. Data obtained from each survey were collated and distributed through a shared e-drive. Finally, further data were collected by individual subcommittees through interviews and artifact collection.

Each subcommittee was tasked with completing drafts of the Description section introducing each chapter of the self-study report. These were submitted at the start of summer 2021. Upon review by the Steering Committee co-chairs, feedback was provided and meetings held at the end of the summer with each set of subcommittee co-chairs to discuss revision strategies. Work on the Appraisal sections began at the start of the fall 2021 semester, when another kick-off event was held, bringing together all self-study participants to review the work already completed and to share ideas about future collaborations between and among groups. Draft Appraisal sections were submitted with revised Description sections at the end of the fall 2021 semester, and individual meetings between the Steering Committee co-chairs and subcommittee cochairs occurred that winter to discuss revisions and plans for the Projections sections. A writing workshop for subcommittees with unfinished work was held in January, supported by the university's president and provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. As the editing process continued in spring and summer 2022, members of the Executive Cabinet set timelines and responsibilities for items in each standard's Projections section.

# Overview of Changes at Worcester State University

Since its last comprehensive regional accreditation self-study, the university has seen significant change, including welcoming a new provost and vice president of Academic Affairs; establishing a new deanship and new academic unit, Education and Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies, and creating, approving, and implementing new institutional strategic plans. These changes have helped support the adoption of a new university-wide initiative to increase the enrollment, retention, and graduation of diverse students through a revised curriculum that fosters leadership and cross-disciplinary exploration. Referred to as the Roadmap for Advancing Student Excellence (RASE) Plan, this initiative requires all new first-time undergraduate students and new transfer students bringing fewer than 45 credits to declare both a major and a minor or two majors. To carry out this plan, the university established new support measures, advising systems, and protocols. Assessment efforts are expanding to ensure that student success and satisfaction is measured through surveys and extra-curricular assessment planning. Finally, Worcester State University launched a limited portfolio of fully-online graduate programs administered through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, with permission from the Commission.

# COVID-19 Impact and the University's Response

In March 2020, after extending the undergraduate spring break by one week, the university pivoted to fully remote learning and operations. All non-essential workers vacated the campus and worked remotely. Through an institutionally convened COVID-19 Response Taskforce, rapid planning for laptop purchases, Zoom licenses, and campus hotspots occurred to ensure the continuation of operations. All campus events, including commencement, were held online, and attention was quickly turned to the fall 2020 semester.

The university's Center for Teaching and Learning offered workshops and support programs during summer 2020 to assist faculty as they planned for a fall semester of remote or hybrid instruction. The Division of Administration and Finance established centralized procedures for procuring remote laboratory kits and other instructional supplies needed for the virtual classroom environment. In addition to distributing Personal Protective Equipment, the institution established university-wide testing protocols and an on-campus testing site and completed building HVAC upgrades; a Safe Return Team helped ensure the resumption of operations by means of new campus signage, class size restriction guidelines, a COVID-19 website, and weekly campus-wide updates delivered by the president via Zoom. A Campus Usage Committee was established to ensure safety while outside parties made use of the institution's facilities, including the thousands of community members who visited a regional vaccination clinic established in the university's Wellness Center.

One hundred volunteers from faculty, staff, and administration underwent training through the Office of Retention to participate during spring 2020 and fall 2020 in a retention effort that involved contacting every undergraduate student registered at the university to check on their academic progress and mental health. Volunteers used a university-prepared seven-point questionnaire to help ascertain students' academic status and concerns, and they employed the Starfish software platform to direct student questions and concerns to appropriate offices within the university.

Throughout the pandemic, the voices of students, faculty, and staff drove decision making. Concerns and suggestions were gathered through frequent surveys and through the feedback and questions solicited during weekly Zoom-broadcast COVID-19 updates. Taken together, these data supported the institution's decision to increase dramatically the percentage of on-campus course offerings in fall 2021. The return of more students to campus coincided with a vaccine mandate, the continuation of a strict testing protocol, and an indoor mask requirement. As the impact of the virus continues to change in response to changing social conditions, the COVID-19 Response Team will continue to monitor the situation and make its recommendations in accordance with the latest guidance issued by health experts. Discussion of each NECHE Standard in this self-study contains a section on the effects COVID-19 conditions had (and, in some areas, continue to have) in that area. A full analysis of the financial impact of the pandemic on the university is in the discussion of Standard Seven in this self-study.

### Conclusion

Despite financial, demographic, and public health and safety pressures converging over the last several years, Worcester State University continues to meet the changing demands of students and the larger Worcester community. A culture of assessment and planning that fosters data-driven decision making continues to support the university in enacting a new undergraduate curriculum model that will guide it into the future. Relying upon a new strategic plan built on a deep-seated commitment to diversity and equitable student success, Worcester State University is well positioned to adapt to changing student populations. A restructured academic organization, with a newly established unit for Education, Liberal, and Interdisciplinary Studies will allow for improved communication and decision making that will benefit students with enhanced supports and guidance. A rigorous academic program, coupled with a rich variety of extra-curricular opportunities and subject to continuous improvement efforts, will promote successful students today and well-rounded leaders of tomorrow.

# Self-Study Committee Membership

Steering Committee Co-Chairs: Emily Soltano, professor of Psychology, and Noah Dion, director of Academic Affairs Support

# Subcommittee Co-Chairs and Members:

# Standard 1: Mission and Purposes

## Co-Chairs

Daniel Hunt, associate professor of communication Karen Wigren, staff assistant to the dean of the School of Science, Technology, and Health

# Members

Leisha Alcia, staff assistant, Academic Success Center (since departed the institution) Kristine Camacho, assistant professor of education Tara Hancock, executive director of Alumni Relations and Engagement Edgar Moros, director of the Intensive English Language Institute Stacey Luster, general counsel and assistant to the president for Employment and Equal Opportunity Marc-Kendy Paul, student

# Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation

<u>Co-Chairs</u> Meghna Dilip professor of chemistry Linda Larrivee, dean of the School of Science, Technology, and Health

# Members

Anthony Adade, associate vice president and chief information officer Diara Canton, student Thomas Kelley, director of retention Syamak Moattari, associate professor of health sciences Tanya Trudell, assistant professor of occupational studies

# Standard 3: Organization and Governance

# **Co-Chairs**

Adrian Gage, assistant dean of Student Affairs and director of Residence Life and Housing Tona Hangen, professor of history

# Members

Joseph Dicarlo, dean of Enrollment and director of Admissions Carl Herrin, assistant to the president and chief of staff Tyanna McCaulsky, student Kathleen Murphy, associate professor of chemistry Karen Tessmer, associate director of Athletics and head women's basketball coach Mark Wagner, director of the Honorable John J. Binienda Center for Civic Engagement Adam Zahler, professor of theatre

#### Standard 4: The Academic Program

<u>Co-Chairs</u> Sara Grady, associate dean of Graduate Studies and Professional Development Jennifer Hood-DeGrenier, professor of biology

#### Members

Mark Beaudry, assistant professor of criminal justice Carol Donnelly, professor of education Julie Frankian, staff associate, Academic Success Center Martin Fromm, associate professor of history Maria Fung, professor of mathematics Hy Ginsberg, associate professor of mathematics Bonnie Kanner, professor of psychology Roberta Kyle, associate vice president for Continuing Education and dean of the Graduate School Ben McElroy, assistant director of Admissions and Coordinator of Transfer Admissions Elaine McKenna-Yeaw, executive director of the Worcester Center for Crafts Russ Pottle, dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences MaryLynn Saul, professor of English Elizabeth Siler, professor of business administration Seth Surgan, professor of psychology Colleen Wheaton, director of First-Year and Transfer Services, Academic Success Center

#### Standard 5: Students

**Co-Chairs** 

Raynold Lewis, dean of Education, Liberal, and Interdisciplinary Studies Colleen Sullivan, associate professor of psychology

### Members

Dean Bowen, assistant director of Athletics and Fitness Center manager
Lyndsey Broxton, student
Joanne Jaber Gauvin, assistant director of the Urban Action Institute
Laura Wildemann Kane, assistant professor of philosophy
Nabin Malakar, assistant professor of environmental science
Stephanie Giguere, staff assistant/accessibility specialist, Office of Student Accessibility Services
Michael McKenna, director, Conference and Event Services
Kristie McNamara, director of the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership
Jessica O'Connor, staff associate and academic fieldwork coordinator, Department of Occupational Studies
Abbigail Poplawski, student
Tammy Tebo, assistant dean for Academic Services

### Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

<u>Co-Chairs</u> Joseph Quattrucci, associate professor of chemistry Henry Theriault, associate vice president for Academic Affairs

<u>Members</u> Mary Fowler, professor of mathematics Yan Hu, Assistant professor of biology Jacqueline Raftery-Helmer, assistant professor of psychology Meredith Rosario, staff assistant, Division of Administration and Finance Yomari Rivera, student

#### Standard 7: Institutional Resources

#### Co-Chairs

Donald Vescio, professor of English Jonathan Walker, director of Internal Controls and Risk Assessment

### Members

Matt Bejune executive director of the Library Jodi Briggs-Pickett, executive director of Development Kathryn Frazier, assistant professor of psychology Margaret Gurney, student Maryanne Hammond, vice chair of the Worcester State University Board of Trustees (term ended) Anisa Hoxha, director of Budget, Planning, and Policy Development Nicole Kapurch, assistant director and special assistant to the president, and liaison to the Board of Trustees Mary Jo Marion, assistant vice president for Urban Affairs, Latino Education Institute Michael Mudd, director of Athletics Susan Moore, executive director of Human Resources and Benefits (since departed the institution) Dave Needham, assistant director of Multimedia Services Dina Nichols, Worcester State University Board of Trustees Jeffry Nichols, associate professor of chemistry Sandra Olson, assistant vice president of Facilities Katey Palumbo director of International Programs Amber Vaill, associate dean for Distance and Global Learning

### Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness

Co-Chairs

Marilyn Cleary, assistant dean of Graduate and Continuing Education Roger Greenwell, associate professor of biology

<u>Members</u>

Rosemary Ahmadi, staff associate, instructional designer and training specialist Charles Bray, student Amanda Cornine, instructor of nursing Brittany Jeye, assistant professor of psychology David Melpignano, adjunct faculty, Department of Communication Adam Shaughnessy, staff associate, Academic Success Center

# Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure

Co-Chairs

Robert Brooks, professor of criminal justice Elena Arranz Alonso, assistant director, Continuing Education/Adult Student Advisor, Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (since departed the institution)

# Members

Maria Isabel Gariepy, director of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity Jason Kapurch, chief and director of University Police Andrea Latter, instructor of nursing John Meany, associate director of Athletics Amiya Phillips, student Christina Santana, assistant professor of English Maureen Stokes, assistant vice president of Communications and Marketing Casey Sullivan, staff assistant, Office of Financial Aid

Jack Reardon, associate director of Network and Infrastructure Services

Wei-Chu Xu, assistant professor of chemistry

Attach a copy of the current mission statement.

Document	Website location	Date Approved by the
Institutional Mission Statement	https://www.worcester.edu/Mission-Statement/	re-affirmed 9/8/2020

Mission Statement published	Website location	Print Publication
Pactbook ?	https://www.worcester.edu/University-Data/	9/28/21
Strategic Plan	https://www.worcester.edu/Strategic-Plan/	2018
Worcester State University Brand Identity Manual	https://www.worcester.edu/Identity/	Summer 2020
Catalog	https://www.worcester.edu/Catalogs-and-Calendars/	8/31/21

	Related statements	Website location	Print Publication
?	Vision Statement ?	https://www.worcester.edu/Mission-Statement/	
	Core Values	https://www.worcester.edu/Mission-Statement/	
	President's Message	https://www.worcester.edu/Presidents-Message/	
	You are Welcome Here	https://www.worcester.edu/you-are-welcome-here/	
			May 2022 (Commencement
	History	https://www.worcester.edu/Our-History/	Program)

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

## STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND PURPOSES

#### Description

Worcester State University was founded as a normal school in 1874. The school transitioned to a teaching college in 1932. As Worcester State College, the school integrated a liberal arts and sciences curriculum in 1963. In 2010, through action initiated by the then-governor, Deval Patrick, the college transitioned to a university. Since that time, Worcester State University's mission has focused on providing accessible and affordable quality education for students in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and a liberal arts educational option for out-of-state students. The institution's mission statement was revised during strategic planning in 1992, 1999, and 2002, and again in 2012 based on findings in the institution's self-study for what was then the Commission on Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. During the last revision cycle, the university's mission was rewritten to reflect more accurately Worcester State's standing as a university, its research and scholarship goals, and to provide a clear vision for institution's mission statement. Subsequently, a committee, consisting of four faculty members, two administrators, and one student, was formed to rewrite the mission statement. The revised <u>mission statement</u> was formally adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2014 and remains in force:

Worcester State University champions academic excellence in a diverse, student-centered environment that fosters scholarship, creativity, and global awareness. A Worcester State education equips students with knowledge and skills necessary for lives of professional accomplishment, engaged citizenship, and intellectual growth.

As part of the university's strategic planning process, the Board of Trustees reviewed the institutional mission statement at a December 2019 planning retreat. During the board's September 2020 meeting, the director of Institutional Research again reviewed the institutional mission with board members as part of a presentation of the university's new 2020-25 strategic plan. The mission statement appears in the university's <u>undergraduate</u> and <u>graduate</u> catalogs and has a dedicated page in the institution's website.

During the <u>2015-20 strategic planning period</u>, a steering committee of students, administrators, faculty, staff, alumni, and trustees evaluated the university's core values in light of the revised mission statement. Through campus conversations and community input, a new set of core values and a new vision statement were developed and continue to guide the university today. The core values are *Academic Excellence*, *Engaged Citizenship*, *Open Exchange of Ideas*, *Diversity and Inclusiveness*, and *Civility and Integrity*; they represent the highest principles and standards of practice that drive the campus operations. The vision statement was reaffirmed during the most recent strategic planning process.

#### Appraisal

Students, faculty, and staff responded during the spring and fall 2021 semesters to surveys that employed Likert-scale questions and open-ended questions to assess the community's understanding of Worcester State's mission and purposes.

Results from the student survey indicated that, out of 714 respondents, 87.3% expressed some level of agreement (total percentage reported: somewhat agree, agree, strongly agree) that the university's mission statement reflects the purpose of the institution. Results from the faculty survey also indicated that, out of 123 respondents, 80.5% expressed some level of agreement that the mission reflects the purpose of the university. Staff survey responses indicated that, out of 182 respondents, 77% expressed some level of agreement that the mission reflects the purpose of the university. As demonstrated in supporting documentation for the selfstudy, survey questions addressing the university's core values and vision statement provided similar results. All surveys offered respondents the opportunity to register open-ended responses regarding the university's mission statement, core values, and vision statement. Open-ended responses on the student survey varied, with some students reporting that "nothing is missing" while other students commented that the university needs to account more for specific constituent groups, such as adult learners, in how they implement the initiatives related to the mission and purpose. Similar to those from the student survey, open-ended responses provided by faculty members varied. Some faculty respondents commented that nothing was missing from the university mission, while several staff members commented that "inclusion" should be integrated into the mission statement.

Supporting documentation for the self-study shows that some units within the university have supplemented the institutional mission with related unit-specific mission statements. For example, the <u>School of Humanities</u> and <u>Social Sciences</u> and the <u>School of Science</u>, <u>Technology</u>, and <u>Health</u> publish mission statements that, respectively, build off of the university mission with a focus on the "human experience" and the "natures of social, economic, and political power" and reflect the university's mission statement in aiming to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for lives of professional accomplishments, engaged citizenship, and intellectual growth. Likewise, co-curricular units also publish mission statements. For example, the Division of Student Affairs' statement commits it "to promote and enrich students' education through a seamless learning environment that enhances the classroom learning experiences."

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

As demonstrated in its current strategic plan and by a number of campus initiatives identified in this self-study and supporting documentation, Worcester State University recognizes diversity, equity, and inclusiveness (DEI) as integral to all the institution's core values. In 2016, the institution utilized these core values to launch a DEI initiative titled "<u>Five Point Plan of Action, Towards a More Inclusive Campus Climate</u>," which included action steps related to student engagement, classroom context, cultural competence, diversity in hiring, and cross-racial interaction. As part of this initiative, the university revived its <u>Equal Opportunity</u>, <u>Diversity and Affirmative Action Advisory Committee</u> and launched three additional university-wide committees, composed of students, faculty, and staff: Campus Climate Committee, Bias Incident Response Team, and LGBT+ Advisory Group. As noted above, survey results indicate that while inclusion is addressed in the institution's core values, "inclusion" should also be embedded in its mission statement.

# **COVID-19 and Mission and Purposes**

To maintain its core mission during pandemic conditions, the university developed strategies to ensure students could continue their intellectual growth in coursework and other academic activities by providing students' access to laptops, computer software, and internet connections. Institutional spending was impacted, with the need to purchase additional software in the sciences, art, and production areas so students could obtain the skills that would have been taught in lab settings. The university also invested significant resources in summer 2020 to make Quality Matters training available to faculty who faced the prospect of moving all their courses to an online modality in anticipation of a fall semester that would see the vast majority of courses offered through remote instruction.

Even within pandemic conditions, the institution continued to enhance its public outreach and academic operations. For example, a regional vaccination site hosted at Worcester State University gave nursing students and students from other academic departments the ability to earn clinical hours by assisting in administering the vaccine. Other members of the university community volunteered their time at the vaccination site for the benefit of the area community. Increased virtual and remote options provided faculty, staff, and students with new opportunities for attending conferences and workshops online.

# Projections

## Address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Institutional Mission

DEI concerns are embedded in the university's core values but do not appear in the university's mission statement. By the end of the 2023-24 academic year, the university's executive administration and Board of Trustees will integrate DEI language into the institution's mission statement, in advance of planning for the institution's 2025-2030 strategic plan.

## Catalog and Align Unit Mission Statements

During the fall 2022 semester, the Office of Institutional Research will gather individual school/department/division mission statements and help determine which units within the university would benefit from developing mission statements. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Office of Communications and Marketing will resolve inconsistencies in how department and/or division mission statements are displayed online and in university publications.

PLANNING	Year approved by governing board	Effective Dates	Website location
Strategic Plans ?		?	2
Immediately prior Strategic Plan	2015	2015-2020	https://www.worcester.edu/Strategic-Plan/
Current Strategic Plan	2020	2020-2025	https://www.worcester.edu/Strategic-Plan/
Next Strategic Plan	2025	2025-2030	
	Year	Effective	Website location
Other institution-wide plans*			
Master plan	2012	2012-2022	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10wA-APztInxpxo9ECYv-3RN_9_MLz2zL2usp=sharing
Academic plan	2020	2020-2025	https://s40380.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2020-2025-Strategic-Plan.pdf
Financial plan	2023		https://drive.google.com/file/d/1POXBBnj_RWB4i2N-I6rIDhzOKJeUflnR/view?usp=sharing
Technology plan		2020-2025	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B4w0Pm0EH7W376P_oqyfv-SWGCOLikST/view?usp=sharing
Enrollment plan		2019-2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HMdbyzkk5PnPzaOrfgPfH6M9JV2GDcYa/view_
Development plan		2020-2025	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B4w0Pm0EH7W376P_oqyfv-SWGCOIikST/view?usp=sharing
Plans for major units (e.g., departments, librar	<u>y)*</u>		
? University Assessment and Planning		2020-2025	https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1hSBbxibua17rURVWm19HhafNMUuV5Rgi
Center for Teaching and Learning		2015-current	https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1hSBbxibua17rURVWm19HhafNMUuV5Rgi
Latino Education Institute		2013-current	https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1hSBbxibua17rURVWm19HhafNMUuV5Rgi

#### EVALUATION

#### Academic program review

Program review system (colleges and departments). System last updated: Program review schedule (e.g., every 5 years)

Sample program review reports (name of unit or program)\* Psychology Department program review Mathematics Department program review

English Department program review

#### System to review other functions and units

Program review schedule (every X years or website location of schedule)

Sample program review reports (name of unit or program)\*

<u>_</u>	······································
U	her significant institutional studies (Name and web location)*
I	Post Graduate Outcomes Report

Student Diversity and Outcomes Report	
COVIE	0-19 Response Assessment Report
Strategic Plan 2015-2020 Assessment	

\*Insert additional rows, as appropriate.

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Website location

2021 Every 5 Years ; https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Bnk1vYR9BUN8H9zpKgv5aaXvYedrbZtL2usp=sharing

P https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ukxdPDZGIsA2Qod0VPkjL\_6k72PYauoG/view?usp=sharing https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P08snQMolQ62[C-nNyQIEyP94DqNf20g/view?usp=sharing

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1awMtFD3blD2g00YknZJFgUsdmsVW2P6p/edit? usp=sharing&ouid=103854443112912508895&rtpof=true&sd=true

Date
2018
2021
2021
2020

#### STANDARD TWO: PLANNING AND EVALUATION

#### Description

#### Planning

At the institutional level, Worcester State University develops five-year strategic plans to support its institution's mission and goals. The current strategic plan, titled "<u>Beyond 150: Lead, Succeed, Engage</u>," is designed to span 2020-25, and acknowledges the university's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024. It was approved by the university's <u>Board of Trustees</u> in June 2020.

The planning that produced "Beyond 150" was demonstrably systematic, comprehensive, and broad based. Over a year-long collaborative process, Worcester State's president convened and charged a Strategic Planning Steering Committee to oversee the planning process, while sharing a commitment to ensure the process would be inclusive, transparent, and based upon broad participation across campus. The planning process included more than 100 faculty members, staff members, students, and members of the Board of Trustees, who convened in working groups to develop strategies and initiatives for each strategic planning goal. Campus-wide surveys, forums, and meetings captured more than 1,000 voices contributing to the planning process. During the process, Strategic Planning Steering Committee shared updates and drafts with the campus community on a regular basis and incorporated the resulting feedback into the plan. The plan's goals are informed also by the <u>Commonwealth of Massachusetts's Board of Higher Education's Equity Agenda</u>. "Beyond 150" establishes quantitative measures for demonstrating success, including lessons learned during the rapid pivot to all-remote learning necessitated during pandemic conditions. It incorporates the institution's commitment to equity, so that all areas of the community can embrace this commitment as their own responsibility. The university's Board of Trustees approved a Strategic Plan Trust Fund to support plan initiatives.

Strategic planning also occurs at the division and unit levels, and planning at these levels align their objectives with the university's current strategic plan. Examples drawn from the formal report-out on the previous strategic plan, "<u>Vision 2020</u>," show, for instance, success in implementing curriculum development planning in the Academic Affairs unit resulted in internal governance and state-level approval for new undergraduate majors in <u>liberal studies</u> and <u>environmental science</u> and new graduate programs in <u>public management</u> and <u>public administration and policy</u>, all contributing to successful implementation of the university's broader goal to "Enhance the undergraduate academic program and expand graduate programs in a community of learning that promotes academic excellence and innovation." Likewise, success in implementing retention planning, as part of the Division of Enrollment Management's 2015-2020 <u>Enrollment Management Plan</u> is represented in the report-out in a first-year retention rate that rose from 77.2% in 2015 to 78.7% in 2019 and a six-year graduation rate that rose from 50.9% in 2015 to 57.6% in 2019, both changes contributing to successful implementation of the university's broader goal to "Attract and enroll a diverse pool of highly motivated students and attach institution-wide priority to promoting their retention and success." Post-report-out, the university's 2021 Fact Book shows the six-year graduation rate continued to progress, to 60.9%, while the first-year retention rate fell to an uncharacteristic 73.5% amid difficult pandemic conditions.

#### Evaluation

As noted above, the university evaluates its mission and purposes on a five-year cycle, as an integral part of its overall strategic planning. The institution provides periodic updates on progress in areas of "Beyond 150." Also as noted above, the previous strategic plan, "Vision 2020," closed out with measures of success logged in the report "2015-2020 Master List: Vision 2020" and finalized in the report "Strategic Plan Final Progress Report 2015-2020." In addition to the positive examples of planning implementation presented above, the university forthrightly took responsibility for areas in which it came up short. For example, in pursuing the

goal to "Cultivate a vibrant campus life and a collaborative work and learning environment in which all members of the Worcester State University community feel welcomed, included, respected, empowered, and valued," the institution reported that "While progress has been made in diversity, equity, and inclusion, as demonstrated in the increase of ALANA/BIPOC (African, Latine, Asian, Native American and/or Black, Indigenous, People of Color)] representation and initiatives to support marginalized groups, we continue to struggle with internal communication and sense of belonging on campus." These data, along with data showing "a low sense of belonging" among commuter, transfer, graduate, and older learner students and demonstrations of equity gaps in technology resources among students in the transition to remote learning at the beginning of the pandemic, led the university to determine that the implementation of plans for "Campus and Community Life" was only moderately successful. All findings on the success, or lack thereof, of strategic planning during the 2015-2020 period was presented to the institution's Board of Trustees.

The Division of Administration and Finance provides annual updates to the Strategic PlanningCommittee. In the area of aligning programs and allocating academic resources in response to student interest and strategic priorities that support the academic vision of the university, as described in discussion of Standard Seven in this self-study, the division continues to prepare the <u>annual operating budget</u> with a focus on prioritizing funding requests by ranking the alignment of the request with the plan's strategic priorities.

Below the university level, individual offices pursue ongoing data collection with the goal of informing evaluation of activities and priorities. For example, Student Affairs collects data daily, weekly, bi-annually, each semester, and annually. Data assist in improving future programs, hours of operation, marketing strategies, skills assessment, social norming strategies, staffing patterns, trainings, website updates, and goal setting for the division. As a second example, in the area of customer service, the Administration and Finance Division seeks annual feedback from the campus community. Each department within that division issues an annual survey and evaluates the results. Finally, the Office of the Diversity, Inclusion. and Equal Opportunity collects hiring demographics and Equal Employment Opportunity complaints in real time. <u>Climate</u> and/or equity surveys occur annually. These data are used to examine the <u>hiring search and selection processes</u>; Equal Employment Opportunity policies; and programs and trainings relating to anti-discrimination and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives.

Undergraduate programs follow a five-year cycle of review, the primary goal of which is to improve teaching and learning. <u>Program reviews</u> also provide faculty and administration the opportunity to periodically examine the extent to which programs are meeting their goals and outcomes; the relationship of program outcomes to program, school, and university missions; various dimensions of program quality; and a program's effective and efficient use of university resources. Special circumstances may occasionally result in more frequent reviews for specific programs or slightly less frequent reviews. The appropriate dean or, depending on the program, the associate vice president for Academic Affairs, coordinates the <u>program review process</u>. As supporting documentation for discussion of Standard Four in this self-study shows, programs being reviewed prepare a self-study, following specified format and guidelines.

Most graduate programs are reviewed by a given department concurrent with review of the department's undergraduate major(s). Programs with external professional accreditation, including undergraduate and graduate curricula in <u>occupational therapy</u>, <u>teacher education</u>, school psychology, speech-language pathology, and <u>nursing</u> follow program review cycles specified by their accrediting bodies. These programs often have sevento 10-year review cycles, with yearly updated reports. Likewise, the <u>Commonwealth Honors Program</u> responds to a review cycle structured by the state's <u>Department of Higher Education</u>.

Appraisal

Planning

Goal 5, Strategy 5.5, of the university's current strategic plan is to "Foster a culture of assessment and databased decision making" across the institution. To that end, the strategic plan calls for construction of a data warehouse; for development of divisional and departmental strategic plans that integrate with "Beyond 150"; and for coordinating the annual collection of data centrally through the Office of Assessment and Planning. To complete this endeavor, the university has retained services from the Washington, D.C.-based consultant firm <u>ASR Analytics, LLC</u>. As of summer 2022, the data warehouse Student Success module has been completed, allowing the institution to create weekly, automatically generated reports and Tableau dashboards for Enrollment Management to aid in enrollment and retention planning. For example, the Tableau dashboards allow administrative bodies to see in real-time the number of students in each stage of the admissions funnel, as well as enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. This module also allows for comparison with past years' data from the same time periods, as well as in relation to current enrollment, retention, and graduation goals.

The Financial module is currently in process, and a report format for audited statements has been completed. Prior to the construction of this portion of the data warehouse, the Division of Administration and Finance relied on multiple, separate Excel files and a labor-intensive manual process that took weeks to months to create the university's audit report. Now, the report can be run in minutes. Additional reports are being created to view financial data at multiple levels of granularity, from completed aggregated views to examining individual budget lines in individual departments. In addition, the final report will help calculate academic programs' return on investment, which will allow the university to examine departments from a financial perspective as well as the academic perspective.

The institution has engaged ASR Analytics for extended services for an additional year, to assist with building reports and dashboards specifically applied to Strategic Planning metrics dashboards and dashboards relating to the <u>Financial Sustainability Taskforce</u>, discussed below in the section focusing on the pandemic's impact on institutional planning and evaluation.

The university's <u>Enrollment Management Plan</u> provides guidance and benchmark data from which projections for traditional undergraduate programs are developed. The Enrollment Management Plan was inaugurated in 2014 and was updated in fall 2018 as a two- to three-year plan. Findings from the report-out of the plan, published in fall 2018, projected minimal enrollment growth through 2023, due to expected demographic shifts in the Northeast region of the United States, tempered somewhat by the university's adoption of the RASE Plan as an initiative to spur enrollment within and outside the university's regular enrollment catchment areas. The fall 2018 plan expired in 2020, coinciding with the onset of pandemic conditions and the university's move to an emergency response to enrollment planning. The Division of Enrollment Management began work on a new "post-COVID" plan in spring 2022; the plan was still in development in summer 2022.

# Evaluation

As noted above, the university closed out its previous strategic plan in 2020. For "Beyond 150," which runs through 2025, the <u>Strategic Plan Review Committee</u> is charged with collecting data from all departments relating to the plan's metrics, as well as the progress of initiatives associated with the new plan, also collected from all university departments. As shown in supporting documentation prepared by the university's <u>Office of Institutional Research</u>, metrics of progress during FY21 have been assessed in relation to targets created by university leadership. The Strategic Plan Review Committee examines progress of initiatives associated with each strategy and assesses the progress of each goal and strategy as "completed, making progress, planned, or not started," with suggested areas of focus for the next year. In FY21, the Office of Institutional Research shows 19% of initiatives complete for "Academic Excellence and Distinction," with another 59% making progress; 12% completed and 73% making progress for "Student Support and Success"; 6% completed and 58% making progress for "Marketing and Enrollment"; none completed and 73% making progress for "People and

Culture"; and 11% completed and 57% making progress for "Resources and Infrastructure." For FY22, \$203,500 was allocated to support seven specific initiatives derived from "Beyond 150."

It will be important to track these data closely, as the university has a perceived history of making large-scale changes and finding funding for initiatives that, on the surface, may not seem to tie in with a given strategic plan. Examples include providing significant funding for a <u>market positioning study</u>, from which developed the institution's signature undergraduate experience initiative, the <u>Roadmap for Advancing Student Excel-lence</u> plan and <u>MajorPlus</u>; the development of a new interdisciplinary department; and the addition of a new academic dean. Decisions to implement these measures may have been linked to the previous or current strategic plan but are perceived not to have been well explained as such to the university community. <u>Survey data</u> show that, on a seven-item Likert scale, <u>faculty</u> respondents rated at an average of 4.1 the institution's success in "relying on the Strategic Plan to prioritize technology, physical space and infrastructure, library, human resources, and fiscal needs. <u>Staff</u> respondents rated the institution's success in this area at an average of 4.8.

Further, a more transparent policy regarding how funds are used to support findings of <u>academic program</u> <u>reviews</u>, as well as new initiatives tied or not tied to the current strategic plan, is needed especially for discussions and plans for how to fund suggestions for improvement. The academic program review process does produce improvements based on data analysis and the perspective of an external reviewer, as shown in the following selected examples:

*Computer Science*: Artifacts produced in CS-448 Software Development Capstone and CS-483 Big Data Analytics Capstone are reviewed annually by the departmental curriculum committee, using agreed-upon rubrics. Changes adopted as a result of reviews and assessment include the creation of a data science minor and various adjustments to other core computer science courses.

*Chemistry*: As a result of a program review and departmental assessment procedures, faculty strengthened the chemistry major by including a seminar to improve literature search and comprehension skills among students and to improve institutional resources such as library, instrumentation, and software, to become ready for provisional approval from the American Chemical Society (ACS). Approval was then sought and obtained.

*English:* The most recent program review, combined with departmental examination of national trends and curriculum recommendations from the Modern Language Association's Association of Departments of English's Ad Hoc Committee on the English Major, drove a comprehensive revision of the English major that is chronicled in governance documents. This revision resulted also in a new five-year departmental assessment cycle.

*History*: The process of program review in 2019-2020 demonstrated that the goals of the history major to provide students with global coverage were falling short, that the major was weighted heavily towards 100-level surveys, and that the history program did not do enough to support the significant number of students who planned to teach social studies at the K-12 level in Massachusetts. Governance documents show that in 2020-21, the department underwent a thorough redesign of the history major and created a new track specifically for future educators within the major.

However, follow-through on the academic review process, especially with regard to funding, is uncertain. For example, all program reviews result in a list of suggestions for departmental enhancement/programmatic improvements. These suggestions are prioritized during dean-chair discussions following the program review and the report from the external reviewer, and the academic review process outlines a process for follow through after the dean's meeting with the chair.

Yet department chairs report that the follow through after this point is inconsistent, especially in regard to making plans to fund priorities. With regard to inconsistent follow up, the Standard Two subcommittee surveyed currently serving academic department chairs, with a 59% response rate, producing the following results. In response to the item "Do you feel WSU's review process is consistent?" 92% of respondents checked "No." In response to "Do you feel that your department's program review process led to institution supported change?" 69% checked "No." In response to "After the last program review did you receive a meeting with the chief academic officer?" 69% checked "No."

Additionally, in many instances, recommended changes were not subsequently supported by financial resource allocations needed for implementation, as shown in <u>supporting documentation</u>. At the same time, the timing of any recommendations that may come from an academic program review is not synchronized with the university's overall budget process, hampering the institution's ability to respond to recommended changes. In addition, any recommendations about full-time faculty positions may not recognize nuances in portions of the collective bargaining agreement negotiated between the Massachusetts State College Association and Massachusetts State Universities Council of Presidents, which structures expectations and working conditions for faculty members and academic departments.

Administered through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, with permission from the Commission, Worcester State University's limited portfolio of fully-online graduate programs, referred to by the institution as <u>Accelerated Online Programs (AOP)</u>, launched at a challenging time, coinciding with the onset of pandemic conditions, and have not realized their original enrollment and revenue goals, although the university has seen success with increasing enrollments over time. The AOPs target working professionals in the education and nursing fields, two fields significantly impacted by the pandemic. The programs have seen greater expenses during their first year than they will in future years, due to up-front course development costs associated with building the programs. Despite these challenges, as demonstrated by <u>documentations supporting</u> this self-study, the university has seen steady increases in enrollment since the programs began. Providing the type of education that meets the needs of adult learners contributes to the university's ability to achieve its mission to make its campus a "diverse, student-centered environment."

# **COVID-19 and Planning and Evaluation**

Despite disruptions by the onset of pandemic conditions, the university completed its strategic planning process virtually and adopted the 2020-2025 strategic plan "Beyond 150: Lead, Succeed, Engage" just a few months after beginning fully remote operations.

However, due to the increasing duration and severity of pandemic conditions, the institution's operational planning narrowed necessarily to short-term windows within the 2021 and 2022 fiscal years. To coordinate the university's pandemic planning, in spring and summer 2020, the president created nine working groups to develop the <u>Safe Return Plan</u>. These groups included 145 faculty and staff, and focused on areas such as academics, contingency plans, communication, student recruitment and retention, external relations, federal stimulus coordination, use of facilities, mental health and well-being, and wrap-around student support. In the fall 2020 semester, these groups were condensed into seven: Academic Planning; Budget and Human Resources; Communications; Health, Safety and Student Life; Resources and Fundraising; Student Academic Support and Retention; and Assessment.

As FY21 progressed, the President's Office formed a 30- to 35-member cross-divisional COVID-19 Response Team, which eventually transitioned to a Safe Return to Campus Team, as the primary means for formulating university-wide responses to pandemic conditions. This group, made up of staff members, administrators, and faculty members, worked under pressure, outside the traditional work week, and with deliberate speed in an intense cross-collaborative fashion to develop plans and activate responses.

Planning challenges faced by the institution in the initial stages of the pandemic and addressed collaboratively by the COVID-19 Response Team/Safe Return to Campus Team were myriad, and included the following:

- An uncertain enrollment environment for the fall 2021 semester, and therefore an uncertain fiscal environment, resulted in the Division of Administration and Finance significantly reducing and heavily centralizing operating budgets across the institution, and committing significant work hours in order to navigate the often-shifting federal and state programs intended to provide emergency funding for higher education students and institutions.
- The Division of Enrollment Management focused increased attention and cross-campus efforts on student retention, partnering with approximately 100 campus community members to call, with email follow-ups in many cases, each enrolled undergraduate student to determine how they felt they were coping with the pandemic-impacted university experience and to assess any individual retention risk factors for possible mitigation.
- A move to almost total remote instruction required the institution to support student technology needs, including distributing laptop computers to students and attempting to aid those who experienced Wi-Fi and other connectivity issues. During summer 2020, the Division of Academic Affairs subsidized Quality Matters training for faculty to enable smoother migration from face-to-face to totally remote instruction projected for the 2020-2021 academic year. Emergency funding from external sources contributed to acquiring academic software platforms and services suited to enhancing learning in remote environments.
- The Division of Student Affairs shouldered the brunt of organizing, coordinating, and staffing a campus-wide COVID-19 testing and contact tracing program encompassing students, staff, and faculty, plus providing isolation and quarantine facilities for campus residents who tested positive for the virus.
- The Division of University Advancement turned fundraising efforts from more long-term projects toward giving programs that would have an immediate impact on students' ability to attend and persist in their academic programs.

In terms of evaluation, pandemic conditions disrupted the academic program review process, as academic departments found their hands full simply creating effective environments for teaching and learning, and external reviewers were unable or unwilling to travel to campus to complete reviews of specialized facilities. As it turns out, any prospective findings from the 2020-2021 academic year would likely have been compromised by the uncertainty of the ongoing duration and intensity of pandemic conditions.

As the university has begun to emerge from the pandemic, it faces significant planning challenges in finances and traditional undergraduate enrollments. In January of 2022, the university's president convened a <u>Financial Sustainability Task Force</u> to, as he said in an announcement to campus, "explore strategies and opportunities that maintain the financial health of Worcester State for future years," beginning with FY24. In spring 2022, the university recommended a "bridge" budget for FY23, which relies upon remaining COVID-19 relief funds and a one-time draw-down of the university's reserves in order to close this fiscal year's budget deficit. Both the bridge budget and the Financial Sustainability Task Force process were supported by the Board of Trustees. As noted above, the Division of Enrollment Management began work in spring 2022 on a post-COVID-19 Enrollment Management Plan, which will aid in projecting tuition and fee revenue for future years.

# Projections

# Complete a Post-COVID-19 Enrollment Management Plan

By the end of the fall 2022 semester, the Division of Enrollment Management will complete an Enrollment Management Plan to carry the institution forward into future years. The plan will comport with the university's Strategic Plan and will be informed by work in Phase 1 and Phase 2 by the Financial Sustainability Task Force.

#### Link Academic Program Review Outcomes to the University's Budgeting Process

Program review results often identify specific financial needs for academic departments in order to foster improvement. However, the university's budgeting process does not specifically include consideration of program review results. Given the Commission's stated interest that the university demonstrate "that annual resource allocations are aligned with its strategic goals and initiatives ... ," by the end of the 2024-2025 academic year, the divisions of Administration and Finance and of Academic Affairs will create clear and transparent links between academic program review results and resource allocations.

# Standard 3: Organization and Governance

#### (Board and Internal Governance)

Please attach to this form:

1) A copy of the institution's organization chart(s).

2) A copy of the by-laws, enabling legislation, and/or other appropriate documentation to establish the

legal authority of the institution to award degrees in accordance with applicable requirements.

If there is a "sponsoring entity," such as a church or religious congregation, a state system, or a corporation, describe and document the relationship with the accredited institution.

Name of the sponsoring entity Website location of documentation of relationship

website location of documentation of relations

#### Governing Board

By-laws Board members' names and affiliations 
 Website location

 https://www.worcester.edu/Board-of-Trustees-Packets/

 https://www.worcester.edu/Trustees/

Website location or document name for meeting minutes

Website location or document name for meeting minutes

Wahaita logation on document name for meetin

	Board committees *	Website location or document name for meeting minutes
?	Academic & Student Development	https://www.worcester.edu/Board-of-Trustees-Packets/
	Planning & Development	https://www.worcester.edu/Board-of-Trustees-Packets/
	Finance & Facilities	https://www.worcester.edu/Board-of-Trustees-Packets/
	Human Resources	https://www.worcester.edu/Board-of-Trustees-Packets/

#### Major institutional faculty committees or governance groups\*

All University Committee	https://www.worcester.edu/governance/governance-documents/
Academic Policy Committee	https://www.worcester.edu/governance/governance-documents/
University Curriculum Committee	https://www.worcester.edu/governance/governance-documents/
Graduate Council	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_T7ZtuMSUqiUGh-S08psTQ25FFuc1Nxk?usp=sharing

#### Major institutional student committees or governance groups\*

#### Other major institutional committees or governance groups\*

s or governance groups*	website location of document name for meeting minutes		
	https://www.worcester.edu/governance/administrative-policy/		

\*Insert additional rows as appropriate.

Non-Academic Policy Committee

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

# Standard 3: Organization and Governance (Locations and Modalities)

## Campuses, Branches and Locations Currently in Operation (See definitions in comment boxes)

(Insert additional rows as appropriate.)				Enrollment*	
	Location (City, State/Country)	Date Initiated	2 years prior	1 year prior	Current year
			(FY2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)
Main campus	Worcester, MA	1874	9,691	8,694	7,737
Other principal campuses					
Branch campuses (US)					
Other instructional locations (US)					
Branch campuses (overseas)					
Other instructional locations (overseas)					
	Number of programs	Date First Initiated	2 years prior	1 year prior	Current year
Distance Learning Programs	Number of programs		-	•	
0 0	Number of programs		prior	prior	year
Programs 50-99% on-line	Number of programs		prior	prior	year (FY 2022)
Programs 50-99% on-line Programs 100% on-line	Number of programs	Initiated	prior (FY2020)	prior (FY 2021)	year (FY 2022)
Programs 50-99% on-line Programs 100% on-line Correspondence Education	Number of programs	Initiated	prior (FY2020)	prior (FY 2021)	year (FY 2022)
Programs 50-99% on-line Programs 100% on-line Correspondence Education Low-Residency Programs	Number of programs 3	Initiated	prior (FY2020)	prior (FY 2021)	year (FY 2022)
Distance Learning Programs Programs 50-99% on-line Programs 100% on-line Correspondence Education Low-Residency Programs Competency-based Programs Dual Enrollment Programs	Number of programs 3 5	Initiated	prior (FY2020)	prior (FY 2021)	year

\*Enter the annual unduplicated headcount for each of the years specified below.

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Dual enrollment programs include: High School Scholars Program, 100 Males to College, Latino Education Institute (LEI) Programs, Early College, and Community-based Cohort Programs.

## STANDARD THREE: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

### Description

Worcester State University is part of the Massachusetts State University System, composed of six comprehensive state universities – of which Worcester State University is one – and three specialized colleges. As with its companion institutions in the State University System – plus the state's community colleges and University of Massachusetts campuses – it is overseen by and accountable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' 13-member <u>Board of Higher Education</u> (BHE), which is responsible for coordinating and defining the mission of the Commonwealth's overall system of public higher education and its institutions. The BHE's <u>core responsibilities</u> are academic policy and program approval; financial aid; fiscal and capital planning; research and performance measurements; workforce development; and oversight of the Commonwealth's Optional Retirement Program.

Acting as staff to the BHE is the Commonwealth's <u>Department of Higher Education</u> (DHE). The DHE acts as the employer in the area of collective bargaining and advocates for the higher education system in negotiation of benefits. The DHE is headed by a <u>commissioner</u>, whose staff provides human resources, financial support, and facilities service to the various campuses. The DHE has developed a <u>statewide strategic plan</u> focused on educational equity, setting specific measurable goals to increase educational attainment, particularly within historically underserved populations, on its systems' campuses.

The state universities are led by each institution's own Board of Trustees. At the institutional level in the State University System, descriptions of roles and linkages among the Board of Trustees, the administration, the faculty, and the staff are distributed among a number of documents, including the <u>Board of Trustees' bylaws</u>; two faculty collective bargaining agreements negotiated with the <u>Massachusetts State College Association</u>; and contracts with local affiliations of the <u>Association of Professional Administrators</u>, MTA/NEA, and the <u>American Federation of State</u>, <u>County</u>, and <u>Municipal Employees</u>. Such documents also describe processes for institutional decision-making, including communication channels, and delineate the roles and responsibilities of participants in the decision-making processes.

# Governing Board

Worcester State University is governed locally by a <u>Board of Trustees</u>; nine of its eleven members are appointed by the governor – of which at least one must be an alumnus/a of the institution – and serve five-year terms with the possibility of a second term appointment. Additionally, to ensure alumni representation, one member of the Board is elected by the <u>Alumni Association's Advisory Board</u>, for a five-year term (with eligibility for one additional term). To represent student interests, one member is elected by the student body for a one-year term. The members of the Board represent a cross-section of the community and bring a wide variety of knowledge and experience to the task of overseeing the management of the institution. Board members advocate for the university in community affairs and consult with the various campus constituencies. The university's president is selected by the Board of Trustees, subject to approval by the BHE.

The president of the university reports directly to the Board of Trustees. The board's operation is guided by a set of <u>operating by-laws</u>. The board has several <u>standing committees</u> that meet regularly to review the plans and performance in several key areas; these committees include Executive Committee, Academic Programs and Student Services, Human Resources, Finance and Facilities, and Academic Student Planning and Development (see Standard Three Data First Form). As a body, the board evaluates the performance of the president, approves major capital projects, and exercises authority over budgetary matters. The board meets regularly throughout the year; it convenes in special sessions when urgent matters arise. All meetings are announced in advance and are open to the public under the state's open meeting law. The by-laws were

amended in the 2020-2021 academic year and include a mandate charging each standing committee to consider equity and inclusion in their respective committee's responsibilities.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts <u>conflict-of-interest policies</u> ensure that trustees may not have even the appearance of personal gain or personal interest in relationships with, or operations of, the university. Trustees are required annually to review these conflict-of-interest policies. They undergo an <u>orientation</u> and regular <u>professional development</u> highlighting their roles as fiduciaries and their responsibilities in promoting the best interests of the university. As part of the institution's strategic planning process, the board regularly reviews the university's mission statement.

## Internal Governance

## **Administration**

The chief executive officer of the university is the <u>president</u>, who is accountable to the Board of Trustees and who leads the university's day-to-day operations. <u>Barry Maloney</u> assumed the position of president in July 2011. Institutional organizational charts show five main administrative divisions of the university operating under the president's leadership:

• Academic Affairs, which is headed by the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The provost/VPAA is the chief academic officer of the university, whose office oversees all academic programs and also all units that provide academic support services, including academic centers and the library, information technology, continuing and graduate education, the Commonwealth Honors program, assessment and planning, and institutional research.

<u>Undergraduate academic programs</u> are administered through 22 academic departments distributed among the School of Humanities and Social Sciences; the School of Science, Technology, and Health; the recently created unit for Education, Liberal, and Interdisciplinary Studies; and the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. Graduate programs are administered through the <u>Graduate School</u>. Undergraduate academic programming offered in the evening, on the weekends, during the university's winter session, and during summer terms are administered through Continuing Education. The graduate and continuing education offices are combined in the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE). The undergraduate schools and the unit for Education, Liberal, and Interdisciplinary Studies are overseen by academic deans. DGCE is overseen by the associate vice president for Continuing Education and dean of the Graduate School and the associate dean of Graduate Studies and Professional Development. DGCE also oversees graduate admissions, the university's <u>Center for Business and Industry</u>, the Center for Effective Instruction, and the <u>Intensive English Language Institute</u>.

The current structure of schools or similar units, headed by deans, was new at the time of the last institutional self-study. It is now a fully functioning part of the university. Deans work with department chairs on semester course scheduling, to advise and approve; are involved in the process leading to full-time faculty hiring; are integral to the review of reappointment, tenure, and promotion applications; and attend regular meetings with chairs. They control some discretionary funds for academic initiatives within their schools or unit.

• <u>Student Affairs</u>, headed by the vice president for Student Affairs and dean of students, consists of a wide array of units, such as Counseling Services, Athletics, University Police, John J. Binienda Cen-

ter for Civic Engagement, Residence Life and Housing, Student Accessibility Services, Veterans Affairs, LGBTQ+ Resource Center, Student Conduct, Title IX Office, Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Development, and Career Services. Student Affairs coordinates contractual arrangements for Health Services, the Bookstore, and Dining Services.

- <u>Administration and Finance</u>, headed by the vice president for administration and finance, oversees the offices of Fiscal Affairs/Comptroller, Facilities, Human Resources, Student Accounts, Payroll and Benefits, Planning and Policy Development, and Procurement and Administrative Services.
- <u>University Advancement</u>, headed by the vice president for University Advancement, incorporates advancement services, the Alumni Relations and Engagement, Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, and financial reporting of the university's endowment, fundraising, and scholarships. The <u>Worcester State Foundation</u> is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that holds and manages funds raised for the benefit of the university. It is presided over by the university's vice president for University Advancement, with a chair and Board of Directors drawn primarily from the alumni community.
- <u>Enrollment Management</u>, headed by the vice president for Enrollment Management, was created as a separate division in January 2012 by the president. Its offices include the Admissions Office, Financial Aid Office, Office of the Registrar, Communications and Marketing Department, and Retention Office.

At present, two main bodies direct the activities of, and facilitate communication among, the university's administrative divisions. The <u>Executive Cabinet</u> consists of the vice presidents, plus the assistant vice president of Communications and Marketing, the university's general counsel, the chief human resources officer, and the president's chief of staff. The President's Cabinet consists of Executive Cabinet plus the academic deans, the diversity officer, representatives from the academic departments' Chairs' Council, and other representatives from across the divisions, primarily those at the director level and above. Additionally, interdivisional structures such as the campus's Bias Incident Response Team, Campus Climate Committee, and Student Intervention Team promote a good deal of interdivisional coordination. Through such bodies and entities, the institution provides a wide range of constituencies with regular opportunities to participate in communication and decision-making.

### Academic Governance

The collective bargaining agreement between the <u>Massachusetts State College Association</u> (MSCA) and the Commonwealth's Board of Higher Education establishes a structure for participatory governance involving faculty, administrators, and students in determining such matters as curriculum development, academic policies, and long-range planning. This system is designed to ensure that representatives of all segments of the campus community may contribute to conversations about significant decisions, by way of standing and ad hoc governance committees. However, all <u>committees' findings</u> take the form of recommendations to the president, who makes the final decision.

As shown in Data First Forms for Standard Three, the <u>standing committees</u> in academic governance are the All University Committee (AUC), the Academic Policies Committee (APC), and the Curriculum Committee (CC). Each of these committees has student, faculty and administration representation, though typically greater faculty numbers. Special and *ad hoc* committees are created, as needed, by joint action of the Chair of the AUC, the MSCA chapter president, and the president of the university. Graduate school proposals are handled separately by the <u>Graduate Education Council</u>. Committees meet monthly during the fall and spring semesters. The AUC may function in the summer via an Executive Committee, composed of six members elected by and from members of the AUC (two faculty, two administrative, and two student representatives).
The AUC is the central academic governance committee, through which all academic governance proposals flow. Its duty is to either send on proposals to the appropriate standing committee, or create an *ad hoc* committee to consider any proposals outside of the purview of the standing committees. The AUC is specifically charged to encourage the members of the faculty, administration, and student body to participate in the decision-making process. As stated in the <u>MSCA collective bargaining agreement</u>, faculty members of the AUC are elected from among unit members. Administrative representatives to the AUC are selected by the president; student representatives are selected under the auspices of the Student Government Association.

The members of the UCC are selected by the MSCA chapter president (for faculty members), the Student Government Association (for student members), and the president of the university (for administration members); all are ultimately appointed by the president of the university. The CC makes recommendations concerning changes to the university's course inventory, degree requirements, and proposals for new and changes to existing programs.

The APC is appointed in the same way as the CC, and makes recommendations with respect to the academic calendar, academic and admissions standards, policies governing selective retention, educational services to the local community, and library services.

Recommendations of the standing committees are transmitted to the AUC, which either accepts the recommendation and transmits the proposal to the president, or makes its own recommendation, which it attempts to reconcile with the standing committee's recommendation. All committee recommendations are forwarded to the president, even in cases in which the AUC and a standing committee cannot agree. Upon receipt of a recommendation, the president can accept, reject, or modify the proposal. If the president does not accept the recommendations of the committees, the MSCA contract requires a written explanation of the decision be sent to the AUC.

Graduate program curricula, standards, and policies are overseen by the Graduate Education Council, composed of ten faculty members selected by the MSCA chapter from departments with graduate programs, three administrators selected by the president of the university, and one graduate student representative. New program proposals, new course proposals, proposed curriculum changes, changes in academic policy, and other proposed changes to a graduate program are initiated by the appropriate graduate program coordinator, department chair, or member of the Graduate School staff. The applicable academic department and the dean review and approve (or deny) the proposals. If approved, proposals are then forwarded to the Graduate Education Council for review. The Graduate Education Council forwards recommendations for changes, additions, deletions to curricula and/or changes to policy directly to the provost and president. Graduate School proposals do not go to the All University Committee.

Each academic department is headed by a chairperson, a faculty member nominated by the departmental faculty and appointed by the university's president to a three-year renewable term (up to three consecutive terms for departments with more than six members). Department chair responsibilities are specified by the MSCA collective bargaining agreement and include: academic leadership for the department; course scheduling; assignment of student advisees to department members; establishment of departmental committees; recruitment and evaluation of department faculty; and the preparation and management of the departmental budget. Chairs remain members of the teaching faculty and of the faculty bargaining unit. Chairs are compensated financially for their work and are also released from some or all of their teaching obligations, the number of credit hours of release depending upon the number of faculty in the department or the requirements of professional accreditation bodies. Department chairs meet as a group monthly during the fall and spring semesters. In addition, in each school or unit, department chairs meet monthly with their respective deans and with the provost. Several times annually, chairs are invited to retreat with the provost to discuss issues of common concern relevant to the operation of academic departments and matters regarding the institution's

#### academic mission.

#### Student Governance

The Student Affairs Committee (SAC) is a standing committee of the university. The SAC method of appointment is similar to the university's Curriculum Committee and has a charge to make recommendations regarding the needs of the student population as well as social and cultural activities on campus. It should be noted that the SAC meets infrequently and is currently not active.

The <u>Student Government Association</u> (SGA) represents the undergraduate student body. The SGA advocates for students' rights and ensures that students contribute to the processes that govern aspects of campus life. The president of the SGA, the vice president and the student representative to the university's Board of Trustees (Student Trustee) are elected annually by undergraduates. The student trustee is a voting member of the Board of Trustees.

An integral part of the SGA is the 24-member student Senate, with three elected members from each class, four representatives of resident students and four representatives of commuter students, and four at-large representatives. Officers of the Senate include the SGA president/chairperson, SGA vice president/parliamentarian, treasurer, secretary, and public relations coordinator, all of whom are elected annually. The junior and senior class committees represent the interests of their respective classes and manage class funds and activities. The Senate's primary responsibilities are the allocation of funds to student organizations, and representation of the students' voices when working with administration and faculty. Weekly Senate meetings are open to the campus community. The <u>Executive Leadership Council (ELC)</u> consists of representatives from all SGA-recognized student organizations on campus including major organizations, special interest groups, class committees and club sports. The ELC provides feedback and suggestions on campus life, policies and procedures to Student Senate/SGA, as well as to the administration on campus.

The university has provided the opportunity for students to be involved in many areas of governance throughout the campus. Students have representation on numerous committees and groups, including, but not limited to, university governance committees, department curriculum committees, the Academic Ceremonies Committee, and the Campus Climate Committee. Students are also encouraged to participate in faculty hiring, teaching demonstrations, and numerous focus groups and survey opportunities that arise annually.

#### Appraisal

# Governing Board

In the 2021-2022 academic years, ALANA/BIPOC (African, Latine, Asian, Native American and/or Black, Indigenous, People of Color) representation, including the student trustee, on the Board of Trustees stood at 18%. This percentage is considerably lower than the 32% ALANA/BIPOC demographics of the university's student population and the 24% ALANA/BIPOC population of the greater Worcester community. In recent years, the trustees have adopted a by-law change that underscores the importance of diversity and inculsion matters in all decision-making.

Standard practices for the board include formal <u>on-board orientation</u> for all new Trustees, a DHE-mandated annual <u>training program</u> for every trustee, formal meeting and information opportunities for Trustees organized by the DHE, a dedicated staff liaison on the DHE commissioner's staff, and an annual retreat-style meeting and legal briefing from university counsel. The trustees have also developed an approach to work that relies on conducting most business through the standing committees which report to the full board. All these meetings are conducted under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' open meeting law. Examples of board effectiveness include trustee leadership, in coordination with university administration, amending the board's by-laws in November 2020 in order to formally charge the board, through its various working committees, to include consideration of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in their responsibilities. In actualizing that new charge, the board now reviews at each meeting a report from administration on specific DEI topics, including those related to university initiatives, bias incident responses, academic programming.

As with prior strategic planning development, the Board of Trustees had active participation in the university's process via a representative on the Steering Committee. This representation permitted both engagement in the planning as well as ongoing awareness of how that planning was proceeding, facilitating full and informed Trustee participation when the plan was presented in 2020 for final consideration and approval. Additionally, the Board oversees a strategic plan trust fund from which financial resources are applied toward achieving the strategic plan's goals and objectives.

Throughout the university's now two-plus year response to the COVID-19 pandemic, trustees sought regular updates on the university's planning and response to this public health challenge. In addition to regular deliberations and budget actions on the fiscal impact and supports available for this response, trustees proactively included pandemic-associated lessons in the university's strategic plan, and select representatives participated in the university's fall 2020 crisis response training in advance of the start of the first COVID-19 academic year.

As the university has returned to more traditional operations following the pandemic crisis response, the trustees have also been supportive of the administration's approach to addressing fiscal sustainability of the university and proactively have endorsed collaborative plans to find institutional efficiencies and new revenue to ensure continued financial strength, via the Financial Sustainability Task Force.

#### Internal Governance

#### **Administration**

The Administration has experienced stability in leadership at the upper levels in recent years, most notably in Academic Affairs, in contrast to the then-New England Association of Schools and Colleges review period preceding this NECHE review. Furthermore, creating a dedicated division of Enrollment Management has helped to strengthen undergraduate enrollment and recruitment, and created a new locus of action around retention. The Division of Enrollment Management, in partnership with the Division of Academic Affairs, has achieved the goal of maintaining the enrollment level, kept retention percentages relatively stable, and raised graduation rates. The four-year graduation rate has risen 5.5% (entering classes of 2007-2017), and the six-year graduation rate has risen by 14% (entering classes of 2005-2015). During the COVID-19 pandemic, enrollment numbers decreased by 7.5% for fall 2020 and an additional 4.5% for fall 2021. The Enrollment Management division is currently in a pandemic enrollment recovery phase to increase enrollment numbers back to the maintenance level.

The new Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR), under the University Advancement Division, developed a Standard Operating Procedure system for grants tracking and an ongoing review and evaluation process for its efforts in support of faculty and student research. Its director is also an active member of the university's Research Advisory Board. The OGSR is preparing to adopt a grants management software system and expand its staffing.

In the ten years since the university's last regional accreditation self-study, communication issues have been and are being addressed by several offices and departments throughout the university. The consolidation of communications, public relations and marketing under an <u>assistant vice president of Communications and Marketing</u> has allowed for greater clarity, centralized organization, and more thorough communication to the university as a whole. Newsletters have been started by different offices, making the issues they deal with more available to university personnel. However, bottom-to-top communication mechanisms have not been as robustly developed over that same time period.

#### Academic Governance

The structure of Worcester State University's academic governance, outlined in the MSCA collective bargaining agreement, has remained unchanged since the last site visit by the then-New England Association of Schools and Colleges and continues to serve as a shared governance system. The standing governance committees function well to evaluate proposals in a system shared amongst administration, faculty, and students. Since the 2012 self-study, the university has addressed the issue of proposals lingering in governance queues. The process has become more efficient in recent years due to a number of factors: a new online program for proposals, better scheduling, and greater efficiency within the committees, among them. Most proposals now work their way through the system within an academic year. With some key proposals, governance can be expedited so that important initiatives can move forward. Revisions to the Ethnic Studies program and the establishment of the MajorPlus initiative are two examples of expedited proposals. In addition, the university employs a part-time governance secretary to serve the AUC, CC and APC.

A new online process, facilitated through the CourseLeaf automated workflow software platform, allows governance proposals to be stored online where they can be searched and amended. The CourseLeaf system also structures the online course catalogs, so that proposals, once passed, are incorporated into the next catalog. New proposals are readily available to the governance committees and to any member of faculty and staff of the university. Yet problems with the proposal system still exist. Not all old proposals have been loaded into the system and, other than the Registrar's Office, no central repository of past proposals exists for those who might feel the need to research a policy or curriculum decision. The control of the system and interaction with the CourseLeaf vendor remains in the Enrollment Management Office, rather than Academic Affairs. Lastly, students do not have access to the system unless it is through an obliging member of the administration or faculty. This is true even for students who sit on AUC, CC, and APC. Therefore, students have additional challenges of access to governance, which may suppress their engagement in that process.

Moreover, confusion about proposals remains a problem for many. Members of the university community who wish to submit proposals have no formal means to receive assistance. Most faculty must go to their departments for guidance and students, as noted, may face significant hurdles. Students, if they know about governance at all, must seek out help in learning about governance, as well as getting access to the CourseLeaf system.

Finally, after three years of work, a new method was devised to make available to the university community the agendas and minutes of <u>AUC</u>, <u>CC</u>, and <u>APC</u>. That system has not, however, been activated. Agendas are sent via the university's daily "FacStaff" internal email newsletter, but the minutes are not distributed.

In terms of academic organization, the decanal structure serves as effective voices for the academic departments and is important to the flow of vertical communication within Academic Affairs. As of fall 2021, this school-based structure added a third dean, of Education, Liberal, and Interdisciplinary Studies, to the existing structure of the dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; a newly renamed dean of Science, Technology, and Health; and dean of the Graduate School within the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education. The Interdisciplinary Studies Department, within the new unit, was created to acknowledge the work over several years to address the increasing number and complexity of interdisciplinary efforts at the university. Further, the Teacher Education Department had recently participated in a review by the Commonwealth's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which had noted that the other Massachusetts state universities had education programming supported by a full dean, whose responsibilities include creating a major pipeline initiative for ALANA/BIPOC students in teacher education. As well, efforts in both STEM and nursing education in Central Massachusetts, including the absorption of <u>Becker College's baccalaureate</u> <u>nursing</u> students when that institution closed, added to the scope of responsibilities within the now dissolved School of Education, Health, and Natural Sciences.

#### Student Representation

The Student Affairs Committee, one of the prescribed standing governance committees, is still convened. However, its responsibilities have been parceled out to offices within the Division of Student Affairs or addressed through other non-standing committees, effectively removing those deliberations and actions from the shared governance system.

Undergraduate students have designated seats in committees and groups throughout the university, such as university governance committees, department curriculum committees, and awards committees. Students may be part of faculty hiring, teaching demonstrations and provide feedback as part of focus groups and surveys. There is no student representation on the President's Cabinet.

Despite the number of opportunities, students lack access to a centralized and accessible way for learning about open slots on committees. This dynamic leads to the student body being represented only by a small portion of the students who each tend to serve on multiple committees. This dynamic potentially creates an incomplete picture of student concerns and opinions and over-reliance on a few students. Also, since only undergraduate students currently pay the student activity fee, only undergraduate students are allowed to participate in student organizations, including the SGA and Student Senate. Access to Student Senate minutes and agendas is provided at each weekly meeting and can be requested through the Student Senate or Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Development. There is no graduate student governance structure, so this population is largely unrepresented. The Graduate School is working to launch a Graduate Student Association in the 2022-2023 academic year.

# Equity

Considerable progress has been made on identifying and focusing on equity as a campus-wide concern, including within governance. In February 2016 the President's Office laid out <u>five points of action for a more</u> <u>inclusive campus</u> (diversity in hiring, cultural competency training, cross-racial interaction, contextualizing classrooms, and student engagement), which anticipated the Department of Higher Education's Equity Agenda (2019-present). The Board of Trustees established an Equity and Campus Climate subcommittee in 2020 and have diversity, equity, and inclusion as a reporting directive for all its subcommittees as of Jan. 19, 2021.

The internal shared governance structure is one pathway for addressing these community concerns about <u>diversity, equity, and inclusion; it</u> is part of the larger campus renewal of interest in these and related issues. Five entities that relate to these points of action have been created:

- Campus Climate Committee, in fall 2016
- Gender Identity Task Force, in 2017, which later became the LGBTQ+ Advisory Group, and joined the Equal Opportunity Office in 2019
- Bias Incident Response Team, in fall 2018
- A re-launched Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Advisory Committee, in fall 2018
- Racial Equity and Justice Institute (REJI) Team, in fall 2020

Activities of these groups include survey creation, providing consultation on campus initiatives, and crafting recommendations for university-wide action by the Campus Climate Committee and making recommendations for an array of student affairs and academic functions and policies to increase equity, particularly with regard to race, by the **REJI** Team. The LGBTQ+ Advisory Group has conducted an equity audit of LGBTQ+ services and has implemented LGBTQ+-friendly policies, such as those that allow students and employees to be listed by a preferred name and addressed by chosen pronouns. However, members of the Worcester State University community have little awareness of the pathways for bringing concerns related to equity to the attention of these entities, which diminishes the committees' ability to respond and plan effectively.

# COVID-19 and Organization and Governance

Worcester State University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, when President Maloney convened a group of individuals from areas of the campus related to the operations of the university during the pandemic. It was unclear whether the campus would close, and if so, for how long. Once it became clear that the situation would be long term, and potentially extend into the fall 2020 semester, the president created nine working groups to develop the <u>Safe Return Plan</u>.

These groups included 145 faculty and staff, and focused on areas such as academics, contingency plans, communication, student recruitment and retention, external relations, federal stimulus coordination, use of facilities, mental health and well-being, and wrap-around student support.

In the fall 2020 semester, these groups were condensed into seven: Academic Planning; Budget and Human Resource; Communications; Health, Safety and Student Life; Resources and Fundraising; and Student Academic Support and Retention; and Assessment.

In summer 2020, the Strategic Plan Review Committee, led by the assistant vice president for Assessment and Planning, was charged with <u>assessing the university's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and issuing recommendations</u> for moving forward. That committee, composed of faculty, staff, and students, reviewed materials from each of the Safe Return working groups and met with leadership throughout the spring of 2021.

# Projections

# Follow Through on Board of Trustees' Goals for Increased Diversity Among Its Membership and Attention to Equity Throughout its Committee Work

Starting with new trustee appointments to begin in the 2023-24 academic year, the university will ensure that its lists of recommend candidates to the state's Public Education Nominating Council include at least 50% ALANA/BIPOC leaders for each trusteeship vacancy. By the end of the 2022-23 academic year, the Board will identify achievable goals for its diversity and equity work and establish a timeline for achieving those goals, with annual assessment of progress.

# Continue Promising Work on Communication within Communications and Marketing, Academic Affairs, and Administrative Offices.

Communication should be viewed as an ongoing iterative process, rather than an achievable end goal. Constant review and assessment of communication issues will help the university maintain a transparent, efficient, and equitable ethos for all members of its community. Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Office of Communications and Marketing will evaluate communication pathways on an annual basis to identify areas that require improvement, seek input from the university community, and establish new communication avenues where needed.

# Make Governance More Transparent and Accessible

By the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, the Offices of Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs will make the online repository/archive of proposals and minutes active and available to all members of the Worcester State University community; grant students access to the CourseLeaf automated workflow system; address any ongoing communication problems within academic governance; and establish, a university-wide, sustainable process for making governance agendas, proposals, and minutes available to the university community.

#### Increase Student Representation in Governance

The Division of Student Affairs, Division of Academic Affairs, and Division of Graduate and Continuing Education will establish a centralized and accessible way for all students, including graduate students, to learn about and join available committee opportunities by the start of academic year 2024-2025. The Division of Student Affairs will share minutes for SGA and Student Senate on the student organization website by the start of academic year 2024-2025. The Division of Graduate and Continuing Education will develop a graduate student governance structure by the start of academic year 2024-2025.

### Build on Campus-Wide and State Higher Education Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness Priorities

By the start of academic year 2024-2025, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will publicize to members of the Worcester State University community the pathways for bringing equity concerns forward to be addressed.

#### Standard 4: The Academic Program (Summary - Degree-Seeking Enrollment and Degrees)

#### Fall Enrollment\* by location and modality, as of Census Date

Degree Level/ Location & Modality	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	Clinical doctorates	Professional	M.D., J.D.,	Ph.D.	Total Degree-
Main Campus FT		3,572	122					3,694
Main Campus PT		699	427					1,126
Other Principal Campus FT								0
Other Principal Campus PT								0
Branch campuses FT								0
Branch campuses PT								0
Other Locations FT								0
Other Locations PT								0
Overseas Locations FT								0
Overseas Locations FT								0
Distance education FT			118					118
Distance education PT								0
Correspondence FT								0
Correspondence PT								0
Low-Residency FT								0
Low-Residency PT								0
Unduplicated Headcount Total	0	4,719	667	0	0	0	0	5,386
Total FTE		5,171	622					5,793.00
		T I	4T 1					
Enter FTE definition:		Total credits/12	Total credits/6					
Degrees Awarded, Most Recent Year		1,024	244					1,268

Notes:

1) Enrollment numbers should include all students in the named categories, including students in continuing education and students enrolled through any contractual relationship.

2) Each student should be recorded in only one category, e.g., students enrolled in low-residency programs housed on the main campus should be recorded only in the category "low-residency programs."

3) Please refer to form 3.2, "Locations and Modalities," for definitions of locations and instructional modalities.

\* For programs not taught in the fall, report an analogous term's enrollment as of its Census Date.

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

#### Standard 4: The Academic Program (Summary - Non-degree seeking Enrollment and Awards)

#### Fall Enrollment\* by location and modality, as of Census Date

Degree Level/ Location & Modality	Title IV-Eligible Certificates: Students Seeking Certificates	Non-Matriculated Students	Visiting Students	Total Non- degree-Seeking	Total degree-seeking (from previous page)	Grand total
Main Campus FT	33	8		41	3,693	3,734
Main Campus PT	53	502		555	1,125	1,680
Other Principal Campus FT				0		0
Other Principal Campus PT				0		0
Branch campuses FT				0		0
Branch campuses PT				0		0
Other Locations FT				0		0
Other Locations PT				0		0
Overseas Locations FT				0		0
Overseas Locations FT				0		0
Distance education FT				0		0
Distance education PT				0		0
Correspondence FT				0		0
Correspondence PT				0		0
Low-Residency FT				0		0
Low-Residency PT				0		0
Unduplicated Headcount Total	86	510	0	596		596
Total FTE	106	109		215		215.00
	Total Credits/6	(UD Credits/12) + (GD Credits/6) /2				
Enter FTE definition:						
Certificates Awarded, Most	37					

Notes:

1) Enrollment numbers should include all students in the named categories, including students in continuing education and students enrolled through any contractual relationship.

2) Each student should be recorded in only one category, e.g., students enrolled in low-residency programs housed on the main campus should be recorded only in the category "low-residency programs."

3) Please refer to form 3.2, "Locations and Modalities," for definitions of locations and instructional modalities.

\* For programs not taught in the fall, report an analogous term's enrollment as of its Census Date.

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

#### Standard 4: The Academic Program (Headcount by UNDERGRADUATE Major)

	Number of	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal
Certificate in Addictions Counseling         36         1         3         1           Undergendate Nondegree Lacensure, Early Childh         36         1         1         2         1           Undergendate Nondegree Lacensure, Secondary E         30         1         1         2         1           Total         2         1         5         5           sociate (add more rows as needed)         1 <t< th=""><th>, as of Census Date credits*</th><th>(Fall 2018)</th><th>(Fall 2019)</th><th>(Fall 2020)</th><th>(Fall 2021)</th><th>(Fall 2022)</th></t<>	, as of Census Date credits*	(Fall 2018)	(Fall 2019)	(Fall 2020)	(Fall 2021)	(Fall 2022)
Undergraduate Nondegree Licensure, Elementary361121Undegraduate Nondegree Licensure, Secondary E30112151Total2153111 <t< th=""><th>more rows as needed)</th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th></t<>	more rows as needed)					
Undergreative Undergreative Nondegreative Sociart (add more rows as needed)11 <td>ddictions Counseling 36</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td></td>	ddictions Counseling 36				1	
Undergraduate Nondegree Licensure, Secondary I361121212Toal215333333sociare (add more rows as needed)21533311 <t< td=""><td>Nondegree Licensure, Early Childho 36</td><td>1</td><td></td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td></td></t<>	Nondegree Licensure, Early Childho 36	1		3	1	
Control         2         1         5         3           Total         2         1         5         3           sociate (add more rows as needed)         1 <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> <td></td>		1	1	2		
social (add more rows as needed)Image: colspan="2">Image: colspan="2">social (add more rows as needed)Image: colspan="2">Image: colspan="2"Image: col	Nondegree Licensure, Secondary E 30	1			1	
social (add more rows as needed)Image: colspan="2">Image: colspan="2">social (add more rows as needed)Image: colspan="2">Image: colspan="2"Image: col						
Image: second	nore rows as nooded)	2	1	5	3	
Total         0         0         0         0           ccalaureate (add more rows as needed)         120         427         375         330         300           Biology         120         427         375         330         300         1           Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65         1           Business Administration         120         76         73         74         59         1           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59         1           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127         1           Computer Science         120         466         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         466         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         416         141         130         128         1           Economics         120         41         33         36         31         1           Elementary Education         120         99         106         109         87         1						
Total         0         0         0         0           Biology         120         427         375         330         300           Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65           Biotechnology         120         1073         807         737         724           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59           Communication         120         219         224         212         168           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         40         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120						
Total         0         0         0         0           Biology         120         427         375         330         300           Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65           Biotechnology         120         1073         807         737         724           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59           Communication         120         219         224         212         168           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         40         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120						
Total         0         0         0         0           ccalaureate (add more rows as needed)         120         427         375         330         300           Biology         120         427         375         330         300         1           Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65         1           Business Administration         120         76         73         74         59         1           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59         1           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127         1           Computer Science         120         466         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         466         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         416         141         130         128         1           Economics         120         41         33         36         31         1           Elementary Education         120         99         106         109         87         1						
Total         0         0         0         0           ccalaureate (add more rows as needed)         120         427         375         330         300           Biology         120         427         375         330         300         1           Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65         1           Business Administration         120         76         73         74         59         1           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59         1           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127         1           Computer Science         120         466         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         466         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         416         141         130         128         1           Economics         120         41         33         36         31         1           Elementary Education         120         99         106         109         87         1						
Total         0         0         0         0           ccalaureate (add more rows as needed)         120         427         375         330         300           Biology         120         427         375         330         300         1           Biotechnology         120         76         735         74         59         1           Biotess Administration         120         76         73         74         59         1           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59         1           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127         1           Computer Science         120         466         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         416         141         130         128         1           Economics         120         41         33         36         31         1         1           English         120         99         106         109         87         1         1         1         1         1         1         1         1         1         1						
cecalaureate (add more rows as needed)         120         427         375         330         300         1           Biology         120         101         96         80         65         1           Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65         1           Business Administration         120         733         807         737         724         5           Communication         120         219         224         212         168         120           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127         1           Communication Disorders         120         466         431         399         352         1           Criminal Jusice         120         446         431         399         352         1           Early Childhood Education         120         41         133         36         31         1           Elementry Education         120         41         33         36         31         1           Elementry Education         120         60         71         65         51         1           Gorgaphy         120         60		-		-		
Biology         120         427         375         330         300           Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65           Business Administration         120         773         807         737         724           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59           Communication         120         76         73         74         59           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         160         163         143         128           Criminal Justice         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Gropphy         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           Health Educati		0	0	0	0	
Biotechnology         120         101         96         80         65           Business Administration         120         793         807         737         724           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59           Communication         120         219         224         212         168           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         160         143         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         410         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Fayironmental Science         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         24         21         13         142 <td>,</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td>	,	1				
Business Administration         120         793         807         737         724           Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59           Communication         120         219         224         212         168           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         197         172         206         188           Criminal Juscice         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         09         106         109         87           Economics         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Heath Education         120         96         87         79         52           Histo						
Chemistry         120         76         73         74         59           Communication         120         219         224         212         168           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         197         172         206         188           Crimial Justice         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         41         33         36         31           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Heath Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studie						
Communication         120         219         224         212         168           Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         197         172         206         188           Criminal Justice         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         90         75         64         50           Ma						
Communication Disorders         120         160         163         143         127           Computer Science         120         197         172         206         188           Criminal Justice         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58           Mathematics         120         90         75         64         50           Math for						
Computer Science         120         197         172         206         188           Criminal Justice         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58           Mathematics         120         44         42         1         1           Nutring         120         32         339         312         357           Occupational Studies						
Criminal Justice         120         466         431         399         352           Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58           Mathmatics         120         90         75         64         50           Mathematics         120         90         75         64         50           Natural Science         120         32         339         312         357           Occupational Studies						· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Early Childhood Education         120         160         141         130         128           Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58           Mathematics         120         90         75         64         50           Natural Science         120         44         4         2         1           Nutraing         120         32         339         312         357           Occupational Studies         120         460         474         484         487           Public Health         <						
Economics         120         41         33         36         31           Elementary Education         120         199         215         230         203           English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58           Mathematics         120         90         75         64         50           Math for Elementary Education         120         2         3         2         1           Nursing         120         332         339         312         357           Occupational Studies         120         460         474         484         487           Public Health         120         227         235         237         198           Sociology						
Elementary Education120199215230203English1209910610987Environmental Science12060716551Geography12020242113Health Education12096877952History120134133132113Liberal Studies12041626658Mathematics12090756450Natural Science1202321Nursing120332339312357Occupational Studies120460474484487Public Health12027235237198Sociology120979483591Urban Studies12050534136						
English         120         99         106         109         87           Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58           Mathematics         120         90         75         64         50           Math for Elementary Education         120         24         4         2         1           Nursing         120         32         339         312         357           Occupational Studies         120         460         474         484         487           Public Health         120         27         235         237         198           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59           Spanish         120         27         27         18         15           Urban Studies         120						
Environmental Science         120         60         71         65         51           Geography         120         20         24         21         13         14           Health Education         120         96         87         79         52         113           History         120         134         133         132         113         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58         113           Mathematics         120         90         75         64         50         113           Natural Science         120         2         3         2         1         114           Nursing         120         332         339         312         357         115           Occupational Studies         120         116         114         114         100         116           Psychology         120         267         235         237         198         118           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59         118         155           Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26						
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Health Education         120         96         87         79         52           History         120         134         133         132         113           Liberal Studies         120         41         62         66         58           Mathematics         120         90         75         64         50           Math for Elementary Education         120         2         3         2         1           Natural Science         120         44         4         2         1         1           Nursing         120         332         339         312         357         1           Occupational Studies         120         116         114         114         100         1           Psychology         120         267         235         237         198         1           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59         1           Spanish         120         27         27         18         15         1           Urban Studies         120         50         53         41         36         2						
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Mathematics12090756450Math for Elementary Education1202321Natural Science1204421Nursing120332339312357Occupational Studies120116114114100Psychology120227235237198Sociology12097948359Spanish120272711815Urban Studies12050534136						
Math for Elementary Education         120         2         3         2         1           Natural Science         120         4         4         2         1         1           Nursing         120         332         339         312         357         1           Occupational Studies         120         116         114         114         100         1           Psychology         120         460         474         484         487         1           Public Health         120         227         235         237         198         1           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59         1           Urban Studies         120         277         271         18         15         1           Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26         1           Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36         1						
Natural Science         120         4         4         2         1           Nursing         120         332         339         312         357           Occupational Studies         120         116         114         114         100           Psychology         120         460         474         484         487           Public Health         120         227         235         237         198           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59           Spanish         120         27         27         18         15           Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26           Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36						
Nursing         120         332         339         312         357           Occupational Studies         120         116         114         114         100         100           Psychology         120         460         474         484         487         100           Public Health         120         227         235         237         198         100           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59         100           Spanish         120         27         27         118         115         100           Urban Studies         120         50         53         41         36         100	/					
Occupational Studies         120         116         114         110         100           Psychology         120         460         474         484         487         100           Public Health         120         227         235         237         198         100           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59         100           Spanish         120         277         277         118         115         100           Urban Studies         120         52         460         360         260         100           Visual and Performing Arts         120         500         53         411         36         100						
Psychology         120         460         474         484         487           Public Health         120         227         235         237         198           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59           Spanish         120         27         27         18         15           Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26           Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36						
Public Health         120         227         235         237         198           Sociology         120         97         94         83         59           Spanish         120         27         27         18         15           Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26           Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36						
Sociology         120         97         94         83         59           Spanish         120         27         27         18         15           Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26           Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36						
Spanish         120         27         27         18         15           Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26           Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36						
Urban Studies         120         52         46         36         26           Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36		-				
Visual and Performing Arts         120         50         53         41         36						
		-				
	0					
Total 4,996 4,919 4,645 4,258						4,0

\* Enter here the number of credits students must complete in order to earn the credential (e.g., 69 credits in an A.S. in Nursing)

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below Projection based on average percentage change from past years.

	Number of	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goa
	credits*	(Fall 2018)	(Fall 2019)	(Fall 2020)	(Fall 2021)	(Fall 2022)
ster's (add more rows as needed)	cicuits	(1 all 2010)	(1 all 2017)	(1 all 2020)	(1 all 2021)	(1 all 2022)
MA - English	33	9	11	8	10	
MA - History	33	18	15	8	3	
MA - Spanish	36	7	6	10	3	
ME - General	33	9	9	11	7	
ME - Early Childhood Education	33	2				
ME - Early Childhood Education, Accel Online	33			22	35	
ME - Early Childhood Education, Lic	33	11	10	5	3	
ME - Elementary Education, Accel Online	33			20	28	
ME - Elementary Education, Lic	33	16	21	15	2	
ME - English As a Second Language	33	4	3	4	4	
ME - Health Education	33	1				
ME - Middle School Education	33	18	22	21	15	
ME - Moderate Disabilities	33	17	12	12	17	
ME - Moderate Disabilities, Accel Online	33	7	4	30	41	
ME - Reading	33	11	9	5	5	
ME - Reading, Lic ME - School Leadership & Ed Admin	33	11	1	23	5	
ME - School Leadership & Ed Admin ME - School Leadership & Ed Admin, Lic	33	62	17	33	38	
ME - School Leadership & Ed Admin, Lic ME - Secondary Education	33	02 11	17	33	28	
ME - Secondary Education ME - Secondary Education, Lic	33	31	25	9	20	
Master of Occupational Therapy	61	62	73	71	67	
Master of Public Administration and Policy	36		15	2	6	
Master of Public Management	36			2	2	
MS - Biotechnology	33	19	19	11	11	
MS - Health Care Administration	36	9	13	6	2	
MS - Management	33	58	48	42	41	
MS - Non-Profit Management	33	10	11	16	14	
MS - Nursing - Community and Public Health	42	21	25	40	31	
MS - Nursing - Nurse Educator	42	34	33	31	20	
MS - Nursing - Nurse Educator, Accel Online					9	
MS - Nursing - Population & Public Health					11	
MS - Speech - Language Pathology Total	39	80 527	86 491	90 580	84 549	
torate (add more rows as needed)						
Total t Professional (add more rows as needed)		0	0	0	0	0
Total		0	0	0	0	0
er; specify (add more rows as needed)		·				
Education Specialist - Leadership	32	10		10		
Education Specialist - School Psychology	39	42	41	42	39	
Post-Bacc Cert for English As a Second Language, Lic Post-Bacc Cert for Leadership, Lic	30	10	8	5	8	
P P	30	12		2	-	
Post-Bacc Cert for Middle School Education, Lic Post-Bacc Cert for Moderate Disabilities, Ini Lic	30	12	6 10	2 18	5	
Post-Bace Cert for Moderate Disabilities, Ini Lic	30	2	10	18	9	
UNI-DALL VETLIOT MODETALE SDECIAL NEEDS 101 L4C	-	27	17	19	14	
			1/	19	14	
Post-Bace Cert for Secondary Education, Lic	30	27			4	
Post-Bace Cert for Secondary Education, Lic Post-Master's Cert in Nursing - Nurse Educator Total	30	106	82	86	1 76	

# Standard 4: The Academic Program (Headcount by GRADUATE Major)

For Fall Term, as of Census Date

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below Projection based on average percentage change from past years.

#### Standard 4: The Academic Program (Credit Hours Generated and Information Literacy)

### Credit Hours Generated By Department or Comparable Academic Unit

	3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current	Next Year
	Prior	Prior	Prior	Year	Forward (goal)
	(FY 2018)	(FY2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)
dergraduate (add more rows as needed)		1	i		
Biology	10,108	9,837	8,446	7,229	6,4
Business Admin & Economics	14,882	14,813	13,273	11,864	11,0
Chemistry	5,337	5,233	4,513	3,880	3,4
Communication	6,315	6,215	5,918	4,796	4,3
Communication Disorders	2,900	2,743	2,785	2,438	2,3
Computer Science	3,771	3,422	3,381	3,582	3,5
Criminal Justice	6,137	6,180	5,619	4,575	4,1
Earth, Environment & Physics	6,662	6,851	6,003	4,770	4,2
Education	5,387	5,725	5,678	4,694	4,5
English	9,683	9,659	9,265	7,697	7,1
Health Science	9,446	9,559	8,666	6,782	6,1
History & Political Science	11,011	11,142	10,216	8,815	8,2
Interdisciplinary	525	700	616	540	ţ
Mathematics	8,046	7,192	6,603	5,055	4,3
Nursing	3,637	4,005	4,100	4,154	4,3
Occupational Therapy	2,103	2,002	1,911	1,599	1,4
Philosophy	2,646	2,940	2,774	2,022	1,8
Psychology	12,217	12,692	12,426	10,384	9,8
Sociology	5,946	5,435	5,547	3,639	3,1
Urban Studies	2,536	2,480	2,188	1,407	1,1
Visual & Performing Arts	5,941	5,958	4,879	4,104	3,0
World Languages	2,058	2,155	1,896	1,270	1,0
aduate (add more rows as needed) Biology	388	246	258	101	
Business Admin & Economics	943	781	750	468	3
Chemistry	3		1		
Communication Disorders	1,607	1,808	1,858	1,069	ç
Education	4,669	4,724	5,332	3,020	2,7
English	261	300	207	84	,
Health Science	249	153	48	3	
History & Political Science	447	297	198	48	
Mathematics	111	72	111	42	
Nursing	924	911	859	725	(
Occupational Therapy	903	1,107	1,122	612	5
Urban Studies	150	253	279	193	2
World Languages	216	183	111	72	
Total	10,871	10,835	11,134	6,437	5,73
	- ,	-,*	, - ,	-,'	-,-
formation Literacy Sessions					
Main campus					
Sessions embedded in a class	143	130	86	105	1
Free-standing sessions			6	5	
Branch/other locations					
Sessions embedded in a class					
Free-standing sessions					
Online sessions					
L					

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below Projection based on average percentage change from past years.

#### STANDARD FOUR: THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

#### Description

Worcester State University's <u>undergraduate</u> and <u>graduate</u> catalogs and website show 38 undergraduate majors and 32 graduate programs, along with eight fully <u>online graduate programs</u>, open to enrollment. The same sources show 47 undergraduate minors offered to students. Since implementation of the university's signature undergraduate initiative, <u>MajorPlus</u>, wherein most undergraduate students enrolling from fall 2021 forward are required to complete both a major and a minor or a second major, the number of minor programs has steadily increased.

<u>Undergraduate programs</u> are offered primarily through 22 academic departments housed in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Science, Technology, and Health, or a smaller, and recently formed, academic unit encompassing Education, Liberal, and Interdisciplinary Studies. <u>Eleven undergraduate degree programs</u> are offered through the university's Continuing Education arm of the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education; these programs are designed for completion in evening time blocks. All <u>graduate programs</u> are offered through the Graduate School of the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, with graduate program coordinators who provide links back to the appropriate academic department.

All undergraduate and graduate degree programs are in recognized fields of study. Undergraduate majors require a minimum of 120 credits for <u>degree completion</u>; sample degree maps (<u>Health Sciences</u> <u>Psychology</u>) published by the university show the expectation that students will complete undergraduate programs in four years. Required credit levels for <u>graduate degree programs</u> vary from 30 to 72, plus required clinical and practicum hours in some programs, with appropriately varying expectations for time to degree completion. The university publishes requirements for undergraduate and graduate degree completion in its catalogs.

With the exception of the individual, self-designed liberal studies major, explained later in discussion of Standard Four, undergraduate programs are constituted from the <u>Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum</u> (LASC, the university's undergraduate general education program), the major or concentration, and elective courses. As noted above, along with their primary major, undergraduate students enrolling from fall 2021 forward choose a minor or second major as part of degree completion requirements. The university has <u>internally published guidelines</u> for ensuring coherence in minor programs. The structure of individual undergraduate degree and minor programs is illustrated in each program's catalog pages. Program-level student learning outcomes for all undergraduate degree programs, with the exception of the undergraduate major in Liberal Studies, are published in the university's 2022-23 undergraduate catalog and are available through the institution's website through a link to the catalog.

Graduate programs show coherent designs and demonstrable concern for the level of achievement expected from degree candidates. Coherence in any graduate program is demonstrated primarily through its overall structure, course-level content, and quality of its capstone/thesis projects or outcomes from practicum/applied experiences. Program coherence may also be seen in requirements specified by professional accreditation bodies, where applicable. As shown in the graduate catalog, capstone/thesis/portfolio projects or practicum/applied experiences are required in the vast majority of graduate offerings. Most recently, the institution, with permission from the Commission, has begun offering four fully online graduate Master of Education and two fully online Master of Science in Nursing programs, plus two fully online post-master's certificates in nursing. While these programs are designed for accelerated time to degree completion, they bear the same marks of coherence that characterize the university's more traditionally offered graduate programs. Program-level student learning outcomes for graduate programs are not published in the university's 2022-23 graduate

catalog and are not available on the institution's website; they are expected to be published on the website in fall 2022 and to appear in the 2023-2024 graduate catalog.

Undergraduate or graduate programs are planned, overseen, evaluated, and improved to assure that the academic quality and integrity of the programs meet Worcester State University's standards of academic excellence. Programs are assessed and improved on a regular basis to assure this quality.

#### Assuring Academic Quality

Oversight of undergraduate academic programming is structured primarily by the collective bargaining agreement negotiated between the faculty union, the <u>Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA)</u>, and the BHE/Council of Presidents of the Massachusetts State University System. Curricula are developed and approved first in academic departments, then submitted to the standing university-level Curriculum Committee. <u>Approval by the Curriculum Committee moves</u> curricular proposals – whether for individual courses or entire programs – to the standing university-level All University Committee (AUC). AUC action on such proposals is forwarded to the university's president for final review. Academic policies are put through a similar review and approval pathway, with the standing university-level Academic Policies Committee in place of the Curriculum Committee. Roles and responsibilities with regard to curricular oversight for the standing university-level committees and for the university's president are detailed in Article VII of the <u>MSCA CBA</u>. Through its description of the committees' compositions, Article VII shows that undergraduate academic governance is shared among faculty, administration, and students.

Oversight of graduate academic programming operates primarily through the <u>Graduate Education Council</u> (<u>GEC</u>) of the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, which receives both curricular and policy proposals from individual departments, reviews and approves (or declines) such proposals, and forwards them to the university's provost and president for final review. Thus, with regard to graduate academic programming and policies, the GEC functions in place of the Curriculum Committee, Academic Policies Committee, and AUC. Although the <u>Division of Graduate and Continuing Education</u> operates through its own collective bargaining agreement, the role and responsibilities of the GEC are detailed in Article VII of the MSCA CBA. Again, through its description of the GEC's compositions, Article VII shows that graduate academic governance is shared among faculty, administration, and students.

Consonant with university policies and procedures, academic programs undergo a five-year review process; selected programs are reviewed also by discipline-specific accreditors or by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As detailed in program review guideline documents supporting this self-study, academic program reviews are designed and carried out, and the main report prepared, by faculty members within a department. Reports are designed around one or two departmentally chosen research questions. Sample reports included as documents supporting this self-study show that the academic program review process, as described in institutional guidelines, examines "(1) the extent to which programs are meeting their goals and outcomes, (2) the relationship of the program outcomes to program, school, and University missions, (3) dimensions of program quality, and (4) the effective and efficient use of University resources." The program review process includes an external perspective. In cases where programs are externally or professionally accredited, the external perspective is that of the external or professional accrediting body, through its periodic review of a program or programs. In cases where programs are not externally or professionally accredited, departments nominate faculty experts from other institutions; nominations are reviewed by a department's dean or the associate vice president for Academic Affairs, who finalizes arrangements with the external reviewer and provides the reviewer with a form for filing the reviewer's report.

Academic planning is evident at the institutional level in the university's strategic plans. The 2015-2020 strategic plan, "<u>Vision 2020</u>," named academic initiatives in four of its five main goals. "<u>Beyond 150: Lead, Succeed, Engage</u>," the current strategic plan, continues this pattern, with academic initiatives named in four of its six main goals. Academic planning is also evident within individual academic departments, schools, or other units; the results of this planning are registered as they are implemented and approved through governance committees. For example, a 2017-18 initiative within the School of Humanities and Social Sciences to expand students' opportunities to follow pathways from undergraduate to graduate/professional education by developing "3+3" articulation agreements with the University of Massachusetts' and Western New England University's law schools prompted re-examination of the university's pre-law minor program and a cooperative revision of this program by the departments of philosophy and of history and political science. The revised program was approved in the 2021-2022 academic year. For interdisciplinary programs and the university's First-Year Seminar program, the university uses advisory boards to help steer academic planning and quality decisions. Whether at the institutional level or below, academic planning is also influenced by initiatives put forward by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education – as seen, for example, in the case of the university's expanding <u>Dual Enrollment</u> and <u>Early College programming</u>.

Institutional correspondence with the Commission shows that Worcester State University is applying to expand the scope of its fully online graduate degree offerings. At this time, the university offers six fully online master's degree programs in education and nursing. It has engaged the online platform management firm Academic Partnerships to help recruit and support online students working towards a master's degree in these programs. Recruitment started in early 2020. Currently, there are more than 200 students matriculated into these programs. Academic Partnerships has provided faculty support in transitioning traditional face-to-face classes into an online, accelerated format. They have also assisted in developing a "carousel" of courses – that is, suggesting to the Graduate School which classes to offer, and when, in order to maximize students' chances of completing programs in an efficient and timely manner. In addition, Academic Partnerships has invested in marketing these programs and provided student support to assist with registration, payments, logins, and other logistical tasks. This additional support has proven helpful, as the Graduate School has seen 41 students who started in or after early 2020 complete degrees. Assessment of how effectively these fully online programs are operating and meeting expected program learning outcomes can be found in Standards Two, Five, and Seven of this self-study report, as requested by the Commission in correspondence dated May 20, 2019. Although the university partners with an outside agency to help recruit and retain students in fully online programs, the curricula of those programs remain under the control of the institution and its academic departments.

Only rarely has the institution closed degree programs. After the 2014-2015 academic year, the university discontinued the Bachelor of Science in Natural Science, and the Department of Earth, Environment, and Physics began offering the Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. After the 2020-2021 academic year, the university discontinued the Bachelor of Science in Health Education, and the Department of Health Sciences began offering a concentration in Health Education within the Bachelor of Science in Public Health program. In both cases, students were allowed to finish their degrees without interruption or were advised into the new program. The institution has discontinued a handful of undergraduate minor programs, including the health fitness minor, and concentrations within majors, including the interdisciplinary concentration in nuclear medicine technology and the industrial organizational psychology concentration within the psychology major, due to low demand or insufficient resources. In these cases, students were allowed to finish the minor programs or concentrations without interruption.

For off-campus sites, such as the <u>Sagamore Road Studios</u> located at the Worcester Center for Crafts, and the May Street Building, Worcester State University has or had written agreements in place governing the use of these spaces. For the May Street Building, the institution has signed a memorandum of understanding with WSF Real Estate, Inc., an affiliated entity of the Worcester State Foundation, that provides the building to

the university for its use. A written agreement, publicly available, continues with the Worcester Center for Crafts.

As part of the university's <u>Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum</u>, its undergraduate general education program, students are required to complete two courses (six credit hours) in university-level writing in English. Writing support for all students is provided through the <u>Writing Center</u>, which has a faculty director who supervises a group of specially trained student writing consultants. Students are also required to complete two courses (six credit hours) in university-level quantitative reasoning, one course of which must have an MA (Mathematics) prefix. Support for all students in this learning domain is provided through the <u>Math Center</u>, which has two faculty directors supervising trained mathematics tutors.

#### Undergraduate Degree Programs

The university's <u>undergraduate catalog</u> describes the requirements for baccalaureate degrees. Requirements include completion of a minimum of 120 semester hour credits, with a minimum overall grade point average of 2.0 and a minimum grade point average of at least 2.0 in all departmental and ancillary courses in the major. Beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year, newly matriculating first-time students and transfer students bringing 45 or fewer transfer credits are required also to complete a minor course of study or a second major, in line with the university's undergraduate <u>MajorPlus</u> initiative.

Some majors, such as nursing or education, set higher grade point average standards for certain courses. No more than 15 credits in total and no more than two courses in any semester may be taken on a pass/fail basis. Students are required to complete the <u>majority of credits</u> toward their major and minor (if elected) at Worcester State University, and 30 of the last 40 credits toward their degree must be taken at Worcester State University. The catalog identifies the number of credits that can be awarded based on benchmark levels of performance on specific <u>Advanced Placement</u>, High-Level <u>International Baccalaureate</u>, <u>and College Level Examination Program</u> exams. The university also accepts some military credits earned in Basic Training, and is in the process of determining how to award advanced placement in language courses for students matriculating with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' new <u>Seal of Biliteracy award</u>. Students who complete their undergraduate degrees in six years or fewer must meet the degree requirements in place in the year they graduate. Students seeking second baccalaureate degrees are awarded up to, but not exceeding, 90 credits from their previous degrees; application of prior credits toward the second baccalaureate degree is subject to approval by the university's <u>Office of Admission</u> for elective courses and the department chair for any credits applied toward the major for the second degree.

Undergraduate degree programs are constituted from the college's Liberal Arts and Science Curriculum (LASC) and a major curriculum. The exception is the individual, self-designed liberal studies major, which requires students to complete the LASC curriculum, plus a minimum of 39 credits falling within two categories: an established minor and a second minor, concentration, or self-designed group of courses. For all major curricula, the courses required by LASC provide students with a substantial and coherent introduction to broader domains of knowledge and methodologies in written and oral communication in English; scientific and quantitative reasoning; critical analysis and logical thinking. Atop this substantial and coherent introduction to broader domains of knowledge, the major curriculum or the two categories of study required for the Liberal Studies program requires students to master at least one disciplinary area. As noted above, prior to fall 2021, minors or second majors were optional, but the <u>MajorPlus</u> initiative now requires entering first-year students and transfer students with 45 credits or fewer to complete either a minor or a second major. Students who have previously earned a bachelor's degree and are enrolling in a second bachelor's degree program are exempt from the MajorPlus requirement. Students are encouraged to pursue topics of individual interest and to gain research or other practical skills through for-credit independent studies and internships; such experiences count toward major requirements in some, although not all, disciplines.

A major curriculum requires students to complete 30-60 credits in a field of study, with significant portions of a curriculum devoted to study at the 300- and 400-course level. Most majors include a discipline-specific capstone seminar or research-based course within their curricula. Many majors also require significant numbers of ancillary courses in other departments. For example, the biology major requires 38 biology credits plus 29 credits of mathematics, chemistry, and physics courses. The university's major disciplines offer either a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree; either option is available for students majoring in liberal studies.

After completing both LASC and major requirements, students typically have at least 20 credits toward their degree requirement that can be fulfilled by minor courses, free elective courses, <u>internships</u>, or independent studies. <u>Minors typically</u> consist of 18-24 credits in a discipline other than the student's major or in an interdisciplinary program and include at least one course at the 300- or 400-level. Although a few existing minors fall outside these guidelines, departments and governance committees are working to ensure all minors conform to more uniform standards, in order to support the MajorPlus initiative. An unlimited number of LASC courses can count toward a concentration, minor, or second major; in addition, up to three first major courses can now be applied to LASC in the MajorPlus scheme.

Students applying to Worcester State may be invited to join the <u>Commonwealth Honors Program</u>, which is structured around two first-year all-honors courses and five additional honors-designated courses as well as co-curricular activities; students may also apply to transfer into this program after beginning their undergraduate studies. Honors students have the option of completing an independent Commonwealth Honors Project and graduating as Commonwealth Honors Scholars.

### General Education: The Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum

The university's Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum (LASC) has been in place since 2008, with revisions made during the 2011-2012 academic year, and has recently evolved again to align better with the MajorPlus initiative. Originally, LASC requirements were designed to align closely with the <u>Association of American</u> <u>Colleges and Universities' Liberal Education & America's Promise</u> learning outcomes and to include high-impact learning practices, such as a required <u>first-year seminar</u> (FYS) for all first-time, first-year students and a capstone experience taken in the junior, or (more often) senior, year. FYS courses are taught within major disciplines and include disciplinary content, while also facilitating students' adjustment to college life and academic expectations.

As shown in <u>undergraduate catalogs prior to the 2021-2022 academic year</u>, in addition to the book-end requirements of FYS and the capstone (the capstone since removed, as explained below), the original LASC core curriculum includes a college-writing requirement (a two-semester sequence for most students or a onesemester requirement for students in the Commonwealth Honors Program) and one required course that addresses the United States and Massachusetts Constitutions. These requirements are designed to ensure that all students graduate with competence in written communication in English and are equipped to be informed citizens. Beyond this core, the LASC curriculum requires at least one course in each of eight content areas covering the breadth of the liberal arts and sciences – creative arts; human behavior and social processes; individual and community well-being; global perspectives; natural systems and processes (non-lab); natural systems and processes (lab required); quantitative reasoning; thought, language, and culture; and The United States and its role in the world – plus three additional "across the curriculum" writing, quantitative literacy, and diversity requirements that can be satisfied by separate courses or by courses that also fulfill a LASC content area or a major requirement. The original LASC scheme required students to complete between 43 and 52 semester hour credits, with the spread determined by student choices in whether to double count courses where they could, in order to discharge general education requirements. With the implementation of the <u>MajorPlus</u> requirement, the "across the curriculum" categories have been eliminated, but a new diversity content area has been added, this last as the consequence of student survey results that showed clearly that respondents did not feel that their learning experiences in Diversity Across the Curriculum adequately addressed topics in and encounters with diversity. Many departments have developed courses within their majors that satisfy the current "Across the Curriculum" learning outcomes, so the spirit of these requirements will persist even with their elimination. With the advent of the MajorPlus requirement, the capstone requirement has been removed from LASC, but the major capstone requirements will likely remain in most major curricula. Other changes to rules regarding double counting of courses towards a student's major and toward general education requirements will allow students additional freedom within the new MajorPlus structure, but a minimum of 40 credits of general education coursework will still be required.

#### The Major or Concentration

The numbers of required credits vary significantly among majors, from a minimum of 30 (sociology) to a maximum of 81 (occupational studies, including required ancillary courses in other departments). In general, majors require some coursework at all levels (100-, 200-, 300-, and 400-level); in some majors it is only ancillary 100-level courses that are required, and the departmental core begins with 200-level courses. Majors also differ significantly in the degree to which courses must be taken in a specific order. Most 200-level courses in all departments require at least one prerequisite course (usually a 100-level course, but not necessarily one in the same department); this percentage is much higher for 300-level courses, which usually require at least one 200-level course in the department. As noted in the undergraduate catalog, courses with 400-level designations include major capstone courses, independent studies or internships (which may or may not count toward the major credits), or special topics courses that may not be offered on a regular basis. Most, but not all, have some prerequisite, depending on the purpose of the course; indeed, 400-level courses often provide advanced content that builds upon knowledge students gain in 200- and 300-level courses. Some majors with more structured curricula require students to earn minimum grades in prerequisite courses to be able to move on to the next course in a sequence. Students (and advisors) can easily view all major and other degree requirements and track their progress toward completion online in the university's enterprise student records software.

As noted above, some undergraduate degree programs are more tightly scaffolded than others, but all have common features: <u>program-level student learning outcomes</u>; coherent sequencing and student intellectual growth achieved through appropriate prerequisites and/or major core/elective course requirements and/or subject area requirements; capstone experiences intended to aid students in synthesizing and applying knowledge and techniques gained from engagement in the major or concentration; and, in cases where programs contain requirements above the university's general policies, minimum admission, achievement, and progression requirements for the major or concentration. Some majors — including <u>biology</u>, <u>biotechnology</u>, <u>chemistry</u>, <u>psychology</u>, and <u>communication sciences and disorders</u> — have honors programs separate from the university-wide <u>Commonwealth Honors Program</u> that require a minimum grade point average for eligibility and require students to complete additional coursework, usually a research methods course, as well as independent research under the supervision of a faculty member.

At Worcester State University, the term "concentration" refers to tracks within majors that allow students to specialize in a disciplinary area and to interdisciplinary programs that are not offered as majors. For some majors, completing one among several concentrations is mandatory, while for others it is optional. Interdisciplinary concentrations that do not have a corresponding major or minor include global studies, and women's, gender, and sexuality studies. These curricula were developed as concentrations rather than majors or minors because there were no departments in which to house them; they have been administered by program coordinators. Concentrations will not satisfy the new MajorPlus graduation requirement; in many cases, existing concentrations are in the process of being converted to minors (with some changes in requirements to align

with minor specifications). At the same time, a new <u>Department of Interdisciplinary Studies</u> has been created, and a faculty member has been designated chair of that department to oversee interdisciplinary programs not housed within another department.

#### Graduate Degree Program

<u>Graduate programs</u> show coherent designs and demonstrable concern for the level of achievement expected from degree candidates. Coherence in any graduate program is demonstrated primarily through its overall structure, course-level content, and quality of its capstone/thesis projects or outcomes from practicum/applied experiences. As shown in the graduate catalog and in documentation supporting the self-study, all graduate programs consist of at least one culminating experience such as action research, a capstone project, clinical placements, a written thesis and oral defense, an internship, and/or an oral or written comprehensive examination. These culminating experiences show that the intellectual and professional practice demands of graduate education at Worcester State University are demonstrably greater than those at the undergraduate level. In disciplinary-oriented master's programs, course sequencing and culminating experiences show that degree candidates develop independent research or action-oriented capacity. In practice-oriented master's programs, course sequencing and significant requirements in fieldwork or other practica show that degree candidates apply knowledge in professional settings. In addition, several graduate programs are accredited by professional associations, including nursing, occupational therapy, school psychology, and speech-language pathology, adding an external perspective to evaluation of students' attainment of graduate-level knowledge and skills.

Most recently, the university, with permission from the Commission, has begun offering four fully online graduate <u>Master of Education</u> and two fully online <u>Master of Science in Nursing programs</u>, plus two fully online post-master's certificates in nursing. While these programs are designed for accelerated time-to-degree completion, they bear the same marks of coherence that characterize the university's more traditionally offered graduate programs.

Due to the structure of the Massachusetts public higher education system, Worcester State University's Graduate School is not funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is a self-sustaining entity. Thus, the Graduate School does not have its own full-time faculty, but relies on the undergraduate day school's fulltime faculty and its own adjunct pool, with compensation for faculty determined by the collective bargaining agreement negotiated between the <u>Commonwealth's Board of Higher Education</u> and the Massachusetts State College Association (<u>MSCA</u>), the faculty union. All instructors of graduate coursework hold at least a master's degree, and many have a doctorate degree. Nearly every graduate program is led by a full-time faculty member from the "day" MSCA contract, with the exception of one program, whose lead is part-time. These program coordinators are responsible for the overall management of the programs and serve as liaisons with their academic departments. Any changes to curriculum must be discussed and voted on within the academic department, approved by the department chair, sent to the dean of the related school or area for approval, and then voted on by the Graduate Education Council. Recommendations are then forwarded to the provost and president for final approval.

The <u>admissions standards</u> and the curriculum for each graduate program have been developed by the faculty and approved by the university's Graduate Education Council; all of this information is published in the Graduate Catalog, which is updated each academic year. Qualifications and procedures for matriculation in the various graduate programs are found on the <u>Graduate School's website</u> and <u>catalog</u>, along with contact information for the various program coordinators and graduate admissions staff who are available to answer questions and advise prospective students about the programs and the admissions process. Admission depends on a combination of undergraduate grade point average, scores on various standardized tests, such as the GRE, MAT, GMAT, or MTELs, letters of recommendation, an application essay, and relevant prerequisites. Once students are fully admitted to a graduate program, they are asked to complete <u>a Program of</u> <u>Study (POS</u>), which outlines the course requirements they need to earn the degree, as well as any transfer credits or substitutions. Students complete the POS with their faculty program coordinator.

All candidates for the master's degree must complete a minimum of 30 semester credit hours, all of which must be earned exclusively in graduate-level courses. No more than 12 graduate credits may be earned at any location other than Worcester State University. The Graduate School clearly defines the <u>transfer policy</u> in the Graduate Catalog. Acceptance of transfer credits is the responsibility of the full-time faculty in the relevant discipline in conjunction with the dean of Graduate Studies.

# Transfer Credit

Students have many pathways to transfer existing undergraduate and some graduate credits toward degrees at Worcester State University. As a public institution of higher learning, the university subscribes to state-approved transfer plans that include the undergraduate <u>Commonwealth Commitment</u> and <u>MassTransfer</u> programs, and has <u>developed institution-specific articulation</u> agreements for certain undergraduate and graduate/professional academic programs. Information about all transfer pathways is available on the university's website and undergraduate and graduate catalogs. Through the undergraduate Commonwealth Commitment program, students who complete an associate degree in certain disciplines while maintaining continuous enrollment and a 3.00 cumulative GPA within 2.5 years at any Massachusetts community college may then transfer to Worcester State University and complete the bachelor's degree within two years.

The MassTransfer agreement allows undergraduate transfer students who complete a 34-credit set of General Education Foundation courses at any Massachusetts public higher education institution with a 2.0 or higher GPA to satisfy the LASC general education requirements with the completion of no more than six additional credits. MassTransfer also provides Massachusetts community college students who complete an associate degree in certain disciplines with a 2.5 GPA or higher guaranteed admission to a corresponding bachelor's degree program at Worcester State University, in addition to other academic benefits. Finally, the MassTransfer agreement offers Massachusetts community college students who complete an associate degree in certain disciplines with a 3.0 GPA or higher, and who are within one year of graduating from the community college, a full tuition waiver (valued at \$970) for two consecutive academic years after transferring to Worcester State University.

Discipline specific articulation agreements exist for students transferring from Mount Wachusett Community College, Quinsigamond Community College, and Springfield Technical Community College. Copies of these agreements are published on the university's website. The institution evaluates its articulation agreements periodically (usually every 5 years). These agreements are on file in the university's Admissions Transfer Center and are available online in the undergraduate catalog.

Department chairs and graduate program coordinators evaluate course descriptions and/or syllabi from individual undergraduate and graduate courses, respectively, to determine whether they are equivalent to courses in their departments. Since December 2014, Worcester State University has fielded an undergraduate <u>Admissions Transfer Center (ATC)</u> managed by one full-time staff member with full-time administrative support. The ATC facilitates communication with prospective undergraduate transfer students and serves as a resource for undergraduate transfer students once they arrive at the institution, as well as for faculty and staff who work with transfer students. A major initiative of the ATC is the continual updating of an online <u>Transfer Equivalency Guide</u>, which is a database of all courses from both public and private institutions, in-state and out-of-state, that have been approved for transfer credits that satisfy specific Worcester State University courses; this database currently contains about 26,554 courses from about 1,034 institutions and is freely accessible online.

#### Integrity in the Awarding of Academic Credit

Worcester State University designates the <u>Commission's policy on academic credit</u> as its own institutional policy. Standard policies on active instructional hours determine the number of credits awarded for a particular course. The university's governance committees enforce these policies when approving new courses or changes to existing courses. For example, while most history courses are three credits, the Department of History and Political Science recently added four-credit courses to its curriculum; when these were reviewed by the university's standing Curriculum Committee, the department was asked to explain the additional credit, which they justified by describing an additional hour of instruction in methods of research and historical pedagogy that would be incorporated into these courses.

Departments must justify the number of credits awarded for each course in the governance process, with each credit corresponding roughly to our hour of active instruction. <u>Independent study and internship forms</u> also stipulate how many hours are needed for each credit. The university's governance process oversees this area. Catalog language describes the vetting process for courses for <u>study abroad</u>.

The minimum number of credits required for a bachelor's degree is 120. The minimum number of credits required for a master's degree is 30. Whether undergraduate or graduate, degree programs are named and structured in consonance with regular higher education practices in the United States. The institution does not currently offer competency-based programs. With regard to course selections and degree completion, most courses are offered frequently enough that students are able to complete their degrees in a timely manner. For courses not offered when they are needed by students, departments use directed studies or occasionally grant limited waivers so students can graduate on time.

For some departments, the courses required to fulfill the degree follow a progression of learning objectives, with introductory, gateway knowledge at the 100 level, more focused, specialized topics at the 200 level, and courses at the 300 level that require more in-depth, specialized study, often involving research or other project-based learning. Academic programs typically require core methodology and research-intensive courses that are designed to equip students with the skills of critically evaluating data and scholarly literature, as well as designing and addressing research questions in complex and evidence-based ways. In capstone courses, students apply what they have learned in their core knowledge and methodology courses to produce original research and scholarly works. Many departments have been working on clarifying the distinctions between 200- and 300-level courses, and this has been a topic both in departmental assessment and at the level of the university's standing Curriculum Committee. Course numbers at the 400 level are often used for capstones or independent work. However, aside from a general statement on <u>course leveling</u> published in the undergraduate catalog, the institution provides no consistent or detailed rules regarding what constitutes a 300- vs. a 400-level course.

Degree-earning experiences completed off campus, such as study away, internships, or practical placement, must demonstrate engagement with substantive academic content. This may be justified in the form of experiences syllabi with student learning objectives, clearly stated hours of contact for field activities, research, and/or interviews, and/or graded written reflections/essays that demonstrate the student's learning outcomes. Independent studies completed on campus involve regular weekly contact hours between the student and instructor, along with demonstrated mastery of content knowledge that is equivalent to knowledge gained in a regular course offering. The university does not award degree credit for remedial or developmental coursework.

The institution provides, and retains oversight of, processes for providing students with multiple avenues for earning academic credit for experiences prior to matriculation at the university. These include credit for <u>Ad-vanced Placement</u> and <u>International Baccalaureate</u> courses taken in high school, <u>dual enrollment</u> courses taken during high school, credits transferred from other institutions, credits earned based on <u>College Level</u> <u>Examination Program results</u>, and <u>military/ROTC</u> credits through Joint Service Transcripts. University governance records show that a prior learning assessment program was approved in spring 2022 and is slated for

launch in fall 2022. Worcester State University retains oversight also of programs and credits in dual enrollment or early college programs. Those programs offer college-level courses to high school students and are stated priorities of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as a means for increasing college access. The university offers dual enrollment through a variety of programs, including the <u>Early College Worcester program</u>, the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment program, the <u>100 Males to College program</u>, the <u>High School Scholars</u> program, and the <u>Latino Education Institute</u>. Dual enrollment and early college courses are taught through the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE) by faculty who have been approved by the relevant department chair; DGCE does not engage high school teachers to teach dual enrollment or early college courses.

For almost all undergraduate students, the last 30 credits of their degree must be completed at Worcester State University. The sole exceptions to this policy were granted to <u>Becker College students</u> who transferred in summer 2021 to Worcester State University after their institution closed. Transfer agreements between the university and Becker College ensured that waiving or reducing this residency requirement was limited to a select number of students who transferred from Becker College for the fall 2021 semester.

The annual academic catalogs for both undergraduate and graduate programs outline the academic standards that must be maintained in order for students to continue in, and ultimately graduate from, their programs. The catalog publishes the university's <u>Academic Honesty policy</u>. Faculty have access to software programs that can check for student cheating on assignments.

The university's Information Technology Services helps ensure academic integrity by mailing students temporary passwords to each new student via United States mail. A password reset is required upon initial login. In order to reset a forgotten password, students may use the online Password Reset Utility and must provide their student identification number and date of birth to verify identity. Throughout 2022, the university has been rolling out multi-factor authentication to provide additional security for user accounts. All students will be required to use multi-factor authentication by the end of September 2022. These security measures help protect student accounts and ensure that only registered students have access to course materials and student information. Students are not charged any fees associated with identity verification.

For accelerated programs, such as the institution's fully online programs, there was as much oversight and regulation in the building of these programs as with any other program. The AOPs were designed to be parallel to their on-ground equivalents. Summer I and Summer II term classes, which are seven-week classes, use the same syllabi and SLOs that are used for the standard-length fall and spring semesters. A large percentage of summer classes are taught by full-time faculty.

Continuing education and graduate students who are only on campus in the evenings typically have less access to faculty for advising, although Zoom and other software have helped provide greater access. Other services have also been improved for evening students. Examples include Academic Mall offices remaining open later in the afternoons/evenings, food services offered during expanded hours, students being provided online library access, and bookstore flexibility with mailing materials.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts stipulates that certificates meet similar criteria as degree programs. Most certificates awarded by the university include a combination of existing classes that are also used towards degrees. Worcester State University's former Certificates of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) are now Education Specialist degrees.

# Appraisal

# Assuring Academic Quality

Faculty responses from an <u>institutional survey</u> indicate that they generally feel quite positive about the academic quality of the university's programs. Large majorities agreed with the following statements: (1) "The programs offered by my department provide students with the scope and depth of learning that the programs claim to offer"; (2) "My program's learning outcomes prepare students for their future careers"; and (3) "Graduates from my program are successful in obtaining positions in their relevant industry or are accepted to graduate school."

A number of mechanisms safeguard the quality of academic programs, including governance procedures, academic program reviews on a five-year schedule, inclusion of course student learning outcomes (SLOs) on syllabi, and professional development opportunities for faculty sponsored by the university's Center for Teaching and Learning. Many of these mechanisms are working well, but some have room for improvement.

For example, all new undergraduate course and program proposals must be approved by the university's All-University Committee (AUC) and Curriculum Committee; all must include clear student learning outcomes (SLOs) or program learning outcomes (PLOs) that conform to assessment best practices. Similarly, all new graduate programs require PLOs that are reviewed by the Graduate Education Council. However, an undetermined number of older courses have not been vetted for SLOs. Although all academic programs have PLOs, only learning outcomes for undergraduate majors, with the exception of the Liberal Studies program, are published in a location that is easily accessible to students or other constituents of the university. Additionally, faculty are not explicitly required to have SLOs or course goals on their syllabi. In the faculty survey referenced above, 105 out of 120 respondents (87.5%) "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they personally include SLOs on syllabi, and 75 out of 118 (63.6%) "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they supported requiring this of all faculty.

All academic programs are scheduled for review every five years in a process that includes evaluation by an outside reviewer. Anecdotally, departments report that the review process is generally beneficial. For instance, faculty in the Department of History and Political Science, in 2020-2021, spurred by findings from <u>the program review process</u> and by input from the external reviewer, carried out a thorough redesign of the history major, reducing the number of required surveys from five to two; creating a new junior-level course on historiography and historical writing to better bridge the gap between the existing sophomore-level methods course and the senior capstone; and re-organizing the elective structure within the major to require better and more substantive global coverage. The department also created a new track specifically for future educators within the major. This track creates new cohort classes to help students better integrate their learning across courses in education and history, and requires core electives in content specified in the pre-secondary social studies frameworks, such as the history of Massachusetts. Recognizing that students had been introduced to much of the content taught at the K-12 level typically in their first year in the introductory surveys, in the new track, the department created two new upper-level courses, US History for Educators and World History for Educators, to cover the content of the surveys in fast-paced, rigorous courses that demand active learning from students.

However, some aspects of the review process should be improved. No program reviews were conducted in the 2020-21 academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but, even prior to that, some did not occur on schedule. From fall 2017 to the current academic year, a total of 15 programs conducted reviews; these programs represent only 12 out of the university's 21 departments. Thus, a significant number of programs are behind in the five-year review cycle. More importantly, there is no clear process by which the administration evaluates and acts upon reports generated by departments undergoing review. For example, the biology and biotechnology majors conducted program reviews that were completed in spring 2019, but the provost did not meet with the Biology Department chair to discuss the recommendations from the reports until spring 2021; moreover, there has not been any clear administrative action on the recommendations discussed in that meeting. Currently serving academic department chairs, with a 59% response rate, reported the following results. In response to the item "Do you feel WSU's review process is consistent?" 92% of respondents

checked "No." In response to "Do you feel that your department's program review process led to institution supported change?" 69% checked "No." In response to "After the last program review did you receive a meeting with the chief academic officer?" 69% checked "No." Additionally, in many instances, recommended changes were not subsequently supported by financial resource allocations needed for implementation, as shown in supporting documentation. At the same time, the timing of any recommendations that may come from an academic program review is not synchronized with the university's overall budget process, hampering the institution's ability to respond to recommended changes. Finally, program reviews are not stored in a centralized, digital location where they can be easily accessed by members of the university community.

New academic program proposals must be approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Higher Education. In some instances, such proposals have included investment commitments that have not come to fruition once the program was approved and launched. Examples include the Liberal Studies program and several new graduate programs. The proposal for the Liberal Studies program included the hiring of academic advisors to guide students in crafting their degrees, but these advisors have not yet been hired. The proposals for new graduate programs in public administration and policy and public management included a promised commitment of funds to market these programs, but those dollars have not been regularly invested.

#### Undergraduate Degree Programs

Recently, the university has embarked on a major revamping of its undergraduate degree program requirements. The new curricular structure, MajorPlus, requires full-time, first-time undergraduate students and undergraduate students who transfer fewer than 46 credit hours to the university to declare at least one minor program of study or a second major, in addition to the major program of study. This initiative was constructed and undertaken subsequent to findings reported from a market positioning study commissioned by the university from the Art & Science Group, LLC, carried out and presented during the 2018-2019 academic year and from which the university's Roadmap for Advancing Student Excellence (RASE) Plan was derived. The intention behind the curricular change, supported by data provided in the positioning study results, is to attract students to the university by offering them a signature academic experience that encourages depth and breadth of knowledge and development of skills in multiple disciplines. Self-study assessments at the department level have revealed a tendency among some students to select courses randomly, according to scheduling preferences, rather than charting a degree path in a planned and systematic way. The adoption of the MajorPlus requirement aims to provide a more robust academic framework for students. It also aims to further the university's goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Data provided in the positioning study's results indicate that the MajorPlus experience seems equally, if not more, attractive to prospective ALANA/BIPOC students as it does to white students.

The MajorPlus curricular aspects of the RASE plan were initiated recently, in fall 2021, so it remains to be seen how MajorPlus will affect undergraduate enrollment, student success, graduation rates, student advising, and student body diversity. It is certainly feasible for students to complete a minor or second major, in addition to the major, within the 120-credit total required for graduation, yet this arrangement can be more difficult for students majoring in professional programs with outside accreditation standards, such as nursing, which have highly-structured and credit-heavy major requirements. Governance committees have so far attempted to ease potential burdens on students by reducing LASC general education requirements (for example by eliminating the "across-the-curriculum" category requirements and allowing students to double-count three of their LASC courses toward their first major) and introducing a new audit system platform for advising that allows students and advisors to better coordinate course selection across semesters. New guidelines that standardize expectations for minors have been passed through governance, and discussion continues regarding the degree to which students might be allowed to count courses within their major department toward an interdisciplinary minor. It remains to be seen also whether the university will provide sufficient faculty resources to offer sufficient numbers of course sections for students to fulfill the new requirements.

Faculty have taken the initiative and the administration has provided support for the creation of new interdisciplinary minors that broaden curricular offerings and provide new options for MajorPlus. Examples include 11 minor curriculum proposals approved through university governance in the 2021-2022 academic year. A significant portion of these new programs and previously approved programs, such as the minors in ethnic studies, environmental and sustainability studies, and Asian studies, are housed within a single interdisciplinary department. It remains to be seen if this organizational structure can provide sufficient support for these minors.

#### General Education: The Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum

As noted above, the university's Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum (LASC) has continued to evolve since its inception in 2008, most recently to align with the university's MajorPlus undergraduate initiative and the expression by students, through survey results, that learning experiences in the former Diversity Across the Curriculum LASC category were not adequate in engaging with concepts and experiences in diversity. Departments have designed many courses to meet published LASC student learning outcomes (SLOs); thus, the number of courses in each LASC category has increased, providing more students with more options to tailor their general education curriculum to their interests and needs. Courses that fulfill most of the LASC content areas are regularly offered during the winter session and in the summer. For example, 40 course sections that fulfilled a total of six out of nine LASC content areas were offered in summer 2021, and six courses that fulfilled a total of five out of nine content areas were offered in Intersession 2022, giving students further flexibility in completing these requirements. Consistent efforts have been made to educate both faculty and students about the LASC curriculum. For faculty, the university's Center for Teaching and Learning offers LASC information sessions each academic year. The LASC curriculum is one of the topics addressed in <u>First Year Seminar</u> courses.

LASC SLOs provide a clear framework of skills that all Worcester State University undergraduate students are to acquire by graduation. However, the degree to which students actually attain these competencies is not rigorously assessed. In September 2021, the LASC coordinator surveyed faculty who had taught or were teaching LASC courses in the spring 2021, summer 2021, or fall 2021 semesters to determine the percent of students who demonstrated proficiency in the LASC SLOs for the courses they taught. A total of 276 faculty were included in the survey pool, but only 44 responded, resulting in a 16% response rate; of these, 77% had taught LASC courses in the spring 2021 semester. Overall, faculty respondents reported that 86% of students in their LASC course sections showed proficiency in the relevant LASC SLOs as measured by the faculty member's assessment criteria, which included final course grades, exams, papers, projects, and/or presentations, depending on the course. Data were collected on only small numbers of course sections for many of the LASC categories, so they should be considered incomplete. The LASC categories that were best represented in the survey were Quantitative Reasoning (18 sections), Natural Systems & Processes (16 sections), and Human Behavior & Social Processes (17 sections); four other LASC categories had data reported for more than five sections: Writing Across the Curriculum (11 sections), Thought, Language & Culture (10 sections), Diversity Across the Curriculum (9 sections), and Quantitative Literacy Across the Curriculum (9 sections). These data provide some evidence that students are meeting the university's general education goals, but additional assessment is warranted.

#### The Major or Concentration

During the period since the university's last decennial review, academic departments have undertaken ambitious initiatives to better align the distribution of course offerings, curricular requirements, and program learning objectives in undergraduate degree programs. These efforts were intended prepare students to engage with a complex, competitive, and diverse world while meeting the highest standards of academic training as defined by the relevant professional associations. Since 2016, the university has added three new baccalaureate programs. In addition, new concentrations and tracks have been added within majors, exposing students to more diverse approaches and perspectives across the discipline and strengthening students' core mastery of methods in analysis, research, and writing by enhancing upper-level, in-depth knowledge courses. Course requirements have also been scaffolded in a logical and coherent sequence. The growing inclusion of prerequisites for middle- and upper-level courses reflects this attention to scaffolding.

Departments vary widely in the relative numbers of course offerings at the 100-, 200-, 300-, and 400-levels, so it is apparent that different departments interpret these level designations somewhat differently and have different strategies for designing their curricula. However, of the 32 major or minor disciplines in the course catalog (excluding interdisciplinary studies involving more than two departments), 23 disciplines require at least one prerequisite course for more than 55% of their 200-level courses; 16 disciplines require a 200-level course for at least 50% of their 300-level courses; 19 disciplines require some prerequisite for at least 50% of their 400-level courses. This indicates that, in general, students' progression through the various course levels is commensurate with accretion of certain disciplinary knowledge and skills.

All these curricular initiatives have contributed to an ongoing evaluation and revision of assessment methods. The emphasis in assessment of students' learning has shifted away from mere content absorption toward higher-level analysis, formulation of arguments, and research. Students have the opportunity to present scholarly work completed in and outside of class at the university's annual <u>Celebration of Scholarship</u> and Creativity and at the annual UMass Undergraduate Research Conference. Since 2016, an average of about 150 individual and group student presentations have been highlighted at the Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity.

### Graduate Programs

Most recently, six 100% online accelerated graduate degree programs (AOPs) were added in <u>education</u> and <u>nursing</u>. This initiative has created a new category of students, who are engaged in full-time distance education.

As well, the university recently inaugurated three new master's degree programs: Master of Public Management (2020), Master of Public Administration and Policy (2020), and Master of Education – Educational Leadership and Administration (non-licensure) (2021). A Marketing Track was added within the Master of Science in Management degree (2014). Curricula were updated for five programs: Master of Science in Nursing: Nursing Education Specialist, Master of Science in Nursing: Public and Population Health Nursing; Master of Education: School Leadership andAdministration (Licensure); Master of Science in Biotechnology; and Master of Arts in Spanish. Additionally, six "4+" programs were developed to accelerate completion of both an undergraduate and master's degree or licensure. These 4+ programs include bachelor's-to-master's (or post-baccalaureate certificate) pathways to the Master of Public Administration and Policy; Master of Public Management; Master of Science in Biotechnology; Master of Education in Middle School Education; Master of Education in Secondary Education; and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program for Initial Teacher License in Middle/Secondary School Education.

In addition to increasing program offerings, the Graduate School has implemented a number of changes to improve the graduate student experience and to assess program outcomes. Graduate School programs of study have been standardized to improve academic advising, retention, and graduation. The Graduate Division moved from a nine-credit definition of full-time status to six credits, which allows students taking three credits (one class at a time) to access federal financial aid, thus increasing accessibility to programs. Scantron's Class Climate is now used for 100% online evaluation of faculty to increase student response rates and obtain meaningful data. Historically, there was a less than a 1% response rate for students in graduate and continuing education courses submitting faculty evaluations. When the Class Climate tool was adopted in 2018, that rate rose to 47%, and in spring 2021 it was 50.6%. In December 2021, an audit of graduate program culminating

projects was conducted to survey graduate level learning. Lastly, the <u>Graduate Assistantship</u> (GA) Program was updated in 2015. This increased the number of GAs on campus to 45, providing financial support and strengthening professional development opportunities for graduate students.

With regard to program review, graduate program reviews are presently not aligned with the cycle in which program reviews occur for the undergraduate programs. The Division of Graduate and Continuing Education reports that it has begun planning implementation for graduate programs to be reviewed three years after the corresponding undergraduate program has been reviewed.

# Transfer Credit

In December 2014, the Undergraduate Admissions Office expanded with the opening of a new Transfer <u>Center</u> designed to improve transfer recruitment efforts and to better serve all prospective transfer students during the admissions process. Since then, the Transfer Center has provided prospective transfers with a better sense of the transfer admission criteria as well as the transfer process as a whole. Specific efforts toward this goal include a series of Transfer Information Sessions each semester, one-on-one meetings, and other programming. Based on data available on Page 42 of the university's <u>2017 Fact Book</u>, the transfer application numbers subsequently decreased between fall 2014 and fall 2015, yet the number of acceptances remained relatively unchanged. Therefore, this trend corresponds with fewer admission denials as a direct result of improved transfer outreach and communication.

Beginning in fall 2021, all transfer students with 45 or fewer transfer credits are required to declare a minor or a second major. This initiative included about 150 new transfer students entering in fall 2021. Transfer students with 46 or more transfer credits are not required to declare a second academic program but are advised on the potential advantages of this.

In the Graduate School, most programs limit the number of transfer credits to 12 or fewer. Students who wish to have credits transferred into a graduate program must complete a Change of Program of Study form and supply an official transcript from the original institution. Only credits for which a student has earned a grade of "B-" or higher within a two-year period immediately prior to the effective term of admission are considered for transfer. The course is evaluated for transferability by the Graduate Program coordinator and dean of Graduate Studies.

# Integrity in the Awarding of Academic Credit

Worcester State University uses standard policies on active instructional hours for determining the number of credits awarded for a particular course. University governance committees enforce these policies when approving new courses or changes to existing courses. For example, while most history courses are three credits, the History Department recently added two four-credit courses to their curriculum. When these were reviewed by the university's standing Curriculum Committee, the department was asked to explain the additional credit, which it justified by describing an additional hour of instruction in methods of research and historical pedagogy that would be incorporated into these courses. However, face-to-face versus online hours expected in "blended" (hybrid) or asynchronous online courses are not clearly defined via a policy, a fact that was brought to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic, when most courses were offered in this format or fully online.

As noted earlier, the institution provides students with multiple avenues for earning academic credit for experiences prior to matriculation at Worcester State University. In most cases, there are clear policies stated in the course catalog regarding the standards used to determine how credits are awarded for these cases. All credits for courses taken at another college or university are vetted by the relevant department chair; if a transfer course is deemed equivalent to an existing course in a department, a student will earn credit for that course, but if there is no clear cognate course, the student earns credits in that discipline or as general transfer credit (TR-1XX) that count toward graduation.

Dual enrollment, as noted earlier, is a stated priority of the Commonwealth as a means for increasing college access. In 10 years, Worcester State University has offered nearly 1,656 dual enrollment seats. Those students have accomplished an overall 85% pass rate in the classes, with 9% of students failing the class(es) and 5% of students withdrawing from their class(es). Of the students who have taken dual enrollment class(es) during this time, more than 13% have matriculated at Worcester State University (though matriculation rates vary widely among the various programs); 65% of all prior dual enrollment programs are offered through a variety of institutional agencies and arrangements. The Division of Enrollment Management has recently created, and hired a staff member into, a position tasked in part with tracking the various dual enrollment arrangements and providing the university with a comprehensive view of how these arrangements contribute to effectiveness in student learning. Also, as noted earlier, a prior learning assessment program was approved through university governance in spring 2022 and is slated for launch in fall 2022.

Students may also earn credits through internships, independent studies, directed studies, study away, and discipline-specific research and field work. These learning modalities are structured by learning contracts that correspond to the university's policies on active instructional hours for determining the number of credits awarded. Such learning contracts require multiple levels of approval before being submitted to the Registrar's Office. However, at the graduate level, independent studies are sometimes used in place of regular course offerings because insufficient faculty are available to teach certain courses of interest to students; this may not always result in an equivalent learning experience for students. Also, not all students interested in study away are able to engage in this form of experiential learning due to financial limitations.

The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education has prioritized phasing out remedial or developmental classes altogether, and the university is implementing this priority. In the past, students were enrolled in nondegree-credit-bearing developmental Math (MA-098 and MA-099) and English (EN-099) courses, on the basis of placement tests. Now, consonant with state-level directives, any student with at least a 2.7 high school GPA is permitted to enroll in MA-105 Survey of Mathematics, and Elementary Education majors are allowed to take MA-130 Numbers and Operations for Teachers with MA-098 as a corequisite. In fall 2020, the English Department piloted a new one-credit Writing Lab, graded on a pass/fail basis, for students with low entering high school grade point averages who also earned a low score on a writing placement test. These students took the Writing Lab as concurrent academic support for EN-101 College Writing I. Three sections of the Writing Lab paired with EN-101 sections were offered in fall 2021. These changes are of recent vintage, so assessment has not shown yet whether the new co-requisite arrangements are yielding positive results.

<u>Syllabi</u> that include student learning outcomes (SLOs) provide evidence that instructors define course content and expectations. In accordance with current academic policies, all course proposals must present SLOs in order to be approved by the university's standing Curriculum Committee and All University Committee; however, faculty are not explicitly required to list SLOs, or even course goals, on their syllabi, and these expectations are not always published in a location that is easily accessible to students. In a <u>faculty survey</u>, 105 out of 120 respondents (87.5%) "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they personally include SLOs on syllabi, but only 75 out of 118 (63.6%) "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they supported requiring this of all faculty.

To facilitate student planning, the undergraduate catalog clearly elucidates all requirements for degrees and for majors/minors/concentrations, with sample timelines for all majors that include the major requirements plus general education requirements. Each course description lists the frequency with which it is offered and, if applicable, if it is offered in fall or spring semesters. However, the university recently adopted new catalog software platform, and a number of inaccuracies in these course frequency/semester descriptions resulted when the existing catalog was imported into this platform. Efforts are underway to correct the errors, but more

vigilant monitoring of the catalog is needed to provide students with accurate projections of when they will be able to take courses they intend to take in order to earn their degrees.

### COVID-19 and the Academic Program

The major impact of pandemic conditions on the university's academic programming was the rapid pivot to remote learning that began in March 2020. For the remainder of the spring 2020 semester and in summer 2020 terms, all courses were conducted fully online. In fall 2020 and spring 2021, faculty and departments were responsible for determining appropriate course modalities, given university guidelines overseeing activities on campus. For comparison, in fall 2020, 23% of courses were face-to-face, 30% were blended, and 47% were fully online; in fall 2019, these numbers had been 86%, 5%, and 9%, respectively. In fall 2021, despite the continuing pandemic, the university made a concerted effort to offer as many courses face-to-face as feasible. For this semester, 69% of courses were face-to-face, 10% were blended, and 21% were fully online. During these pandemic semesters, the university followed an existing policy stating that a blended (hybrid) course should have between 25% to 75% face-to-face instruction. However, the experience of more courses being offered in alternative formats highlighted a need for more precise definitions of the range of course modalities, and a new proposal specifying these has been approved through the shared governance process, including the university's president. It remains to be seen what proportions of total course offerings will be in the various modalities once the pandemic is finally over.

The university provided significant support for faculty in navigating the rapid and unexpected changes in course modalities necessitated by the pandemic. In summer 2020, the institution covered tuition for any faculty member who wanted to complete training by Quality Matters (QM), a nonprofit organization that provides faculty with professional development in creating and validating online courses, to gain expertise in online or blended teaching to assist with the COVID-19 pivot. One hundred-eighteen full-time faculty, 25 other instructors (adjunct), and 15 staff registered for these courses (with some individuals completing more than one QM course); moreover, 42% of current full-time faculty have completed at least one QM course. All full-time faculty were also awarded \$250 stipends in recognition of the added work required to shift each unique, previously face-to-face courses to fully online or blended formats.

Although already an active agent in promoting professional development for faculty, the university's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) increased the number of professional development opportunities offered to faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic. To illustrate, in the <u>2018-2019 academic year</u>, the CTL offered 34 programs, with 338 total participants; in the <u>2019-20 academic year</u> (which included the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020), the center offered 52 events with 496 participants. CTL set up a web page titled "Teaching in Times of Disruption," which compiled local and best practices in adapting to remote teaching and employing unfamiliar technologies in creating helpful learning environments. Some faculty would like still greater access to professional development programs. In a survey with 123 faculty respondents, 37.4% replied that they would like more professional development through their departments, 32.5% wanted more CTL programing, and 48% wanted more off-campus opportunities.

Other ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic affected academic programming included diminished overall enrollment numbers; more leniency for students who wanted to take courses pass/fail instead of with letter grades in the spring 2020 and fall 2020 semesters; delays in program assessment through the five-year academic program review schedule; and delays in campus infrastructure upgrades

Pandemic conditions triggered a significant reduction in Academic Affairs and academic departmental operational funds, and these funds currently remain at diminished levels compared to pre-pandemic times. The reductions impact the curricular and co-curricular experiences that academic departments are able to provide to students. Creative solutions allowed continuing of some student and faculty scholarship during the pandemic. For example, the university's Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity, which occurs annually in April, pivoted successfully to an online format in both 2020 and 2021. However, funding for student and faculty research that had already been allocated in the 2019-20 academic year was abruptly terminated, which affected research productivity. Moreover, a number of faculty were asked to delay planned sabbaticals as a cost-cutting strategy; this will have lasting impacts on academic programs, given that sabbaticals allow faculty to enhance their skills and bring new direction to their teaching and research with students.

### Projections

#### Update the Academic Program Review Process

By the end of academic year 2022-2023, the Division of Academic Affairs and the Provost's Leadership Team will remedy delays in the existing academic program review cycle. The Division of Academic Affairs will institute a formal review of the program review cycle, process, and annual data collection, and will examine the makeup of constituencies involved in the program review process and follow-up, including the Division of Administration and Finance. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education will develop a program review process for graduate programs without external accreditation or approval.

#### Display Graduate Program Learning Outcomes

By the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education will make academic program learning outcomes for graduate programs easily accessible on the university's website and graduate catalog.

#### Continually Assess New Programs and Initiatives

Over the academic years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, the Office of Assessment and Planning will work with faculty and administration to develop assessment plans and conduct analyses over the next five years to measure the impact of initiatives such as MajorPlus, First-Year Seminar changes, the new general education Diversity content area requirement, and early college initiatives, such as dual enrollment programs.

In addition to ensuring assessment of new programs, the Division of Academic Affairs will work with the Division of Administration and Finance to increase accountability for delivering financial resources that were committed to new programs as part of the state Department of Higher Education's program approval process.

Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education's (DGCE) will conduct regular audits of undergraduate degree programs that are offered in the evening through DGCE to ensure that students have timely access to all courses needed for their degree programs.

#### Standard 5: Students

#### (Admissions, Fall Term)

Complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (see Standard 5.1)

Credit Seeking	Students Only - 1	Including Contir	uing Educatior	1	E.
0	3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current	Goal
	Prior	Prior	Prior	Year	(FY 2023)
	(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)
Freshmen - Undergraduate	?			· · ·	
Completed Applications	4,076	3,896	4,047	3,446	3,75
Applications Accepted	3,173	3,145	3,279	3,078	2,81
Applicants Enrolled	891	886	807	756	90
% Accepted of Applied	77.8%	80.7%	81.0%	89.3%	75.0
% Enrolled of Accepted	28.1%	28.2%	24.6%	24.6%	32.0
Percent Change Year over Year					
Completed Applications	na	-4.4%	3.9%	-14.9%	8.8
Applications Accepted	na	-0.9%	4.3%	-6.1%	-8.6
Applicants Enrolled	na	-0.6%	-8.9%	-6.3%	19.0
Average of statistical indicator of aptitude of					
enrollees: (define below) Adjusted High School GPA	3.3	3.32	3.39	3.36	2
		3.32	5.59	5.30	3.:
Transfers - Undergraduate					
Completed Applications	970	792	642	721	66
Applications Accepted	838	717	569	650	60
Applications Enrolled	547	498	369	384	34
% Accepted of Applied	86.4%	90.5%	88.6%	90.2%	91.5
% Enrolled of Accepted	65.3%	69.5%	64.9%	59.1%	56.9
Master's Degree					
Completed Applications	517	523	525	327	28
Applications Accepted	285	273	312	238	22
Applications Enrolled	90	80	202	170	24
% Accepted of Applied	55.1%	52.2%	59.4%	72.8%	79.0
% Enrolled of Accepted	31.6%	29.3%	64.7%	71.4%	106.1
First Professional Degree	2				
Completed Applications					
Applications Accepted					
Applications Enrolled					
% Accepted of Applied	-	-	-	-	
% Enrolled of Accepted	-	-	-	-	
Doctoral Degree	2				
Completed Applications					
Applications Accepted					
Applications Enrolled					
% Accepted of Applied	-	-	-	-	
% Enrolled of Accepted	-	-	-	-	

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below High School GPA adjusted to max 4.0

Goal based on past 3 year averages, change to common app may increase number of applications

# Standard 5: Students (Enrollment, Fall Term)

#### Complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (see Standard 5.1)

Credit-Seeking Students Only - Including Continuing Education

		3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current	Goal
		Prior (EV 2010)	Prior (EV 2020)	Prior (FY2021)	Year (FY 2022)	(FY 2023)
UNDERGRA	ADUATE ?	(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)
First Year	Full-Time Headcount	1.322	1.255	1,106	1,033	952
Part-Time He		368	396	319	393	408
Total Headcou		1,690	1,651	1,425	1,426	100
Total FTE	2	1,443	1,386	1,211	1,163	1,087
Second Year	Full-Time Headcount	1,021	1,030	947	814	757
Part-Time Hea		120	128	125	103	98
Total Headcou		1,141	1,158	1,072	917	
Total FTE		1,061	1,072	988	848	789
Third Year	Full-Time Headcount	975	989	1,025	953	947
Part-Time Hea	adcount	240	244	241	194	182
Total Headcou	int	1,215	1,233	1,266	1,147	
Total FTE		1,054	1,070	1,105	1,017	1,007
Fourth Year	Full-Time Headcount	842	802	790	772	750
	Part-Time Headcount	479	481	394	194	190
	Total Headcount	1,321	1,283	1,184	966	
	Total FTE	1,000	961	920	836	813
Unclassified	Full-Time Headcount ?	4	2	3	0	0
	Part-Time Headcount	9	5	8	4	4
	Total Headcount	13	7	11	4	
	Total FTE	7	4	6	1	1
Total Undergr	aduate Students				·	
	Full-Time Headcount	4,164	4,078	3,871	3,572	3,395
	Part-Time Headcount	1,216	1,254	1,087	888	644
	Total Headcount	5,380	5,332	4,958	4,460	4,038
	Total FTE	4,565	4,493	4,230	3,865	3,789
% Change	FTE Undergraduate	na	-1.6%	-5.9%	-8.6%	-2.0%
GRADUATE						
	Full-Time Headcount ?	167	173	168	160	158
	Part-Time Headcount ?	670	699	598	617	603
	Total Headcount	837	872	766	777	
	Total FTE ?	388	404	365	364	356
0	FTE Graduate	na	4.0%	-9.5%	-0.5%	-2.0%
GRAND TO						
Grand Total H		6,217	6,204	5,724	5,237	4,038
Grand Total F		4,953	4,897	4,595	4,229	4,145
% Change	Grand Total FTE	na	-1.1%	-6.2%	-8.0%	-2.0%

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

FTE = FT headcount +1/3 PT headcount

Projection based on average percentage change from past years.

#### Standard 5: Students (Financial Aid, Debt, Developmental Courses)

Complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (see Standard 5.1)

#### ? Where does the institution describe the students it seeks to serve?

University Mission Statement					
	(FY 2016)	(FY 2017)	(FY 2018)		
? Three-year Cohort Default Rate	5.9%	6.2%	6.0%		
? Three-year Loan repayment rate	67%	65%	66%		
(from College Scorecard)					
	3 Years	2 Years Prior	Most	Current	Goal
	(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)

? Student Financial Aid					
Total Federal Aid	\$26,801,872	\$26,192,176	\$23,027,965	\$21,450,480	\$19,927,496
Grants	\$7,846,585	\$7,787,375	\$7,160,739	\$6,563,693	\$6,189,563
Loans	\$18,765,220	\$18,144,931	\$15,693,641	\$14,886,787	\$13,800,052
Work Study	\$190,067	\$259,870	\$173,584	\$189,569	\$181,577
Total State Aid	\$6,177,285	\$6,447,677	\$6,675,042	\$7,402,620	\$7,868,985
Total Institutional Aid	\$2,746,465	\$3,067,571	\$2,883,168	\$2,507,400	\$2,444,715
Grants	\$2,746,465	\$3,067,571	\$2,883,168	\$2,507,400	\$2,444,715
Loans					
Total Private Aid	\$7,049,273	\$7,100,242	\$4,367,065	\$5,747,684	\$5,626,983
Grants	\$7,049,273	\$7,100,242	\$4,367,065	\$5,747,684	\$5,626,983
Loans					

#### Student Debt

Percent of students graduating with debt (include all students who graduated in this calculation)

Undergraduates	61%	78%	63%	65%	67%
Graduates	26%	34%	33%	29%	30%
First professional students					

For students with debt:

First professional students

#### Average amount of debt for students leaving the institution with a degree

Undergraduates	\$24,420	\$26,504	\$26,562	\$28,753	\$26,560
Graduates	\$21,578	\$27,615	\$19,753	\$17,826	\$26,560
First professional students	\$4,850		\$1,750		\$3,300
Average amount of debt for students leaving the institution with	nout a degree				
Undergraduates	\$11,757	\$11,029	\$13,603	\$12,060	\$12,112
Graduate Students	\$18,939		\$11,759	\$16,965	\$15,888

#### Percent of First-year students in Developmental Courses (courses for which no credit toward a degree is granted)

English as a Second/Other Language	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
English (reading, writing, communication skills)	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Math	15%	7%	8%	15%	8%

50

Other			

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below Goal based on average % change UD debt based on 6 year grad cohort, GD debt based on 3 year grad cohort

#### Standard 5: Students (Student Diversity)

#### Complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (see Standard 5.1)

For each type of diversity important to your institution (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, first generation status, Pell eligibility), provide information on student admissions and enrollment below. Use current year data.

Undergraduate Admissions information	Completed Applications	Applicants Accepted	Applicants Enrolled		
Gender					
Male	2,728	2,441	694		
Female	1,427	1,275	442		
Unknown	12	12			
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaska Native	5	4	2		
Asian	180	165	59		
Black or African American	420	339	99		
Hispanic or Latino (of any Race)	639	560	185		
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	1			
White	46	43	14		
Two or more Races	109	97	25		
Race or Ethnicity Unknown	143	123	39		
Non-Resident Alien	2,624	2,396	713		
Generational Status	- ,	- ,			
First Generation	1,907	1,672	549		
Continuing Generation	2,260	2,056	587		
Pell Eligibility	2,200	2,000	507		
Pell Eligible	1,271	1,147	437		
Pell Ineligible	2,896	2,581	699		
Graduate Admissions information	Completed Applications	Applicants Accepted	Applicants Enrolled		
Gender					
Male	308	231	157		
Female	90	53	37		
Unknown	1				
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1	1		
Asian	17	9	5		
Black or African American	13	7	5		
Hispanic or Latino (of any Race)	25	19	10		
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	1			
White	288	218	154		
Two or more Races	6	3	3		
Race or Ethnicity Unknown	32	23	15		
Non-Resident Alien	14	3	13		
Undergraduate Enrollment information	Full-time Students	Part-time Students	Total Headcount	FTE	Headcount Goal (FY 2023)
Gender	(24)	(0)	100	154	
Male	634	60	490	654	4
Female	423	19	317	429	31
Race/Ethnicity					
Asian	55	4	59	56	
Black or African American	89	10	99	92	
Hispanic or Latino (of any Race)	166	19	185	172	1
White	671	42	713	685	6
Two or more Races	35	42	39	36	0
		4	25		
Race or Ethnicity Unknown	25			25	
Non-Resident Alien	14		14	14	
First Generation			I		
First Generation	500	49	549	516	5.
Continuing Generation	557	30	587	567	5
Pell Eligibility					
Pell Eligible	403	34	437	414	4
Pell Ineligible	654	45	699	669	6
Graduate Enrollment information	Full-time Students	Part-time Students	Total Headcount	FTE	Headcount Goal (FY 2023)
Gender					
Female	58	79	137	84	1:
Male	3	30	33	13	
Race/Ethnicity					
Asian	1	4	5	2	
Black or African American	1	4	5	2	
Hispanic or Latino (of any Race)	3	2	5	4	
White	52	85	137	80	1.
Two or more Races	52	3	3	1	1
	4	3 9		7	
Race or Ethnicity Unknown	4		13		
Non-Resident Alien	1	1	1	0	
Please enter any explanatory notes in the box be FTE= FT headcount + 1/3 PT headcount	elow				
	ange from enrollm				

#### STANDARD FIVE: STUDENTS

#### Description

Consistent with its mission, Worcester State University enrolls students who are broadly representative of populations within the Central Massachusetts region and the City of Worcester. In doing so, the university provides a liberal arts education that supports the needs and interests of students and the broader community. In addition to academic preparation, students find at the institution a variety of engagement activities that prepare them to understand civic responsibilities as citizens of a local and global community. Information regarding services, policies, and activities are widely available throughout the university's website, electronic catalogs, electronic student handbooks, pamphlets, and social media presences. These resources are available to potential students/families and enrolled undergraduate and graduate students.

As shown in the institution's most recent Fact Book, the fall 2021 student body stood at a total headcount of 5,417 students, 67.2% of which indicated Worcester County as their place of residence. Included in this total were 3,575 full-time and 1,065 part-time undergraduate students and 160 full-time and 617 part-time graduate students. Within these totals, 4,271 were degree-seeking undergraduate students and 636 were degree-seeking graduate students. Degree-seeking undergraduate students resided on campus at a rate of 30%. The quality of undergraduate students applying for admission has remained consistent. The average high school grade point average of applying students since fall 2019 is consistently in the 3.3 range.

Among demographic categories documented for fall 2021, 62% of degree-seeking undergraduates identified as female and 38% as male; 45.3% were first-generation degree seekers. In keeping with the university's vision of creating a more diverse community, 32% of degree-seeking undergraduates identified as ALANA/BIPOC (African, Latine, Asian, Native American and/or Black, Indigenous, People of Color) students, up slightly from 30% in fall 2017 – but up significantly from 18% in fall 2012. The fall 2021 percentage of ALANA/BIPOC students compares with United States Census Bureau data from July 2021 that estimates the percentage of non-white residents responding to ALANA/BIPOC categories as roughly 24.2% for Worcester County and 43.9% for the City of Worcester.

#### **Admissions**

First-year undergraduate admission to the university is guided by admissions standards established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Higher Education (DHE) and <u>published by the state</u> on the DHE's website. These standards are repeated on the <u>Undergraduate Admissions</u> page on the institution's website and in the undergraduate catalog. The catalog also publishes additional criteria for admission required by two selective undergraduate programs. Since fall 2018, the university no longer requires the submission of SAT or ACT scores for undergraduate admissions. <u>Undergraduate transfer admissions criteria</u> are determined by the institution, subject to state-level policies such as those articulated in the state's <u>MassTransfer</u> program, and are also published on the Undergraduate Admissions page on the website. Further information on these admissions policies and on other matters such as advanced placement, veteran/military applicants, and high school equivalency applicants are centralized in the university's undergraduate catalog. Both the website and the undergraduate catalog publish minimum retention and persistence requirements; program-specific retention and persistence requirements are published in the undergraduate catalog.

As a public institution, Worcester State University provides programs that encourage pre-college students to seek higher education, including the institution's early college and dual enrollment initiatives, the 100 Males to College program, the Alternatives for Individual Development program, and a summer bridge program run by the Office of Multicultural Affairs. The three latter programs offer pipeline services and access for first-generation college, economically disadvantaged, and ALANA/BIPOC students who may or may not meet all stated academic criteria. These programs provide students with the opportunity to develop university-
level skills and acquire university-level credits, so that they begin their semester of entry ready to undertake the rigors of the university academic experience. Once admitted, ALANA/BIPOC students are mentored through the Office of Multicultural Affairs. The university structures all these paths of entry through written agreements or memoranda of understanding.

Undergraduate students who enter as first-time matriculants with a high school grade point average greater than 2.7 may bypass competency assessments and take degree-credit-bearing courses in mathematics and English. First-time matriculants, as well as undergraduate transfer students who need to fulfill university general education requirements, who do not meet the GPA criterion, undergo placement testing in mathematics, English, and reading in order to demonstrate mathematics and literacy competency and guide placement in the appropriate mathematics and English courses. The Departments of English and Mathematics have developed "co-requisite" models, allowing students whose placement testing results indicate they would benefit from advanced support when enrolling in degree-eligible credit-bearing courses. The co-requisite model was launched in fall 2020, during the first full semester of pandemic conditions; reliable data on its efficacy is still being gathered. When necessary, remedial mathematics courses offered through the Mathematics Department and remedial reading courses offered through the Education Department are available to students. Undergraduate students receive academic support through the university's Academic Success Center, Mathematics Lab, Writing Center, and Aisiku STEM Center, which offers specialized peer tutoring in STEM subjects.

<u>University data</u> show that application of admissions criteria and provisions for academic support result in a first-year retention rate of between 77% and 79% during the most recent five-year period documented in said data. Data for six-year graduation rates for entering cohorts shows an improvement from 55.8% to 58.6% over the most recent five-year period documented in said data.

Graduate school entry requires a minimum of a 3.0 undergraduate grade point average. Additional criteria for acceptance vary among graduate programs, but all use holistic criteria in making enrollment decisions. Overall, as shown in Data First Forms for Standard Five, the percentage of applicants accepted to graduate study increased from 55.1% of applicants in FY19 to 78.2% in FY22; during the same period, the percentage of applicants who enrolled in graduate study increased from 31.6% to 71.4%. Along with specific criteria in various programs, these increases have been made possible by the institution's expanding the raw number of its graduate programs and, with permission from the Commission, by launching a limited number of fully online graduate programs.

## Student Services and Co-Curricular Experiences

A main goal of the university's current strategic plan is to "Provide all students with a transformative, holistic educational experience with a path to timely degree completion and solid preparation for advanced academic studies or career success." Recognizing that its student constituencies cover both undergraduate and graduate students, students from diverse backgrounds, and students with disparate educational and career goals, the university offers services through offices distributed among the divisions of Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Academic Affairs.

As listed on the institution's <u>website</u>, these services include, but are not limited to, Academic Support Services, Career Services, Counseling Services, Health Services, and Student Accessibility Services. Support for students also includes, but is not limited to, coordination of student academic, financial, health, and social services by the university's Retention Office, and diversity, equity, and inclusion programming and outreach by the university's Office of Multicultural Affairs. All students are assigned faculty advisors who meet with them periodically to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress in the major of their choice. For first-year and new undergraduate transfer students, the Academic Success Center functions as academic advising support, as it places new students in First-Year Seminar sections, registers new students in their first semester of classes

at the university, and advises students who have yet to declare a major. Students responding to an institutional survey administered in 2020 (n = 708) rated at 5.6 on a seven-point scale the item "I have had satisfactory interactions with faculty and staff who provide academic and career guidance."

All undergraduate students are assigned a faculty advisor in their major or, for undeclared students, from among other faculty. Beginning in the second semester of their first year, students meet regularly with their faculty advisor for scheduling support, major and general education advice, and career development. For departments that want this support, as well as for undeclared students, first-year advising is handled by academic advising professionals in the Academic Success Center. Students are provided with online guides to advising and course selection as well as videos explaining how to use the <u>academic advising</u> and scheduling support software, <u>Student Planning</u>, along with an interactive tutorial on it. Students receive advising support through first-year and transfer orientations as well as their first-year seminars. In addition to providing direct advising, the Academic Success Center is a key resource for students seeking advice about course scheduling, help with course material, or support regarding other, more general university policies and procedures.

In the years leading up to the pandemic years, the university documented increasing demand for <u>Student</u> <u>Accessibility Services</u> (SAS) and mental health services through the Counseling Center – a trend the pandemic accelerated. SAS coordinates support services and programs that enable equal access to education and university life for students with disabilities, including temporary or permanent challenges with mental health, chronic health, sensory ability, physical health/mobility, and learning ability. Accommodations and services are individually determined, based on any functional limitation(s) identified by a diagnostic evaluation and during an intake interview. SAS collaborates with academic advisors, faculty, the Counseling Center, residence life, health services, and athletics to help ensure that students have a positive, supportive university experience. Staff members include a full-time, year-round learning specialist who provides one-on-one support and helps students establish a consistent and confidential relationship with SAS.

The Counseling Center offers services by appointment but also provides students with published triage/walkin hours, after-hours on-call responses, and emergency mental health services in cooperation with the University of Massachusetts Memorial Medical Center. The Counseling Center also engages in mental health outreach, including the student organization Active Minds, which pursues peer-led stigma-reduction programming and activity-based stress reduction programming; the Student Support Network, a six-week training program held every semester that trains students in recognizing and responding to peers who may be in distress; and a considerable array of sexual violence prevention and response efforts. The Counseling Center helps coordinate the university's Student Intervention Team, which takes a multidisciplinary approach to addressing reports of disruptive or concerning student behavior prior to a critical incident, as recommended by the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association. In addition, the university fields the Student Support Network (SSN), which is a student-based, six-week gatekeeper training to provide students with the skills to recognize, respond to, and refer their peers who may be in distress. These programs increase student connectedness and help identify students at risk. Each semester, in an effort to provide trauma support to survivors, the university offers a Projections Sexual Assault Survivors Support group and, in collaboration with the Athletic Office, conducts an Athlete Life Skills Program to provide athletes with the skills needed to balance their academic success, athletic success, and personal well-being.

In recognizing its diverse student body, the institution supports ALANA/BIPOC students through the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA). OMA provides ALANA/BIPOC students with wraparound services and academic support to supplement other services and clubs that provide a sense of belonging on campus. OMA hosts student organizations such as the <u>Third World Alliance</u>, which brings diversity and enhances pluralism on campus through campus and community activities that reflect the unique cultural backgrounds of those within the Worcester State University community. Events include Latin Heritage Month, Black History Month, the Multicultural Party, and Courageous Conversations, focusing on social justice, as well as lectures by special guests. The LGBTQ+ Alliance promotes gender inclusive housing opportunities and inclusiveness

on campus. In fall 2019, a policy was established that allowed all students, faculty, and staff to choose a preferred name, personal pronouns, and gender identity. Gender inclusive housing is available in the residence halls, and there is a growing number of academic courses with an LGBTQ+ focus. The institution opened an LGBTQ+ Resource Center and created a ten-hour-per-week, non-benefitted position for a coordinator of the LGBTQ+ Resource Center. The LGBTQ+ Resource Center is a safe space dedicated to advocating for the needs of LGBTQ+ students and their allies and works closely with the LGBTQ+ Alliance.

New matriculants are introduced to the institution's array of student services at the New Student Orientation Program, which consists of three two-day programs held in June; five Parent Orientation programs held each spring; two Transfer Orientation programs held each August; and a Winter Orientation program held every January. General topics for these programs include academics and related support services, student services, Title IX/sexual assault information, student conduct information, commuter and residence life information, and information about student leadership opportunities. The university provides students with written documentation of policies and procedures expected as members of the academic community, primarily through the Student Handbook, published annually by the Division of Student Affairs, and the document Code of Conduct and the Conduct System, which is updated as needed by the Division of Student Affairs. Policies contained in these documents address all aspects of student life, so that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities, with clearly defined processes to follow in cases where a grievance process is invoked.

Career Services has expanded the breadth of employers that have been granted authorization in LancerLinkpowered by Handshake to recruit for internships and job opportunities and post corporate sponsored inperson and virtual events. Fortune 500 companies and nonprofit organization are now all vetted utilizing consistent inclusion/exclusion rules. A new position in Career Services has allowed for the continued growth of more than 10,000 employer relationships coupled with 39,273 approved internships/jobs and 687 employer sponsored events during the 2021-2022 academic year. Career Services has been able to host campuswide programming and has purposefully collaborated with academic departments, professors, alumni services, student services entities, and student groups to design and facilitate individualized programming.

Civic duty through community engagement and public good is a focus of the institution's 2020-2025 Strategic Goals. Over the last three years, the university's John J. Binienda Center for Civic Engagement engaged students in volunteer work, with notable service during the pandemic. The center also participated in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Student Engagement (NSLVE) on voter registration and voting rates. In 2016 only 5.7% of Worcester State University students voted in the general election; however, 69.1% voted in the 2020 election. In 2018, the university was awarded a gold standard for student voting rates. Worcester State University's commitment to volunteerism, civic engagement, and service learning enabled the institution to earn the Community Engagement Classification by the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching in 2015, and the university was named a member of the National ASPA's on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement.

Through an initiative called Circles of Leadership, students engage in a three-tiered leadership program offering them different workshop series for emerging leaders to learn about engagement strategies and to excel in leadership roles. Workshop sessions include personal leadership style exploration, communication, problem solving, and diversity and inclusion training. In 2018, the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Development (OSILD) was launched along with a <u>leadership website</u> that includes all leadership opportunities, a leadership blog, and resources for student leaders.

The <u>Financial Aid Office</u> assists students and families with the process and guidelines of financing their education. Functions on the Student Financial Services web page helps ensure that students have a clear understanding of their financial aid options while attending the university and their financial responsibility after leaving the institution. Because financial aid packages are based on students' unique circumstances, a financial aid counselor is assigned to work with all students receiving aid throughout their careers at Worcester State University. The process for applying for financial aid is available on a designated website, and securing financial aid is a topic that receives much attention during Open House and New Student Orientation events.

Strategy 2.2 under Goal 2 of the university's 2020-2025 strategic plan directs the institution to "Promote student leadership development proactively, inclusively, and equitably." A variety of student-led opportunities on campus are designed to develop leadership qualities among the student body. Some of the major student organizations include Active Minds, Presidential Student Ambassadors, Commuter Activities Board, Dance Company, Enactus, Games Club, Student Government, Student Events Committee, Third World Alliance, and the university's radio station, WSUR. In addition to these larger groups, there are more than 25 smaller special groups, including faith/spiritual groups, cultural groups, and other general-interest groups. Since 2018, there has been an increased interest in faith/spiritual-based groups, as well as cultural groups. Through the <u>International Programs</u> Office, opportunities are afforded for students to "study away," engage in research, and travel locally and within the U.S. to deepen their global experience. The university's Commonwealth Honors Program also provides opportunities for leadership development. A co-curricular transcript documenting student participation in leadership development activities was developed by the Innovation subcommittee of the President's Cabinet, and approved by the Cabinet, immediately prior to the onset of pandemic conditions; the impacts of COVID-19 on campus activities have delayed implementation of this initiative.

The Athletics and Wellness offices supports the university in providing a high quality, affordable education and a caring environment that promotes the <u>total development</u> of the student. The staff provides students with opportunities to grow and learn through intercollegiate varsity athletics, intramurals, and wellness programs. The institution develops student athletes through participation in a range of NCAA Division III sports, supported by more than 50 full- and part-time staff. The Athletics Office complies with all NCAA standards, including those related to Financial Aid reporting, academic expectations, and standards of academic integrity. The office collaborates with Student Affairs to provide training on safety, including substance misuse and gambling; Title IX; student conduct, including integrity, hazing, and sexual violence; and health and wellbeing, among other topics.

Some student athletes are accepted into the university through the Request for Special Consideration for Admission process. Student athletes admitted through this process must adhere to strict academic benchmarks. During the first year, they are provided with academic support to demonstrate that they have the desire and capacity to engage in academic work at the university level. These student athletes receive academic support during mandatory Team Study Halls four times each week. Student attendance at these sessions is closely monitored. An Athletics staff member has the direct responsibility to oversee each student's academic progress. Beginning from the first year, student athletes who meet entrance requirements must maintain a 2.0 overall grade point average, and the grade point average expectation is increased every year until graduation.

The Student Affairs Division is a sixteen-office unit that interacts with students through teaching, mentoring, advising, and counseling. Curriculum vitae provided as supporting documentation for the self-study show that staff are educated and trained through licensures, such as the staff in <u>Health Services and Counseling Services</u>, and staff in other offices are trained through nationally recognized professional organizations such as the National Collegiate Athletic Association, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, American College Personnel Association, National Association for Campus Activities, Handshake Career and Internship Services, as well as higher education compliance requirements such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title IX regulations, Biennial Review of the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program, as well as campus-specific training through Human Resources, which includes diversity/equity/inclusion training. All staff remain current in the field of practice in keeping with their continuous improvement responsibility. Staff are encouraged to become members, read articles, and attend webinars, workshops, and conferences that align with their functional areas to remain current with higher education trends and to meet generational student needs. All Student Affairs staff are trained within their departments to respond to student financial, medical, or personal crises or to refer students to appropriate support services on and off campus.

Ongoing collaboration between campus constituents occurs to ensure that student services are equipped to meet students' needs. Policies and procedures are reviewed on a yearly basis within each department to be in accordance with applicable laws and to ensure the purpose and goal of the policy still exists or if it needs to be modified or removed.

Worcester State University provides every student with access to printed documents advising them of their <u>academic rights and ethical standards</u> that are expected of them as members of the community. This information is made available to students during orientation and is available online. Students are advised of their rights and responsibilities, and there are established procedures for students to file grievances and seek representation that is unbiased.

Students records are held confidentially. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has specific document safety and data destruction rules, to which the university adheres. Worcester State University complies fully with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, protecting the privacy of education records and establishing students' rights. Under Massachusetts General Law Ch. 93H § 2, businesses must protect any personal information they have on state residents, which, for the university, means restricting access to records (both paper and electronic), implementing security measures, and having a written comprehensive information security program in place.

Through the Office of Institutional Research, periodic survey research provides a snapshot of students' perception of the services offered by the university.

## Appraisal

## Admissions

The university has experienced a decrease in total enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students over the past five years — although it should be noted that in the fall semesters of 2017, 2018, and 2019, the university brought in its three largest first-year classes, and the decline in undergraduate enrollment between fall 2017 and fall 2019 represented only a 3% difference. As shown in Data First Forms for Standard Five, overall full-time undergraduate enrollment, including first-year and transfer students, most recently decreased from 4,164 in FY19 to 3,572 in FY22. Total graduate student enrollment decreased from 837 in FY19 to 777 in FY22. This three-year span of decline can be partially attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic; nevertheless, it has created a financial challenge analyzed at length in discussion of Standard Seven in this self-study. On a positive note, even during this overall decline, the percentage of ALANA/BIPOC members among the matriculated undergraduate student population remained steady, having increased from 16% to 32% over a tenyear period as a result of recruitment and retention efforts by the university.

Data First Forms for Standard Five show that the institution historically has accepted between 77% and 81% of first-year applicants and enrolled roughly 28% of accepted applicants. Pandemic conditions affected this steady ratio in fall 2020 and 2021, with enrollment yield dropping about four points. The university adopted the Common Application (Common App) in the admissions cycle for fall 2022, with the effect that first-year applications and acceptances have greatly increased. An undergraduate admissions data report dated June 24, 2022, shows a jump in applications from 4,687 pre-Common App to 5,670 in the first year of Common App participation. Likewise, acceptances rose from 3,649 pre-Common App to 4,556 in the first year of Common App participation. To account for this increased volume of applicants and accepted students, the university's Office of Admissions has adjusted yield assumptions lower — from about 30% to 20-22% — although it identifies a fall 2022 goal of 900 new first-year students enrolled, compared to 886 new first-year students enrolled in the fall 2019 semester, preceding the onset of pandemic conditions and their effects on admissions and enrollment.

Data First Forms for Standard Five show steady decreases in transfer student enrollment since FY19; 547 transfers enrolled in FY19, which declined to 384 enrolled in FY22. From fall 2019 to fall 2021, the Massachusetts community college sector experienced an 18% decrease in total enrollment. As the primary source of transfer students, especially from Quinsigamond Community College, this decrease has had a significant effect on Worcester State University's transfer student applications. The initial drop in transfer enrollment can also be correlated to a shift in the admissions policies of several Massachusetts private colleges and universities, which were approved by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE) to form agreements with community colleges based upon the MassTransfer program and named the Massachusetts Independent College Transfer Guarantee. This agreement extends to these private institutions the same MassTransfer benefits that had, until this time, been exclusive to the public higher education system in the Commonwealth. The result was a larger array of institutions from which community college transfer students could choose, with each institution representing a smaller piece of the overall transfer "pie." Since then, two other factors have impacted Worcester State University's transfer numbers. First, public universities in some of the other New England states, primarily the University of Maine campuses, began to offer in-state tuition to residents of the other five New England states. Second, many four-year institutions in the region have increased their maximum community college transfer credit limits to 75 (or more in some select instances); Worcester State University allows a maximum of 72 transfer credits from a two-year college. Like the expanded "pie" available to potential transfer students, these factors have provided further reason for students to consider transfer options other than Worcester State University.

The university experienced an increase in fall 2021 transfer admissions subsequent to the closing of nearby Becker College. Particularly, nursing students from Becker College received support through required courses to maintain their academic progress in an intensive course of study, although students from a variety of majors transferred to Worcester State University that year.

Declines in undergraduate admissions have led the institution to increase recruitment efforts and expand some demographic regions of recruitment. These efforts include the MajorPlus curriculum initiative. The Enrollment Management Division has developed a range of retention strategies and supports Early College programming with some regional high schools. As well, beginning in summer 2020, specialized Safe Return groups were developed on campus to support the immediate needs of the university due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of these groups, Student Academic Support, identified resources and services that would be essential for students' success during and beyond pandemic conditions. From this group, a new course, ED 191 Lancer Learning, was developed for new first-year students. This free three-credit course was hosted in an online format and taught by faculty members at the university. Additionally, staff (during summer 2020) and peer mentor students (during summer 2021) assisted in the course. The course provided college preparation resources, educated students on university services, addressed college-level writing expectations, and aided in literacy skills to support college demands. In summer 2021, 93% of the 174 total students who enrolled in and completed the course received a passing grade in the course and reported gains in their college preparation skills as they entered their first full-time semester in college. This course has since been discontinued, with key elements having been folded into regular first-year programming for first-year students.

Online course enrollment has increased across the university. This has been due partially to the COVID-19 pandemic. Institutional data comparing the last pre-pandemic fall semester (2019) with the most recent fall semester (2021) show that the number of online undergraduate course sections rose by 53% and the number of online graduate course sections rose by 84%. The Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE) continues to expand online course delivery. For example, DGCE recently expanded the winter session term and formatted it as 100% online.

Electronic documentation portals for <u>financial aid</u> offerings are now used for all students to upload necessary materials while maintaining personal identifiable information (PII) privacy. The process for applying for financial aid is available on a designated <u>website</u>. Student financial aid awards adhere to all federal guidelines.

These are presented at recruitment fairs, at orientation, and during open house events. For FY20, 4,496 students received financial aid, with an average award of \$10,524. Additionally, 611 scholarships were awarded. Approximately 68% of students receive a financial aid award. Awards and grants disbursed to students have increased year over year with an average total of \$29 million, save for the 2020 pandemic year.

#### Student Services and Co-Curricular Experiences

Orientation sessions give new and potential students an opportunity to know more about services on campus. Figure 1 provides a snapshot of students who attended orientation sessions. The orientation sessions are better attended in the fall than in the spring. Incorporation of the online orientation platform Comevo into orientation activities was introduced in summer 2021, primarily because of the pandemic, as a virtual orientation program to complement the in-person orientation program. Access to Comevo by new students was promoted during any in-person programming and via email throughout July and August. All first-year and transfer students were required to complete an assigned Comevo module prior to the start of the semester. First Year Orientation (FYO) and Transfer Orientation. In an effort to support new undergraduate students in the advising and registration process, the Academic Success Center hosts a series of workshops in the weeks prior to the advising and registration period. The data (see Figure 2, 3 & 4) relate to attendance at these events. Issues concerning students who are placed in a wrong course are quickly addressed and remedied.

In 2016, the university launched "Five Points of Action towards a More Inclusive Campus Climate" and a Bias Incident Report Team, which join the university's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in protecting against discrimination and in carrying out programming that brings together people of diverse backgrounds from across the campus. In 2021, the institution created the Office of the General Counsel. The role of the counsel is to provide legal expertise to the university's president, Executive Cabinet, and Human Resources office and to collaborate with all offices on campus to meet equal opportunity, diversity, and affirmative action initiatives.

In order for services to improve, additional training and dialogue needs to occur across campus specifically for the following populations: ALANA/BIPOC, LGBTQ+, first-generation, and low-income students; students with disabilities; veteran students; and adult learners. Enrollment among these populations is on the rise, and the university will be competing to retain them if services are not more holistic, flexible, and adaptable. For instance, creating protocols and practices in responding to micro- and macro-aggressions will assist in fostering a more inclusive environment as well as setting the tone for the campus. ALANA/BIPOC students on campus in a recent town hall meeting expressed the desire for more residential directors (RDs) and counselors who share a common ethnicity with them, as some ALANA/BIPOC students do not feel comfortable sharing concerns with counselors who do not share their ethnic background. Regarding support for LGBTQ+ community members, the university's score of a 4.5 out of 5 on the Campus Pride Index Survey is higher than most institutions in Massachusetts, above others located in Worcester, and on par with large research institutions. The institution has hired a full-time LGBTQ+ resource coordinator, to begin in fall 2022, as further support for students. It has also hired a new Veterans Services coordinator, to begin in fall 2022. However, a recent campus initiative carried out during the 2021-2022 academic year by an external consultant to provide an assessment of the campus climate as it pertained to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) indicated that, although the institution has been making efforts towards improving the perception of the campus DEI initiatives, the campus community is not as welcoming as it was believed to be. The institution consistently scored in the 2<sup>+</sup> range, signifying only limited evidence that the connections between the university's stated goals and realities are clear.

The number of students taking advantage of Student Accessibility Services has increased substantially over the last ten years. Currently, the students registered with SAS represent about 10% of the total student population (see Figure 5). Over the last 10 years, student-to-professional staff ratios have remained roughly the same. In 2010, there was one full-time director and a part-time learning specialist for a student-to-staff ratio of 1:120. In 2020, SAS employed one full-time director, a full-time assistant director, and a full-time accessibility specialist for a student-to-staff ratio of about 1:118. Thus, while staff have been added to the SAS office, the student-to-staff ratio has not significantly changed.

As well, the Counseling Center has seen substantial increases in demand. Institutional data show that, in comparison to FY18, when it assisted 561 students, the center assisted 652 students in FY22 – an increase of 14%. The need for triage/walk-in services has increased significantly and progressively: between FY18 and FY22, triage/walk-in numbers escalated from 17 to 113, 241, 119 (the pandemic year, when on-campus operations were at a minimum), and 232. In spring 2022, the Counseling Center hired staff into two additional counselor positions, to begin employment in the fall. The Counseling Center is undergoing renovations in order to add two additional office spaces as well as a restructuring of departmental titles and responsibilities to better reflect the needs of students and the work being done. One example is the addition of a multicultural mental health outreach specialist. This position will assist the Counseling Center in its focus on outreach efforts to ALANA/BIPOC students, in an effort to increase access to services and strengthen on-campus partnerships.

Beginning in spring 2019, Worcester State University become a member of the JED Campus Program, a four-year program designed to assist the institution through a collaborative process of developing comprehensive systems, programs, and policies with customized support to build on existing student mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention efforts. In 2019, as part of this initiative, the university completed the Healthy Minds study, which provided mental health and well-being-related data specific to the Worcester State University community. Since that time, this data has been utilized to inform the community of student needs and to shape the institution's mental health and well-being strategic plan and enhance already existing mental health, substance misuse, and suicide prevention efforts. Currently, the institution is in the final year of the implementation process for the JED program. In fall 2022, the university will be completing a final self-assessment and administering a post-Healthy Minds study to students. This evaluation will continue to inform work moving forward.

# **COVID-19 and Students**

Since March 2020, the pandemic has impacted students at Worcester State University in terms of their educational experience, their emotional/mental well-being, and their financial situations. Most significant was the fact that students had to pivot from primarily a face-to-face instructional modality to a 100% virtual online instructional modality for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester and for a large portion of the 2020-2021 academic year. Aware that inequities exist in access to the internet and in student/family economic capacity, the university initiated a program for loaning students laptop computers in order to complete their courses in a virtual modality.

The institution provided for faculty development in supporting students new to remote teaching from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Early in March 2020, the university's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) partnered with university IT Blackboard staff to create a schedule of drop-in sessions and workshops focused on remote learning. A total of 22 trainings were offered to faculty during the spring 2020 semester. In these sessions, faculty reviewed the basics of Blackboard, tools for asynchronous and synchronous instruction, secure online testing options (Respondus LockDown Browser), accessibility and closed captioning, and using tools such as YouTube, Google Drive, and Perusall. The CTL reached 110 faculty representing 22 departments at the University. During the summer of 2020, the CTL offered 24 workshops for faculty on topics that would help prepare faculty for teaching in new ways during the pandemic. Some faculty members taught in a blended format during the fall 2020 semester, and many taught fully online. Workshop topics included Open Educational Resources, flipped classrooms, backward design, and trauma-informed pedagogy.

To address student mental health concerns while the university operated in a remote modality, the Counseling Center created protocols for virtual counseling sessions and services. As well, the university employed a comprehensive retention strategy that included coordination by the Office of Retention and campus volunteers connecting personally with each undergraduate student through a phone call, text message, or Zoom meeting.

Finally, grants to students increased during the first pandemic year, due primarily to appropriations from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Security (CARES) Act and the university's Student Emergency Fund (see Fact Book 2020, p. 95). In fall 2021, approximately \$3.3 million in American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act disbursements began, governed by an equitable distribution methodology and managed by the university's Division of Enrollment Management and Office of Internal Controls and Risk Management. A total of 5,259 students received disbursements ranging from \$150 to \$1,200, with approximately 75% of students receiving \$600 or more. The university was able to help students clear outstanding account balances before sending grant monies directly to students. At the local level, the university's Student Emergency Fund helped provide support for students by providing limited emergency financial support for assistance with unexpected, unforeseen, and unavoidable emergency circumstances that jeopardized students' ability to continue in their academic programs. The Student Emergency Fund became a major and successful fundraising effort for the Office of University Advancement.

One result of these student financial aid infusions is that students have grown accustomed to receiving large sums of funding, such as those included in the CARES Act.

## Projections

## Improve Services to Underrepresented Students

By the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, the Division of Student Affairs will evaluate the effectiveness of services for underrepresented groups, based on its recent moves to hire individuals who are better equipped to adequately address the needs of students from diverse populations, including BIPOC/ALANA, LGBTQ+, first-generation, and low-income students; students with disabilities; veteran students; and adult learners. The assistant dean for Student Accessibility Services will use data from the Student Accessibility Services student dashboard to determine any further staffing needs and additional types of student assistive technology.

## Mount a Campus-Wide Response to Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the university will be prepared to address the mental and emotional health needs of all students, especially first-year students, in a post-COVID crisis environment. Beginning in November 2022, the vice president for Student Affairs and dean of students and the associate dean of students will work with an outside provider who provides consultation on suicide prevention and response. The vice president for Student Affairs and dean of students and the associate dean of students affairs and dean of students will complete a final JED Campus Program self-assessment and administer a post-Healthy Minds study to students by May 2023. This will continue to inform the university's work moving forward.

## Continue COVID-Era Retention Strategies for Undergraduate Students

Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Office of Retention will systematize, carry out, and evaluate the personalized retention contacts with undergraduate students, with the aim of improving retention.

#### Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship (Faculty by Category and Rank; Academic Staff by Category, Fall Term)

3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current Year
Prior	Prior	Prior	
(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)

#### ? Number of Faculty by category Full-time 207 208 209 208 Part-time Adjunct 421 299 345 346 Clinical Research Visiting Other; specify below: Total 628 507 554 554 Percentage of Courses taught by full-time faculty 51% 55% 61% 65%

#### ? Number of Faculty by rank, if applicable

Professor	76	76	78	74
Associate	54	54	52	49
Assistant	62	65	68	61
Instructor	15	13	11	24
Other; specify below:				
Adjunct	421	299	345	346
Total	628	507	554	554

#### ? Number of Academic Staff by category

Librarians	14	14	14	12
Advisors	6	5	6	8
Instructional Designers	2	2	3	3
Other; specify below:				
Total	22	21	23	23

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Adjunct faculty includes FT staff teaching courses.

# Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship (Highest Degrees, Fall Term)

	(11)	ignest Degrees,			
		3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current Year
		Prior	Prior	Prior	
?		(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)
II' I D E I	Destaurt		/		
Highest Degree Earned:		74	7.	70	74
Faculty	Professor	76	76	78	74
	Associate	49	49	50	48
	Assistant	59	59	65	59
	Instructor	1	1	1	4
	No rank	205	82	164	174
	Other				
	Total	390	267	358	359
Academic Staff	Librarians				
	Advisors	1			
	Inst. Designers	1			
Other; specify*	Ilist. Designers				
Highest Degree Earned:	Master's				
Faculty	Professor				
	Associate	5	5	2	1
	Assistant	3	5	3	2
	Instructor	14	12	10	20
	No rank	169	156	164	155
	Other				
	Total	191	178	179	178
Academic Staff	Librarians	6	6	8	7
	Advisors	3	3	4	6
	Inst. Designers	1	1	2	2
Other; specify*					
Highest Degree Earned:	Bachelor's				
Faculty	Professor				
	Associate				
	Assistant				
	Instructor				
	No rank	22	20	15	12
			20	15	12
	Other		20	45	
	Total	22	20	15	12
Academic Staff	Librarians	3	6	4	4
	Advisors	1	2	1	2
	Inst. Designers	1	1	1	1
Other; specify*					
	D				
Highest Degree Earned:					
Faculty	Professor				
	Associate				
	Assistant				
	Instructor				
	No rank	2	2	1	4
	Other				
	Total	2	2	1	4
Academic Staff	Librarians				
	Advisors				
	Inst. Designers				
Other; specify*	mat. Designers				
Other, specify					
Highest Degree Earned:	Unknown				
Faculty	Professor				
Tacuity					
	Associate				
	Assistant				
	Instructor				
	No rank	23	39	1	1
	Other				
	Total	23	39	1	1
	1000	25	57	1	1
	<b>.</b>				
Academic Staff	Librarians	5	2	2	1
	Advisors	1		1	
	Inst. Designers				
Other; specify*					
-					

#### Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship (Appointments, Tenure, Departures, Retirements, Teaching Load Full Academic Year)

		3 Ye Pri		2 Ye Pri		1 Ye Pri		Curren	t Year
		(FY 2	/	(FY 2		(FY 2		(FY 2	/
		FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
	culty Appointed								
Professor									
Associate								1	
Assistant		7		16		15		7	
Instructor		7		2		2		10	
No rank			448		298		334		
Other									
Total		14	448	18	298	17	334	18	
	culty in Tenured Pos								
Professor		76		76		78		74	
Associate		49		49		47		43	
Assistant		1							
Instructor									
No rank									
Other									
Total		126	0	125	0	125	0	117	
Number of Fa	culty Departing								
Professor									
Associate		1		1		1		3	
Assistant				7		7		3	
Instructor		1		1		1		1	
No rank			7		15		4		
Other									
Total		2	7	9	15	9	4	7	
Number of Fa	culty Retiring								
Professor	. 0	6		3		2		8	
Associate		1		3		2		3	
Assistant				1					
Instructor									
No rank						1			
Other									
Total		7	0	7	0	5	0	11	
	ad, in credit hours	,	Ŭ	,	Ŷ	5	Ŷ		
Professor	Maximum	19.00		17.00		17.00		17.00	
	Median	12.00		12.00		12.00		12.00	
Associate	Maximum	16.50		16.75		16.00		18.00	
1100001410	Median	12.00		12.00		12.00		12.00	
Assistant	Maximum	17.00		12.00		16.75		12.00	
11001010111	Median	12.00		12.00		12.00		12.00	
Instructor	Maximum	15.00		12.50		13.00		15.00	
motructor	Median	12.00		12.00		12.00		13.00	
No rank	Maximum	12.00		12.00		12.00		12.00	
1NO TAHK	Maximum Median								
Other	Maximum								
Outer									
	Median Iching load if not mea								

# Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship (Number of Faculty by Department or Comparable Unit, Fall Term)

	3 Ye Pri		2 Ye Pri		1 Ye Pri		Curren	nt Year
	(FY	2019)	(FY 2	2020)	(FY	2021)	(FY 2	2022)
	FT	PT	FT	РТ	FT	РТ	FT	PT
Number of Faculty by Department (or c	omparable a	cademic unit	t); insert addi	itional rows a	as needed			
Biology	14	25	14	15	14	19	14	30
Business Admin & Economics	20	33	19	15	20	20	17	18
Chemistry	10	14	10	7	10	9	10	10
Communication	9	17	9	9	9	11	9	13
Communication Disorders	7	25	7	18	7	15	7	18
Computer Science	5	9	5	5	5	6	4	8
Criminal Justice	9	10	9	6	9	12	8	14
Earth, Environment & Physics	8	14	10	13	10	10	9	11
Education	12	46	12	42	13	46	13	38
English	15	22	15	15	15	20	16	22
Health Science	5	30	5	25	6	27	5	21
History & Political Science	14	26	14	15	15	16	14	18
Interdisciplinary							1	
Mathematics	12	21	12	15	12	15	12	13
Nursing	16	31	16	37	13	41	19	31
Occupational Therapy	5	10	5	8	5	6	5	6
Philosophy	4	8	4	5	4	4	3	8
Psychology	17	17	17	7	17	18	17	20
Sociology	5	16	5	10	5	11	5	11
Urban Studies	5	10	5	5	5	9	5	8
Visual & Performing Arts	10	28	10	23	10	25	10	19
World Languages	5	9	5	4	5	5	5	9
Total	207	421	208	299	209	345	208	346

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

# Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship (Faculty and Academic Staff Diversity)

For each type of diversity important to your institution (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, other), provide information on	faculty and
academic staff below. Use current year data.	

Faculty	Full-time	Part-time	Total Headcount	Headcount Goal (FY 2023)
Gender				
Female	127	205	332	263
Male	81	141	222	173
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaska Native	4	3	7	7
Asian	15	14	29	29
Black or African American	6	16	22	21
Hispanic or Latino (of any Race)	18	23	41	41
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	1	2	1
Two or more Races	1	7	8	8
White	163	281	444	427
Unknown		1	1	0
Academic Staff	Full-time	Part-time	Total Headcount	Headcount Goal (specify year)
Gender	•			
Female	12	1	13	13
Male	9	1	10	10
Race/Ethnicity				
Asian	1		1	1
Black or African American	1		1	1
Hispanic or Latino (of any Race)	2		2	2
White			0	19
white				
white	17	2		

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below Academic staff includes librarians, advisors, and instructional designers.

#### STANDARD SIX: TEACHING, LEARNING, AND SCHOLARSHIP

#### Description

#### Faculty and Academic Staff

As a master's-level institution, defined by contracts negotiated between the <u>Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA)</u> and the BHE/Council of Presidents of the Massachusetts State University System as "primarily [a] teaching institution" (Article VIII.A.1), Data First Forms for Standard Six show that Worcester State University employed 208 full-time and 346 part-time faculty members (inclusive of full-time staff teaching courses outside their regular employments) in FY22. In addition to the executive director of the Library and eight clerical staff, there are six tenured or tenure-track academic librarians. Faculty and librarian categories and responsibilities are defined through the MSCA collective bargaining agreements. Faculty members may be employed full-time only under the MSCA "day" contract; faculty who teach in evening or graduate offerings administered by contract through the university's <u>Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE</u>) are, in effect, part-time faculty. Thus, the institution does distinguish between graduate and undergraduate faculty, although DGCE provides stipends to faculty members who act as Graduate Program coordinators to oversee post-baccalaureate programming.

Under the umbrella of academic staff, the Academic Success Center consists of five full-time and two parttime staff, all of whom advise students as well as support faculty academic advisors. This number includes a net increase of one full-time position equivalent in the fall of 2021. Housed in the Information Technology Services unit within the Division of Academic Affairs are two learning management system experts and one instructional designer who provides support to faculty members. A full-time faculty development specialist position has been added within the Center for Teaching and Learning.

The MSCA "day" contract stipulates that full-time faculty members teach 12 credit hours each semester, unless course release time is granted for duties such as department chair or other institutional needs. By contract, full-time faculty members are required to perform scholarship in their field of study or in the scholarship of teaching and learning, advise undergraduate students, and provide service to the university, their department, their fields, and/or the community, by serving on committees and contributing to activities that support the mission and goals of the university. Appointment, evaluation, tenure, and promotion processes for full-time faculty are defined and explained, respectively, in Articles XX, VIII, and IX of the MSCA contract.

Full- and part-time faculty and academic librarian positions are distinct from other employment roles at Worcester State University. By contract, there are no teaching assistants at the institution. No non-faculty employee, even those employees who otherwise meet all faculty requirements, can teach as part of their primary employment but must be hired as part-time faculty outside of their full-time non-faculty role in order to teach a course. Only under emergency circumstances may up to two courses per year campus-wide be taught by non-faculty staff members as part of their primary employment activities.

Academic administration and academic department chairs monitor course demands as well as changes in fields to align the faculty's academic areas and specialties with enrollment trends. Existing tenure lines may be reallocated and new tenure lines created when deemed appropriate. Department chairs keep the administration apprised of the need for additional support staff within the department. The university has added new academic programs over time – most recently new undergraduate majors in <u>art</u>, <u>political science</u>, and <u>theatre</u>, launched in fall 2021; and new graduate programs in <u>public management</u> and <u>public administration</u> and <u>policy</u>, in fall 2019. However, these programs, as documented in program curriculum proposals approved through institutional governance, did not require new additional faculty lines. For example, the Department of History and Political Science revised the area of specialty in one of its hiring lines to a full specialty in

political science, rather than continue the previous iteration of the line, which had primary teaching duties in history, with occasional teaching in political science. The resulting three full-time lines in political science are sufficient to support a major enrollment of up to 90 full-time students — 30 full-time students being defined in the MSCA "day" contract as a full undergraduate advising load. The Art and Theatre majors were developed out of existing concentrations within the interdisciplinary Visual and Performing Arts major, and each had a full complement of existing faculty lines. At the graduate level, because faculty teaching in graduate programs are in effect part-time faculty, no new full-time faculty lines were required to support the new programs.

Department chairs work with the appropriate academic dean, the provost, and Human Resources to formulate job opening advertisements and identify appropriate venues for ad placement. Announcements for all regular positions must be posted publicly. Because diversity is a high priority of the institution, as stated in its strategic plan, faculty members participating in search committees attend an information session given by the <u>Office of Diversity and Inclusion</u>, which covers the hiring process from start to finish and highlights the importance of diversity within the campus community.

The offices of Human Resources and Diversity and Inclusion ensure that legal requirements are met with regard to equal employment opportunities. Policies for recruitment and search processes exist for all positions. Additionally, by MSCA contract, each academic department has a written <u>faculty search policy and procedure</u> document specific to it. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion maintains statistics of the faculty makeup across the university as well as for each department and tracks progress toward a faculty and staff representative of the various dimensions of diversity of the student body as well as the broader community.

By MSCA contract, a terminal degree is required for tenure-track faculty hiring and is strongly encouraged for temporary and part-time hiring. Article I.D. 56 of the MSCA collective bargaining agreement allows recognition of some professional master's degrees as terminal degrees, including the Master of Fine Arts, the Master of Business Administration, the Master of Science in Nursing, the Master of Social Work, and the Master of Library Science/Master of Library Science and Information Science. Hiring decisions also account for teaching experience and preparation, including past professional development and accomplishments and potential in research and/or creative activity. As part of the hiring process, prospective tenure-track candidates are typically expected to perform a teaching demonstration. Teaching experience, performance, and development are the primary areas of emphasis for part-time hiring.

Minimum faculty and staff salaries are set by collective bargaining agreements, with reference to external data such as that available through the <u>College and University Professional Association for Human Resources</u> (CUPA-HR). Human Resources and the deans monitor internal and peer-institutions' pay levels to ensure that actual levels of salary offers are competitive.

The teaching workload for all full-time faculty members is uniform across campus and specified in the MSCA contract. Within this framework, the university also offers opportunities for released time for organizational needs, such as directing one of the institution's interdisciplinary centers or student support services, or activities that further the university's acquisitions of external funding, such as writing external research/creative activity grant applications. Standard course times for in-person and virtual synchronous course sessions in the MSCA "day" program are between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., with each faculty member having the option to request, pending an approval process, a course scheduled later than these hours. In-person and virtual synchronous course sessions in the "evening," or offerings through the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE), are typically one-day-per-week block classes on Mondays through Thursdays starting at or after 4 p.m., or take place on Saturdays. As specified in the MSCA collective bargaining agreement, the university uses a system of earned workload credits (EWCs) for instances in which a full-time faculty member's teaching (and possibly alternative assignment) reaches above the standard of 12 credits per semester. EWCs can then be discharged for a reduced load in a subsequent semester. Teaching schedules are

arranged by full-time faculty members, department chairs, academic deans, and the provost to ensure sufficient time for scholarship/creative activity, service, professional development, and other non-teaching activities specified as part of the evaluation process in Article VIII of the MSCA collective bargaining agreement.

As noted throughout discussion of Standard Six, the contract negotiated between the <u>Massachusetts State</u> <u>College Association (MSCA)</u> and the BHE/Council of Presidents of the Massachusetts State University System serves as a faculty handbook for full- and part-time faculty employed in the traditional "day" program. Faculty employed in "evening" programs – continuing education and graduate programs – use a contract similarly negotiated between the Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA) and the BHE/Council of Presidents of the Massachusetts State University System, with specific regard to programs and processes within DGCE. These documents, readily available online, describe working conditions and expectations for all faculty members, and they describe policies for resolving grievances. The second half of Article V of the MSCA contract delineates faculty members' academic responsibilities, including intellectual honesty and ethical conduct.

Faculty members' effectiveness in carrying out assigned responsibilities is evaluated through the processes described in Article VIII of the MSCA contract. Full-time faculty members are evaluated on four criteria – teaching effectiveness, academic advising, continuing scholarship/creative activity, and other professional activities, including service to the institution, to the faculty member's discipline, and/or service to the local, area, or regional community. Part-time faculty members are evaluated primarily on teaching effectiveness. Academic librarians are evaluated on three criteria – effectiveness in carrying out library responsibilities and assisting members of the university community, continuing scholarship, and other professional activities. If a faculty member or academic librarian is given released time to fulfill an institutional need – for example, directing one of the university's interdisciplinary centers or faculty or student support entities – assessment of performance in those duties, referred to in the MSCA contract as an Alternate Professional Responsibility, is included in the evaluation portfolio.

The primary instrument for demonstrating full-time faculty members' and academic librarians' effectiveness is the evaluation portfolio, which is centered on an analytic, reflective statement written by faculty members themselves, addressing each criterion of evaluation. The portfolio is reviewed by a number of parties, depending on the type of personnel action being sought and, to a degree, on what year of the tenure-track cycle the faculty member is in. Evaluations of faculty effectiveness include peer classroom observations and reviews of teaching, research, service, and advising statements and documented materials as listed in Article VIII of the MSCA contract. Evaluations also include student course evaluations of instructors administered through a standardized survey instrument.

Faculty members seeking reappointment to the tenure track, the award of tenure, the award of promotion, or post-tenure review have their portfolios reviewed by the appropriate department chair, a departmental Peer Evaluation Committee, the dean of the respective school, the university-wide tenure and/or promotion committees, and the provost, who forwards a recommendation to the president. In cases of faculty members' applying for tenure, the president makes a further recommendation to the university's Board of Trustees, which is the governing body designated for granting tenure. As part of the evaluative process, and at different points within it, department chairs and others discuss their evaluation of a faculty member with that faculty member, and faculty members may discuss and object to specific elements of chair or other evaluations.

For faculty members on the tenure track, as well as full-time temporary and part-time faculty, student course evaluations are administered each semester in all courses being taught. Faculty members and their department chairs receive a summary report of each course's student evaluations; faculty members can make changes to their teaching approach to address student feedback as documented within the report. Additionally, classroom observations are conducted each year for tenure-track faculty members by the department chair; on a 32-credit cycle for part-time faculty by the chair of the relevant department; and, for members in a tenure or promotion year, also by a departmental Peer Evaluation Committee. Tenured faculty members' teaching evaluations are conducted on a yearly basis and include, at a minimum, the evaluation of a single course of each type (lecture, lab, studio, etc.).

Continuing scholarship or creative activity is required by the MSCA contract of full-time faculty members and academic librarians and is considered essential for faculty members seeking tenure, promotion, or post-tenure review. The contract contains examples of activities or achievements that may be considered evidence of scholarship and creative activity.

The first portion of Article V of the MSCA contract describes the purposes and protections of academic freedom for all faculty members employed by the institution. Results from an <u>institutional survey</u> show overwhelming agreement from faculty respondents that the university supports and fosters academic freedom. Of respondents, 90% of the faculty, including tenured, non-tenured, and full- and part-time, agreed with this statement. When asked if an administrator or someone else had ever violated their academic freedom, the vast majority of respondents reported that their academic freedom had never been infringed upon. In addition, there have been no complaints of violations of academic freedom in internal and external funding evaluation processes.

The operations of support programs such as the <u>Academic Success Center</u> are informally evaluated relative to the needs of faculty and students, both at the individual course level and program- and institution-wide. Evaluative feedback from department chairs and other faculty, as well as deans and other academic leaders, is routinely sought through discussion, including individualized evaluative and planning meetings at the beginning of each semester between each chair and the director of the Academic Success Center. Further, collaborative relationships support on-going sharing of critical feedback from faculty members, students, and others, with the support programs. For instance, based on needs, the Academic Success Center has been given a net one (full time equivalent (FTE) increase in staffing this past year.

The performance of all non-faculty academic staff members is regularly evaluated to ensure they are performing their jobs correctly and are given opportunities to improve or correct problems if they exist, in accordance with the standards and schedule (typically annual) agreed to by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and their bargaining unit or, in the case of non-unit professionals, through a similar set of standards and schedule determined by the university's Human Resources office. There is a uniform process for each category of employee. Remedial action is taken when appropriate, though the vast majority of staff are given satisfactory ratings.

# Teaching and Learning

All courses, including content, are approved through a shared governance process specified in the MSCA contract. As noted in discussions of Standards Three and Four, governance bodies comprise faculty, students, and administrative appointees. Departmental curriculum committees, as well as a committee overseeing the general education program, the deans, and others, examine curriculum to determine appropriate updating and changes. An example is the recent adoption of a full diversity content area in the general education system in response to an assessment that determined the Diversity Across the Curriculum requirement in the general education system was not effective. Routine reviews of specific academic programs as well as the general education curriculum, the first-year seminar program, and other campus-wide curricular elements are designed to determine the effectiveness of each and to recommend improvements as appropriate.

Article VIII of the MSCA contract identifies pedagogical experimentation and community-engaged teaching methods as features of teaching effectiveness. Individual departments determine instructional modalities in course offerings, whether those are face to face, blended (hybrid), or fully online in synchronous or asynchronous format. To support departments and individual faculty members in expanding instructional techniques

and exploring new instructional modalities, the university's <u>Center for Teaching and Learning</u> offers workshops throughout the year and makes related resources available.

Efforts to aid faculty in improving instruction include a <u>Faculty Fellow for Equity</u>, who designs support programming for curricular development, pedagogy, and other aspects of course design and teaching focused on promotion of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice in the content and methods of teaching of courses across the university. As noted earlier, by contract the university identifies as primarily a teaching institution, and evaluation of teaching effectiveness makes use of valid procedures for assessment, including the portfoliobased evaluation scheme and the results of regular classroom observations by department chairs and peers, and the results of student evaluation of instruction.

Individual departments determine the level of uniformity across different sections of the same courses and sections of different courses, in line with the norms of their subject areas and any program-specific accreditation requirements. As noted earlier, teaching schedules are arranged by full-time faculty members, department chairs, academic deans, and the provost to ensure sufficient time for scholarship/creative activity, service, professional development, and other non-teaching activities. This process helps ensure that students are exposed to a variety of instructional approaches and disciplinary perspectives within major programs of study.

Undergraduate student advising is an identified part of workload for full-time faculty members. As such, it is evaluated for individual faculty members during personnel actions such as application for renewal on the tenure track, application for tenure and/or promotion, and submission of post-tenure review. Students responding to an <u>institutional survey</u> administered in 2021 (n = 709-711) rated on a seven-point scale the following averages: 5.4 for "Information from my advisor has helped me select courses"; 5.0 for "My advisor's information about career opportunities has helped me clarify career goals"; 5.4 for "Information from my advisor has clarified or simplified university requirements or procedures (degree requirements, drop/add, registration, etc.)"; 5.1 for "I have obtained helpful information from my advisor about resources and services on campus (student services, counseling, financial aid)"; and 5.7 for "As appropriate, my advisor places final responsibility for making decisions on me." 81% of responding students (n = 712) reported seeking support from their academic advisor once or twice per semester or once or twice per year. 85% (n = 703) reported being able to spend as much time with their academic advisor as they need at least sometimes; 63% reported being able to spend as much time with their academic advisor as they need mostly or always.

Program coordinators, such as the liberal arts and science curriculum (general education) coordinator, ensure consistent messaging across the campus community and provide specialized advice to students about this area of the curriculum. Faculty assist students with career planning, from future employment to graduate and professional school placements. The Center for Teaching and Learning, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Academic Success Center, and other campus entities provide faculty development in advising, while the academic deans and Office of Academic Affairs have taken on advising as an emphasis area. This has included development of advising resources, including such things as suggested meeting topics indexed by how far a student has advanced in their major and general educational processes, which are available in the <u>faculty resources area</u> of the university's website.

Support for continuing scholarship and involvement in creative activity is provided by the university through regular operational funding and by the Worcester State Foundation through foundation funds, including travel grants for both faculty and students. Faculty may also use their contractually determined Continuing Scholarship funding to support scholarly work. These opportunities give the faculty and students an opportunity to share their accomplishments with their professional communities.

The <u>Faculty Scholarship and Creative Activity Grant program</u> administered through the Provost's Office and a like-titled program offered by the Worcester State Foundation and administered through the academic deans' offices provide internal funding for nearly any aspect of research or creative projects. The program

administered through the Provost's Office can provide course release time for the development of research/creative projects and applications for external funding. The Teaching and Learning Innovation Grant and Advising Innovation Grant programs administered through the Provost's Office fund faculty projects related to teaching and advising, including research projects in the areas of the scholarship of teaching and learning and the scholarship of advising. <u>The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research</u> provides support to faculty seeking outside funding opportunities, as does the <u>Advancement Office</u> more generally.

The institution's Research Advisory Board, Institutional Review Board chair, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee chair, and research integrity officer are also available to support faculty regarding their research needs. University procedures and policies regarding research are readily available on its <u>website</u> to all faculty members. Research activities by faculty must conform to <u>standard human subject and animal experi-</u><u>mentation policies</u>, as relevant. Research conduct is also subject to standard policies regarding plagiarism, conflicts of interest, and other matters. Allegations of violations of these standards are reported to the research integrity officer, who performs an investigation of all complaints and issues a decision regarding each.

The institution also supports student research and creative activities. It sponsors an annual <u>Celebration of</u> <u>Scholarship and Creativity</u> event for students. Many majors have research-project-focused capstone courses as well as research methods courses. Faculty support of student research is encouraged through such incentives as the <u>Summer Undergraduate Research Grant program</u>, which provides a stipend to students performing research and/or creative work under the direction of a faculty member funded during the summer months, and a fund offered through the Worcester State Foundation and administered by the undergraduate academic deans each semester that supports student research and creative activity – for instance, by sponsoring them to present at conferences. Students are also written into <u>Faculty Scholarship and Creative Activity Grants</u>, administered by the Provost's Office, as well as external grants awarded to faculty members.

#### Appraisal

#### Faculty and Academic Staff

Worcester State University's mission as a public institution has included striving to be a diverse and inclusive community. The university thus follows protocols to ensure that its hiring practices adhere to the requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as best practices for diversity hiring and retention. These practices include mandatory training in procedures and diversity hiring for all faculty and staff members who serve on hiring committees; said training must be renewed if more than two years have passed since a hiring committee member's previous training. Within the last two fiscal years, more than 200 faculty and staff members and administrators have gone through the training to serve on various hiring committees. Additionally, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, along with the Human Resources Office, provides detailed flow charts for the hiring process of faculty and staff, as well as documents detailing the interview process, search committee chair and member checklists, best practices, and other materials outlining the hiring process and the importance of diversity. Each academic department also has a set of hiring protocols that build on those provided by the administration to enhance the hiring process within the individual departments. Documents pertaining to the diversity at Worcester State University and the hiring process can be found in documents supporting the self-study and the university's Fact Books.

Of the 208 full-time faculty members listed in the university's 2021 Fact Book, 61% identify as female and 39% identify as male. Additionally, 22% of the full-time faculty identify as ALANA/BIPOC (African, Latine, Asian, Native American and/or Black, Indigenous, People of Color) – up from 19% in 2016, but down from 25% in 2020. The latest percentage represents a 14% increase in the number of ALANA/BIPOC faculty members since 2016. While this percentage is roughly consistent with the non-white racial demographics of Worcester County as a whole, which United States Census Bureau data from July 2021 estimate as 24.2%, it is far below the non-white 43.9% for the City of Worcester and the university's ALANA/BIPOC student

percentage of 32%. The disparity between Black or African-American full-time degree-seeking undergraduate student and faculty percentages is even greater, at 7.8% vs. 2.8%. A disparity also exists between the 14.1% Latinx students and 8.6% Latinx faculty.

To address this problem, both the <u>Racial Equity and Justice Institute (REJI</u>) Worcester State University team and the team tasked with implementing the recommendations of a recently completed <u>racial equity audit</u> are pursuing projects intended to bring the ALANA/BIPOC <u>faculty percentage</u>, generally and across specific subgroups, to a minimum of parity with the student and/or community demographics. Despite frequent statements from different groups on campus about the need for and multiple external expert visitors' recommendations for their formation, the university does not yet have faculty (or faculty/staff) affinity groups for BIPOC faculty (faculty/staff) in general or by group. Also identified in the racial equity audit and other campus assessments has been a failure to ensure equity in outcomes for ALANA/BIPOC students, especially in STEM disciplines. The equity audit implementation team and the REJI team are formulating approaches to this problem.

Although minimum faculty and academic staff salaries are determined through their respective bargaining agreements, the salary range for posted staff position vacancies are analyzed by the university's executive director and chief human resources officer or the associate director based on regional, national, and local sister institution data, by position, for each job. Faculty and academic librarian salary ranges are determined in Academic Affairs, based upon Appendix <u>O-1</u> and <u>O-2</u>, respectively, of the collective bargaining agreement and an assessment of typical compensation for a given discipline at comparable institutions. Current faculty salaries are a contributing factor in determining a new faculty salary salary. As of 2020, the average faculty salaries ranged from \$63,000 to about \$105,000, depending on rank and discipline. Details can be found in the institution's <u>Fact Books</u>. Given the common salary structure across Massachusetts state universities, these salaries are consistent with pay at comparable institutions, as are <u>benefits</u> offered to all employees. However, resource challenges may play a role in faculty recruitment and retention. The academic deans are able to relate instances in which the salaries the university is able to offer are not competitive enough to attract top-choice candidates in certain disciplines. The hiring of specific diverse candidates is inhibited in part by contractual stipulations that prevents the offering of higher salaries.

Per the MSCA contract, full-time faculty members are required to teach 12 credit hours each semester. Data collected by Academic Affairs on <u>teaching loads</u> shows that the average load across the university for all faculty has been just over 12 credit hours per semester for the last two years. In a recent <u>survey of faculty</u> conducted by the university, in which 89 full-time and 34 part-time (day and DGCE) faculty participated, several questions were asked regarding the availability of time. For example:

## "I have adequate time for teaching (e.g., preparation time, classroom time, etc.) so that I can provide effective instruction to my students."

For full-time tenured faculty, 64% agreed with or were neutral to this statement, while 36% disagreed. For tenure-track faculty members, 58% agreed with or were neutral while 42% disagreed. The vast majority of part-time faculty agreed with or were neutral with this statement. When asked:

## "I have adequate time to evaluate students."

Similar results were obtained, with a slight increase in agree/neutral for tenured and tenure-track faculty members. However, when asked:

"Do you believe that you have <u>adequate time</u> to do all the things expected of faculty, including providing effective instruction, advising and evaluating students, continuing your own professional growth, engaging in scholarship and research, and participating in university/department service? 47.5% of respondents disagreed with this statement, 19.5% were neutral, and 33% agreed with the statement. Academic administration and staff are cognizant of these time concerns and work to help support and streamline processes and activities to make them more time efficient for faculty. For example, in 2021 the administration established an Office of Grants and Sponsored Research and has plans to reopen the Faculty Fellow for Research position beginning in fall 2022 to assist faculty with acquiring funding and other aspects of research and creative activities. In 2020, the Office of Academic Affairs also expanded its internal research, teaching, and advising grant programs to include the possibility of up to three credits of course release each year for external grant writing. In certain situations, faculty members receive course releases for substantial service activities and, for some activities during non-service summer months, stipends are provided to faculty for participation. While these efforts do not address all of the challenges of a 12-credit-per-semester teaching load, they do mitigate those challenges to the extent possible within the budget constraints of the state university system.

## Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

Each major program of study is designed to ensure that students receive a progressively more advanced, comprehensive education in their major field, including the range of perspectives, methods, and subfields characteristic of the discipline. In a <u>survey of faculty</u>, respondents (n = 118) rated at an average of 5.7 on a seven-point scale the statement "The programs offered by my department provide students with the scope and depth of learning that the programs claim to offer." The university's steadily improving undergraduate graduation rate, increasing placements in graduate and professional schools, and success of education and nursing students in achieving licensure are important indicators of the success of this approach. As described in discussion of Standards Three, Four, and Eight, academic programs, whether accredited by an external body or not, undergo program review every five years to evaluate their effectiveness in serving students and to identify areas for change and improvement.

The director and advisory committee of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the academic deans, and other offices and positions in Academic Affairs seek to stay abreast of innovations in college teaching and learning and to support faculty in being up to date in their pedagogy. Additionally, the <u>Center for Teaching</u> and Learning maintains a physical and online suite of resources available to faculty, from books on various aspects of teaching and learning to internally and externally created online course tutorials and components that faculty can adapt to their particular courses available through the CTL's <u>website</u> and through Blackboard course shells for online and face-to-face teaching available to all faculty members <u>here</u> and <u>here</u>. In response to an identified need for faculty support, a full-time faculty development specialist position, with a focus on all technical and non-technical aspects of course design, has recently been created for the Center for Teaching and Learning in its efforts, the Information Technologies area has a full-time instructional designer focused on the use of technology in in-person, hybrid, and wholly online courses, as well as two experts in the university's learning management system, Blackboard, to help faculty design and maintain their courses' online presence and content.

In addition to the resources available at the CTL, workshops, faculty learning groups, and other programming are offered throughout the year, including summer and winter breaks, covering all aspects of teaching and academic advising. Furthermore, CTL provides training in different modalities and methods. A <u>list of Center for Teaching and Learning programming</u> over the past three years can be found in documents supporting the self-study. The number of faculty members that have attended the various CTL offerings in the past few years is in excess of 200. Attendance at these events demonstrates the faculty's commitment to teaching and their desire to improve and make changes when necessary in order to support student learning.

To encourage innovation in teaching and advising, the university also publishes *Currents in Teaching and Learning*, an internationally known online, peer-reviewed journal of pedagogical studies. Worcester State University faculty members have contributed three articles and two book reviews to the journal in the past three years. The university pays all costs of producing *Currents*, including release time for the faculty editor and full payment for design, formatting, and copyediting. The journal is open-access and available <u>here</u>.

During FY20 through FY22, Academic Affairs awarded faculty more than \$50,000 for Teaching and Learning Innovation and Advising Innovation Grants. In addition, the university routinely funds relevant conference participation for the director and some advisory committee members of the Center for Teaching and Learning, coordinator of the First-Year Seminar, and other program leaders, and ensures at least one professional development opportunity for faculty leaders of support programs per academic year. The university also supports efforts by faculty to pursue external funding that promote innovation in teaching and learning through the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the academic deans' offices.

The university's investment in new technologies and resources has allowed faculty members to explore and develop new pedagogical approaches and learning environments, even as the pandemic lessens. However, feedback from faculty members suggests that the university's Information Technology Services has some difficulty keeping up with maintenance of this technology. In <u>survey results</u>, (n = 122-123), faculty rated at 4.5 and 4.2, on a seven-point scale, respectively, the following items: "Technology resources are adequate to support student instruction" and "WSU is proactive in adapting technology to meet changing needs." Persistent anecdotal testimony suggests that faculty members report issues with occasional equipment failures. While immediate help is available during business hours, support may take too long to be effective for a given class session and is not available outside of normal business hours. Additionally, there is not a system in place that assigns a technology-heavy instructor to a room that has the desired technology.

The university promotes participation in faculty development activities such as the statewide <u>Massachusetts</u> <u>Colleges Online annual conference</u> and acknowledges two full-time faculty members and two adjunct faculty members each year for their excellent and innovative teaching by awarding them the George I. Alden Excellence in Teaching Award and the Adjunct Excellence in Teaching Award, respectively.

Only full-time faculty members who meet standards described in Article VIII of the MSCA contract receive reappointment to the tenure track or to a full-time temporary appointment, tenure, promotion, or a positive post-tenure review. This process helps ensure that only highly qualified faculty members are retained and rewarded. During the recent evaluation period, spanning the 2021-22 academic year, academic deans reviewed data collected from classroom observations by the applicable department chairs and Peer Evaluation Committees for those faculty members applying for such personnel actions. Faculty members who are found not to meet contract standards are offered paths to improvement, including support. Additionally, as discussed earlier, the involvement in CTL programs and willingness to pursue innovative teaching grants speaks to the dedication to teaching at Worcester State University. In the past three years, more than 200 faculty members have participated in more than 100 CTL programs. This percentage of participation is an important indicator of efforts faculty members make to pursue professional development and of the level of support offered by the university. On a seven-point scale, <u>faculty respondents</u> rated at 4.1 the statement "WSU provides adequate opportunities for continued professional development."

As stated in Article VIII of the MSCA contract, full-time faculty members are evaluated on participation in continuing scholarship and/or creative activity. The university has spent \$54,533 in equipment needs and infrastructure changes needed by the departments to ensure that the faculty members have what is needed and also to ensure that students are making use of the current technology and resources. The Office of Academic Affairs' Faculty Scholarship and Creative Activity Grant Program, Summer Undergraduate Research Grant Program, and the dean's research and creative activity grant funds for faculty members provide internal

funding for any aspect of research or creative projects. From FY20 through FY22, the university awarded more than \$250,000 in internal grants to faculty and students for research and creative activity projects. In a recent <u>survey</u>, when the faculty was asked about the availability of time for research, 68% of tenured faculty respondents and 64% of non-tenured faculty respondents reported not having adequate time for research. A first step in addressing this has been expansion of the Office of Academic Affairs' Faculty Scholarship and Creative Activity, Teaching and Learning Innovation, and Advising Innovation Grant programs to include the option of release time (up to three credits) to write grants for external funders. The academic administration acknowledges faculty concerns and has been considering additional ways for increasing time for scholarship and creative activity

The newly created Office of Grants and Sponsored Research provides support to faculty seeking outside funding opportunities, as does the Advancement Office. Over the 2019-21 period, the inaugural Faculty Fellow for Research offered support programs for faculty seeking to gain external funding or to develop or complete research or creative projects. These programs have been continued by the Office of Academic Affairs, and the next Faculty Fellow for Research is expected to begin serving in September of 2022. In FY21, faculty members received \$239,956 in external grants. The university did not track overall grant funding for the 2019-2020 fiscal period, and so does not have a reliable figure for this period. The university was awarded \$2,799,378 in external grants in FY22. Between FY20 and FY22, the Office of University Advancement, via the Worcester State Foundation and the offices of the academic deans, awarded more than \$20,000 per year to faculty members for research and creative activity support.

While the university publishes web pages that include information about faculty and student research, the institution does not have a single website listing internal and external grant applications and process documents and processes, and there are gaps in the policies, including a lack of information about faculty course buyouts and guidance on intellectual property as it relates to grant-funded activities. (Articles I and III of the MSCA contract describe faculty members' intellectual property rights vis-à-vis the institution.) However, a recent <u>comparative analysis of policies for peer</u> and aspirational institutions revealed that Worcester State University's policy suite covers more than other institutions in the Massachusetts State University System. The university's Research Advisory Board is currently identifying elements of a comprehensive web page for research, with internally and externally facing components, that will cover all student, faculty, external funder, and other parties' needs.

The Research Advisory Board and Office of Grants and Sponsored Research have proposed, developed, and continue to develop additional policies to cover such areas as faculty course buyouts, indirect cost allocation, and intellectual property. However, in 2020, a consultant from <u>Copley Raff</u> noted several areas in which improvements in administrative support for externally funded research are needed. This reflected long-standing concerns expressed by faculty and other entities, such as the Research Advisory Board. The <u>report</u> specifically made recommendations to modify protocols for how grant proposals are initiated, researched, drafted, submitted, and administered for compliance, and how relationships are established with funders. However, the university has not yet effectively implemented recommended changes for systems and protocols that would allow for increased efficiency and positive outcomes for faculty who have pursued or who have secured external funding.

Faculty are also responsible for conducting the majority of academic advising. Results from a recent survey (*n* = 100) indicate that 65% have fewer than 30 academic advisees. (Article VIII of the MSCA contract indicates that academic advising loads above 30 constitute a special contribution to the professional development and growth of the university community.) To help with advising loads greater than 30 students, the university has hired additional staff and made changes to the advising process. For example, expansion of the Academic Success Center's advising duties to the full first year for first-year students (except where departments choose to do this themselves) was one result. At times, the university has hired part-time advisors for specific depart-

ments with high advising loads. Additionally, an Advising Innovation grant was established in 2018 for individuals or departments to use for resources to alleviate advising workloads. While more than 75% of full-time faculty (tenured and untenured) responding to a survey viewed advising as important as teaching and scholarship, only around 50% felt that they had adequate time available for advising and furthermore do not feel that the university provides adequate and useful professional development to support advising.

## COVID-19 and Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

In February and March 2020, a small group including key IT personnel, the director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the associate vice president for Academic Affairs created a substantial series of trainings run by faculty and IT experts on all aspects of online teaching and conversion of in-person courses to online. This program supported a highly successful transition to a fully online semester after spring break in March 2020. Online teaching resources supplemented the trainings and continued to be developed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, especially as longer-term issues emerged and a mix of in-person and online teaching became the norm. Discussions now focus on how to incorporate the benefits of the significant increase in faculty online competence developed during the height of pandemic conditions and how to integrate new technological tools available to faculty into the permanent teaching and learning model of Worcester State University. Trainings held over the summer of 2020 included stipends to faculty members to encourage participation.

The transition to online learning in the spring of 2020 and the subsequent mixed online and in-person format for 2020-21, as well as a relaxed pass/fail policy permitting unlimited pass/fail courses for 2020-21, were successful in supporting overall retention of students. All courses scheduled during these periods were completed.

Travel restrictions resulted in a reduction of overall faculty and student research and creative activity as well as other internal grant applications. There were also delays in the funding of some applications, but projects receiving funding recommendations based on independent criteria were uniformly fully funded.

## Projections

## Increase Faculty Diversity

Guided by its strategic plan, Worcester State University, through multiple offices, will increase the percentages of full-time faculty members representing different underserved populations (BIPOC/ALANA) across the university to a minimum of parity with the demographics of the Worcester State University student body and the labor market in the greater Worcester region. Attention will be paid also to other underserved populations, such as people with disabilities.

## Increase the Scope and Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning Support Activities

Continuing from the 2021-2022 academic year, the Division of Academic Affairs will expand and reorganize the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and create a standing committee, chaired by the CTL director, to assess classroom learning environments, pedagogy, and technology.

## Solidify Research Administration

Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research will continue to advance faculty and student research opportunities by identifying achievable goals, with annual assessment of progress.

# Standard 7: Institutional Resources (Headcount of Employees by Occupational Category)

For each of the occupational categories below, enter the data reported on the IPEDS Human Resources Survey (Parts B and D1) for each of the years listed.

If your institution does not submit IPEDS, visit this link for information about how to complete this form: https://surveys.nces.ed. gov/IPEDS/Downloads/Forms/package\_1\_43.pdf

		3 Years Prior			2 Years Prior			1 Year Prior			urrent Ye	
		(FY 2019)			(FY 2020)			(FY 2021)			(FY 2022)	
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Instructional Staff	207	248	455	208	242	450	203	218	421	208	230	438
Research Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Service Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Librarians	6	0	6	6	0	6	6	0	6	5	1	6
Library Technicians	7	2	9	7	2	9	7	0	7	6	3	9
Archivists, Curators, Museum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Student and Academic Affairs	30	61	91	26	3	29	0	8	8	0	5	5
Management Occupations	68	6	74	68	64	132	64	7	71	92	3	95
Business and Financial	22	4	26	24	1	25	24	5	29	20	7	27
Computer, Engineering and Science	32	3	35	25	5	30	26	3	29	27	7	34
Community, Social Service, Legal, Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and												
Media	21	54	75	25	63	88	53	61	114	38	115	153
Healthcare Practitioners and	2	3	5	2	5	7	0	6	6	1	2	3
Service Occupations	67	3	70	67	14	81	60	1	61	57	11	68
Sales and Related Occupations	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office and Administrative	85	28	113	86	28	114	84	15	99	77	12	89
Natural Resources, Construction,	13		13	26	1	27	18	2	20	17	0	17
Production, Transportation,	3	1	4	6	0	6	3	1	4	2	1	3
Total	563	413	976	576	430	1,006	548	327	875	550	397	947

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Changed SOC codes for certain positions in FY2021

Standard 7: Institutional Resources (Statement of Financial Position/Statement of Net Assets) in 000's

_	Fiscal Year ends - month & day: (06/30)	2 Years Prior (FY 2019)	Year Prior (FY 2020)	Most Recent Year (FY2021)	Percent Change 2 yrs-1 yr prior 1	yr-most recent
	ASSETS (in 000s)					
	Cash and Short Term Investments	\$23,354	\$23,877	\$32,093	2.2%	34.4
	Cash held by State Treasurer	\$9,138	\$6,625	\$6,494	-27.5%	-2.0
	Deposits held by State Treasurer				-	
	Accounts Receivable, Net	\$1,891	\$1,397	\$3,123	-26.1%	123.6
	Contributions Receivable, Net				-	
	Inventory and Prepaid Expenses	\$271	\$728	\$272	168.6%	-62.0
	Long-Term Investments	\$20,847	\$21,744	\$22,044	4.3%	
	Loans to Students	\$526	\$407	\$342	-22.6%	
	Funds held under bond agreement	\$249			-100.0%	
	Property, plants, and equipment, net	\$100,696	\$97,698	\$93,131	-3.0%	
	Other Assets	\$7,344	\$7,459	\$7,243	1.6%	
	Total Assets	\$164,316	\$159,935	\$164,742	-2.7%	3.
-	Deferred Outflows of Resurces	¢19.00¢	¢15.052	¢1E 196	16.00/	0
	Resources related to pension and OPEB obligations	\$18,096	\$15,053	\$15,186	-16.8%	0.
	Loss on refunding of long term debt	\$82	\$76	\$402	-7.3%	428.
	Total deferred outflow of resources	\$18,178	\$18,178	\$18,178	0.0%	0
	LIABILITIES (in 000s)	\$12,509	\$9.216	\$8,278	-34.3%	0
1	Accounts payable and accrued liabilities Deferred revenue & refundable advances	\$1,234	\$8,216 \$1,683	\$0,270	-54.5%	
1	Due to state	+رير1ھ	ş1,005	\$2,00J	50.470	
İ	Due to affiliates					
İ	Annuity and life income obligations	\$65,563	\$55,778	\$52,673	-14.9%	-5
İ	Amounts held on behalf of others	\$6,666	\$6,599	\$7,356	-1.0%	11
l	Long-term investments	\$23,270	\$22,690	\$22,573	-2.5%	
1	Refundable government advances	\$781	\$538	\$423	-31.1%	-21
	Other long-term liabilities				-	
	Total Liabilities	\$110,023	\$95,504	\$93,366	-13.2%	-2
	Deferred Inflows of Resources					
	Resources related to pension and OPEB obligations	\$6,428	\$16,260	\$20,758	153.0%	27
	Deferred service concessionarrangements	\$4,879	\$4,458	\$4,034	-8.6%	-9
	Total deferred inflows of resources	\$11,307	\$11,307	\$11,307	0.0%	0
	NET ASSETS (in 000s)					
-					1	
	Unrestricted net assets					
	Unrestricted net assets Institutional * (detail below)	-\$17,531	-\$17,788	-\$10,379	1.5%	-41
		-\$17,531 \$4,143	-\$17,788 \$5,257	-\$10,379 \$6,248	1.5% 26.9%	
	Institutional * (detail below)					18
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation	\$4,143	\$5,257	\$6,248	26.9%	18
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total	\$4,143	\$5,257	\$6,248	26.9%	-67
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets	\$4,143 (\$13,388)	\$5,257 (\$12,531)	\$6,248 (\$4,131)	26.9% -6.4%	18 -67 31
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation <b>Total</b> Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046	26.9% -6.4% 31.5%	18 -67 31 80
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation <b>Total</b> Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$111,364	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1%	18 -67 31 80
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$111,364	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1%	18 -67 31 80 77
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,967	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3%	18 -67 31 80 77 -5
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets Institutional - Capital assets (net)	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,967 \$78,092 \$17,964 \$96,056	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572 \$75,835 \$19,080 \$94,915	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485 \$71,503 \$20,177 \$91,680	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3% -2.9% 6.2% -1.2%	18 -67 31 80 77 -5 5 5 -5 -3
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets Institutional - Capital assets (net) Foundation Total Total Total Total Net Assets	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,967 \$78,092 \$778,092 \$17,964 \$96,056 \$94,635	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572 \$75,835 \$19,080 \$94,915 \$93,956	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485 \$71,503 \$20,177 \$91,680 \$108,034	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3% -2.9% 6.2% -1.2% -0.7%	18 -67 31 80 77 -5 5 -5 5 -5 5 -3 15
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets Institutional - Capital assets (net) Foundation Total	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,967 \$78,092 \$17,964 \$96,056	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572 \$75,835 \$19,080 \$94,915	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485 \$71,503 \$20,177 \$91,680	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3% -2.9% 6.2% -1.2%	18 -67 31 80 77 -5 5 5 -5 5 -3 15
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets Institutional - Capital assets (net) Foundation Total Total Total Total Net Assets	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,967 \$78,092 \$778,092 \$17,964 \$96,056 \$94,635	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572 \$75,835 \$19,080 \$94,915 \$93,956	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485 \$71,503 \$20,177 \$91,680 \$108,034	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3% -2.9% 6.2% -1.2% -0.7%	18 -67 31 80 77 -5 5 5 -5 5 -3 15
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets Institutional - Capital assets (net) Foundation Total Total Total Total Net Assets TOTAL LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,967 \$78,092 \$778,092 \$17,964 \$96,056 \$94,635	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572 \$75,835 \$19,080 \$94,915 \$93,956	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485 \$71,503 \$20,177 \$91,680 \$108,034	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3% -2.9% 6.2% -1.2% -0.7%	18 -67 31 80 77 -5 5 5 -5 5 -3 15 6
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets Institutional - Capital assets (net) Foundation Total Total Total Total Net Assets TOTAL LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS Unrestricted Net Assets - Institution	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,364 \$11,967 \$78,092 \$17,964 \$96,056 \$94,635 \$204,658	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572 \$75,835 \$19,080 \$94,915 \$93,956 \$189,460	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485 \$71,503 \$20,177 \$91,680 \$108,034 \$201,400	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3% -2.9% 6.2% -1.2% -0.7% -7.4%	18 -67. 31. 80 77. -5. 5. -5. 5. -3. 15. -3. 15. -6. -22.
	Institutional * (detail below) Foundation Total Temporarily restricted net assets Institutional Foundation Total Permanently restricted net assets Institutional - Capital assets (net) Foundation Total Total Total Total Net Assets INSTITUTIES and NET ASSETS Unrestricted Net Assets - Institution Unrestricted from operations	\$4,143 (\$13,388) \$603 \$11,364 \$11,967 \$78,092 \$17,964 \$96,056 \$94,635 \$204,658	\$5,257 (\$12,531) \$793 \$10,779 \$11,572 \$75,835 \$19,080 \$94,915 \$93,956 \$189,460 39,197	\$6,248 (\$4,131) \$1,046 \$19,439 \$20,485 \$71,503 \$20,177 \$91,680 \$108,034 \$201,400 47,866	26.9% -6.4% 31.5% -5.1% -3.3% -2.9% 6.2% -1.2% -0.7% -7.4% 7.8%	18 -67. 31. 80 77. -5 5 5 -5 5 -3 15 6 -22 22 9

#### Standard 7: Institutional Resources

	(Stati	ement of Revenue		Most Recently		Next Year
	Fiscal Year ends - month& day: (06/30)	3 Years Prior (FY2018)	2 Years Prior (FY2019)	ompleted Year (FY 2020)	Current Year (FY 2021)	Forward (FY 2022)
	OPERATING REVENUES (in 000s)					
	Tuition and fees	\$47,456	\$49,365	\$48,742	\$46,998	\$46,998
	Room and board	\$12,164	\$12,437	\$10,336	\$7,156	\$7,156
	Less: Financial aid	(\$9,262)	(\$9,427)	(\$9,091)	(\$8,458)	(\$8,458)
	Net student fees	\$50,357	\$52,375	\$49,987	\$45,696	\$45,696
	Government grants and contracts	\$9,475	\$9,917	\$9,992	\$9,023	\$9,023
	Private gifts, grants and contracts	\$3,163	\$2,847	\$3,165	\$2,543	\$2,543
	Other auxiliary enterprises	\$796	\$854	\$630	\$68	\$68
	Endowment income used in operations					
9	Other revenue (specify):	\$1,265	\$1,469	\$1,130	\$911	\$911
	Other revenue (specify):					
	Net assets released from restrictions					
	Total Operating Revenues	\$65,056	\$67,462	\$64,904	\$58,241	\$58,241
	OPERATING EXPENSES (in 000s)					
?	Instruction	\$38,783	\$42,981	\$45,101	\$43,284	\$43,284
?	Research					
?	Public Service				\$351	\$351
?	Academic Support	\$7,376	\$6,456	\$6,152	\$5,822	\$5,822
?	Student Services	\$11,099	\$11,881	\$11,189	\$11,208	\$11,208
?	Institutional Support	\$13,737	\$11,580	\$12,593	\$12,991	\$12,991
	Fundraising and alumni relations					
	Operation, maintenance of plant (if not allocated)	\$13,959	\$20,099	\$15,221	\$15,571	\$15,571
	Scholarships and fellowships (cash refunded by public institution)	\$2,635	\$2,089	\$4,429	\$4,801	\$4,801
2	Auxiliary enterprises	\$11,840	\$12,955	\$12,774	\$7,939	\$7,939
2	Depreciation (if not allocated)	\$5,655	\$5,448	\$5,473	\$5,600	\$5,600
•	Other expenses (specify):	\$696	\$672	\$645	\$603	\$603
	Other expenses (specify):	1070		10.00		40.00
	Total operating expenditures	\$105,779	\$114,161	\$113,577	\$108,170	\$108,170
	Change in net assets from operations	-\$40,722	-\$46,699	-\$48,673	-\$49,929	-\$49,929
	NON OPERATING REVENUES (in 000s)					
?	State appropriations (net)	\$35,415	\$39,400	\$41,087	\$42,192	\$42,192
	Investment return	(\$77)	\$1,188	\$1,519	(\$217)	(\$217)
	Interest expense (public institutions)					
	Gifts, bequests and contributions not used in operations					
	Other (specify):	\$38			-\$33	-\$33
	Other (specify):			\$1,934	\$7,526	\$7,526
	Other (specify):					
	Net non-operating revenues	\$35,376	\$40,588	\$44,540	\$49,468	\$49,468
	Income before other revenues, expenses, gains, or losses	-\$5,346	-\$6,111	-\$4,133	-\$462	-\$461
2	Capital appropriations (public institutions)	\$353	\$4,668	\$1,807	\$3,793	\$3,793
2	Other (specify):			. ,,		
	TOTAL INCREASE/DECREASE IN NET ASSETS	-\$4,993	-\$1,443	-\$2,326	\$3,331	\$3,332

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below FY2021 is the most recent audit Next year forward uses current year figures.

Revised October 2018

#### Standard 7: Institutional Resources

Image: Long-term Debt       Image: Long-term Debte:
Additions       \$0       \$0       \$0       \$0       \$12,926,359         Reductions       \$0       \$0       \$0       \$12,926,359         Ending balance       \$23,413,802       \$22,697,441       \$21,926,3680       \$21,924,501       \$21,         Interest paid during fiscal year       \$695,557       \$672,047       \$645,168       \$602,865         Current Portion       \$680,667       \$705,667       \$730,667       \$547,983         Bond Rating - Moody's       A2 stable       A2 stable       A2 stable       A2 stable
?       Reductions       (\$696,362)       (\$716,362)       (\$741,361)       (\$12,957,938)       (         Ending balance       \$23,413,802       \$22,697,441       \$21,956,080       \$21,924,501       \$21,         Interest paid during fiscal year       \$695,557       \$672,047       \$645,168       \$602,865         Current Portion       \$680,667       \$705,667       \$730,667       \$547,983         Bond Rating - Moody's       A2 stable       A2 stable       A2 stable       A2 stable
Ending balance         \$23,413,802         \$22,697,441         \$21,956,080         \$21,924,501         \$21, \$21,924,501           Interest paid during fiscal year         \$695,557         \$672,047         \$645,168         \$602,865           Current Portion         \$680,667         \$705,667         \$730,667         \$547,983           Bond Rating - Moody's         A2 stable         A2 stable         A2 stable         A2 stable
Interest paid during fiscal year         \$695,557         \$672,047         \$645,168         \$602,865           Current Portion         \$680,667         \$705,667         \$730,667         \$547,983           Bond Rating - Moody's         A2 stable         A2 stable         A2 stable         A2 stable
Current Portion         \$680,667         \$705,667         \$730,667         \$547,983           Bond Rating - Moody's         A2 stable         A2 stable         A2 stable         A2 stable         A2 stable
Bond Rating - Moody's     A2 stable     A2 stable
Bond Rating - S&P     A stable     A stable     A stable
Debt Service Coverage Operating Income / (Annual Interest + Current Portion of Debt)     47.27     47.22     49.03     56.40
Debt to Net Assets Ratio         0.37         0.37         0.37         0.35
Debt to Assets Ratio     0.15     0.14     0.14       Long-term Debt / Total Assets     0.15     0.14     0.13

Future borrowing plans (please describe). NONE

# Standard 7: Institutional Resources (Supplemental Data)

	9 Years Prior (FY2018)	2 Years Prior (FY2019)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 2020)	urrent Year (FY 2021)	Next Year Forward (FY 2022)
NET ASSETS					
Net assets beginning of year	\$99,846,050	\$62,608,757	\$61,165,019	\$58,840,408	\$58,840,408
Adoption of accounting principle	(\$32,243,936)	<b>\$</b> 0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total increase/decrease in net assets	(\$4,993,357)	(\$1,443,738)	(\$2,324,611)	\$3,330,690	\$3,330,690
Net assets end of year	\$62,608,757	\$61,165,019	\$58,840,408	\$62,171,098	\$62,171,098
				1	
FINANCIAL AID					
Source of funds					
Unrestricted institutional	\$2,369,267	\$2,333,333	\$2,388,714	\$2,117,532	\$2,094,239
Federal, state and private grants	\$10,543,765	\$10,835,011	\$11,178,186	\$10,992,107	\$10,970,123
Restricted funds	\$352,380	\$411,032	\$645,808	\$669,351	\$672,028
Total	\$13,265,412	\$13,579,376	\$14,212,708	\$13,778,991	\$13,737,654
% Discount of tuition and fees					
? % Unrestricted discount					
Net Tuition Revenue per FTE	\$10,039	\$10,373	\$10,061	\$9,720	\$9,749
FEDERAL FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMPOSITE SCORE					
Please indicate your institution's endowment spending poli In the case of endowment restricted to scholarship and financial	aid, the Foundatio				
endowment averaged over the preceding 12 quarters. Until the eraveraged over the number of quarters it has been in existence.	ndowment has bee	en in existence fo	or 12 quarters, th	ne market value w	rill be

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below.

FY2021 is the most recent audit.

We do not discount tuition and fees. State Universities exempt from Federal Financial Responsibility Composite

# Standard 7: Institutional Resources

ISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day (06 /30)	3 Years Prior (FY2018)	2 Years Prior (FY2019)	Most Recently ompleted Year (FY 2020)	Current Year (FY 2021)	ext Year Forward (FY 2022)
CASH FLOW Eash and Cash Equivalents beginning of yea	¢21.4(2.740	¢22 (50 002	\$22,402,441	\$20 E94 E04	\$20 EQ4 EC
Cash Flow from Operating Activities	r \$21,462,740 (\$31,887,220)	\$23,658,883 (\$32,110,198)	\$32,492,441 (\$44,114,671)	\$30,584,596 (\$43,292,053)	\$30,584,59
Cash Flow from Investing Activities	\$33,993,067	(\$52,110,198) \$920,966	\$641,157	(\$43,292,033) (\$510,874)	(" ) )
Cash Flow from Financing Activities	\$90,296	\$920,986	\$41,565,669	\$51,887,067	(\$510,87 \$51,887,00
Cash and Cash Equivalents end of		\$32,492,441	\$30,584,596	\$38,668,736	\$38,668,73
	\$23,030,003	<i>\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\</i>	\$30,501,570	\$30,000,730	\$50,000,70
IQUIDITY RATIOS					
Current Assets	\$25,331,702	\$34,808,674	\$32,841,965	\$42,173,381	\$42,173,3
Current Liabilities	\$12,593,007	\$18,415,410	\$14,603,707	\$14,926,951	\$14,926,9
Current Ratio	2.01	1.89	2.25	2.83	2.
Days Cash on Hand	77.49	99.15	93.77	124.06	124.
Days Cash on Hand See enter any explanatory notes in the box			ł	124.06	124

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below.

FY2021 is the most recent audit

#### Standard 7: Institutional Resources (Information Resources)

	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	Most Recently Completed Year	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)
Total Expenditures					
Materials	\$526,096	\$510,291	\$435,334	\$555,022	\$506,686
Salaries & wages (permanent staff)	\$856,343	\$913,390	\$920,908	\$920,908	\$920,908
Salaries & wages (student employees)	\$52,021	\$45,633	\$7,725	\$7,725	\$7,725
Other operating expenses	\$67,001	\$74,359	\$98,106	\$64,478	\$75,986
Expenditures/FTE student					
Materials	\$104	\$103	\$93	\$128	\$122
Salaries & wages (permanent staff)	\$170	\$184	\$196	\$196	\$196
Salaries & wages (student employees)	\$10	\$9	\$2	\$2	\$2
Other operating expenses	\$13	\$15	\$21	\$15	\$18
Collections					
Percent available physically	43%	39%	37%	34%	31%
Percent available electronically	57%	61%	63%	66%	69%
Number of digital repositories					
Personnel (FTE)					
Librarians - main campus	6	6	6	5	6
Librarians - branch /other locations					
Other library personnel - main campus	11	9	9	13	13
Other library personnel - branch/other locations					
Availability/attendance					
Hours of operation/week main campus	102	102	53	102	102
Hours of operation/week branch/other locations					
Consortia/Partnerships					
Massachusetts Library System (https://www.masslibsyst	em.org/)—Member	for 10+ years.			
Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization (			ber for 10+ ve	ears.	
Worcester Academic Research Cooperative (https://wor	montana ana A Ma	$mbor for 10\pm$			

 Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization (https://www.waldolib.org/)—Member for 10+ years.

 Worcester Academic Research Cooperative (https://worcesterarc.org/)—Member for 10+ years.

 Fenway Library Organization (https://libraries.flo.org/home)—Affiliate Member since FY20

 Higher Education Libraries of Massachusetts (https://libraries.flo.org/HELM-Public/Home)—Member since FY22.

URL of most recent library annual report:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1wyV6rMXj4nnVTs-khY5T

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Collections is Total Books Title Count (Physical) vs. Total Digital Books Count (Digital). This approach does not include a physical/electronic comparison of other information types, e.g., serials, media, etc. COVID pandemic reduced hours in FY 2021

See Form 4.5 for data about Information Literacy

# Standard 7: Institutional Resources

(Technological Resources)

3 Years	2 Years	Most	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)

Course management system	Blackboard					
Number of classes using the system		All	All	All	All	All
Bandwidth						
On-campus network		100	1000	1000	1000	1000
Off-campus access						
commodity internet (Mbps)		5000	10000	10000	10000	10000
high-performance networks (Mbps)						
Wireless protocol(s)		n&g, ac	ac wave1	ac wave 1	ac wave 1	ac wave 1
Typical classroom technology						
Main campus	Dell Ot	otiPlex 380 co	mputers, proje	ctors. Theatre h	as 2 MAC minis	for controlling light and sound
Branch/other locations			Center lab has			
	The we	feeder Glait		20 11/12/00		
Software systems and versions						
Students	SIS rela	ted: Colleague	e (18), WebAdv	isor (3.2.3), Seli	f-Service (2.30)	
Finances	Colleag					
Human Resources	HRCM	-				
Advancement	Blackba	uud, imodules				
1.1					7, OCLC Catalog Classification W	guing and Metadata, OCLC Worlshare, ILL,
Library Website Management	WordP	/ 1	ngsnare, Libra	ry of Congress	Classification w	ed,
Website Management Portfolio Management	WordP	ress				
Interactive Video Conferencing	Zoom					
Digital Object Management		s Portfolio				
Digital Object Management	Extensi	s Portiolio				
W/1 ··· 1 ··· / 1						
Website locations of technology policies/plane		1	1 /ED C	1		
Integrity and security of data	1 , ,		er.edu/FP-Go	,		
Privacy of individuals	1 / /		er.edu/FP-Go er.edu/FP-Go	,		
Appropriate use	1				20W2CLNID0	5YgL-XESSMukWc/edit?
Disaster and recovery plan					28V3GkNP9kq of=true&sd=tru	
Technology replacement	-	0		1		
	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RcERfj3cJ1xzorAzAK4-PerNPDxOuxJw/view?usp=sharing					

All courses are assigned a Blackboard course shell, but there are differing amounts of usage by course. For policies, specific policies are found on the portal (requires sign-in) at https://www.worcester.edu/FP-Governance/

# **Standard 7: Institutional Resources**

#### (Physical Resources)

Campus location	Serviceable Buildings		Assignable S	-		
Main campus	15			1,231,728		
Other U.S. locations						
International locations						
		3 Years	2 Years	1 Year Prior	Current	Next Year
		(FY 2018)	(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)
Revenue (\$000)		· · · · · · ·		• · · ·		
Capital appropriations (public institutions)		\$353	\$4,668	\$1,807	\$3,793	\$3,793
Operating budget		\$4,607	\$6,902	\$4,618	\$2,077	\$2,000
Gifts and grants						
Debt						
Total		\$4,960	\$11,570	\$6,425	\$5,870	\$5,793
Expenditures (\$000)				•		
New Construction						
Renovations, maintenance and equipment		\$3,824	\$7,262	\$3,405	\$5,030	\$5,030
Technology		\$600	\$530	\$546	\$332	\$332
Subtotal		\$4,424	\$7,792	\$3,951	\$5,362	\$5,362
Capitalized fixed asset addition		\$536	\$3,778	\$2,474	\$508	\$508
Total		\$4,960	\$11,570	\$6,425	\$5,870	\$5,870

Assignable square feet (000)	Main campus	Off-campus	Total
Classroom	52,969	4,400	57,369
Laboratory	49,278	6,615	55,893
Office	121,336	4,735	126,071
Study	35,248		35,248
Special	74,487		74,487
General	108,426	10,306	118,732
Support	181,804	60	181,864
Residential	239,301		239,301
Other	1,169		1,169

## Major new buildings, past 10 years (add rows as needed)

Building name	Purpose(s)	Assignable Square Feet (000)	Cost (000)	Year
Dowden Hall Expansion	Residence hall	41,555.00	\$24,200	2010-201
Wellness Center	Athletic facility	73,361.00	\$54,649	2015-201
Sheehan Hall	Residence hall	102,638.00	\$62,788	2013-201

_	Cost (000)	Year
	\$24,200	2010-2011
ſ	\$54,649	2015-2016
ſ	\$62,788	2013-2014

#### New buildings, planned for next 5 years (add rows as needed)

Building name

Purpose(s)



Cost (000)	Year

# Major Renovations, past 10 years (add rows as needed)

The list below includes reno	vations costing \$500,000 or more
Building name	Purpose(s)
Coughlin Field	Track & Field Resurfacing
Parking Lots and Roadways	Resurfacing & accessability
Learning Resource Center	Restack 2nd floor
Learning Resource Center	Overclad exterior
Learning Resource Center	3rd floor lighting/ceiling
Ghosh Science & Technology	Renovate various labs
Ghosh Science & Technology	Replace RTU's
Ghosh Science & Technology	Replace Roof
Student Center	Reprogram 3rd floor
Student Center	Replace RTU's
Student Center	Replace Roof
Sullivan Academic Auditorium	Install RTU's
Dowden Hall	Boiler replacement et al
Dowden Hall	Replace elevators
Wasylean Hall	Envelope resealing

Assi	gnable Square	Feet
	N/A	
	N/A	
	16,150.00	
	N/A	
	31,710.00	
	6,310.00	
	N/A	
	N/A	
	11,360.00	
	N/A	

Cost (000)	Year
\$2,839	2019
\$2,399	2016-2019
\$938	2011
\$3,386	2012-2013
\$1,169	2015
\$816	2010-2015
\$4,195	2017-2020
\$1,112	2020
\$2,254	2014-2015
\$947	2016-2017
\$1,541	2017-2018
\$1,114	2010-2011
\$746	2011-2012
\$645	2019-2020
\$610	2013-2014

#### Renovations planned for next 5 years (add rows as needed)

The list below includes rea	novations costing	
Building name	Purpose(s)	
Student Center	Replace elevators	
Ghosh Science & Technology	Replace fume hoods	
Ghosh Science & Technology	Replace boilers	
Student Center	Counseling Suite renovation	
Sullivan Building	Eager Auditorium reno	
Sullivan Building	Sullivan Auditorium reno	
Sullivan Building	Bathroom renovations	
Learning Resource Center	Roof replacement	
Sullivan Building	Boiler replacement	
Sullivan Building	Roof replacement	
Learning Resource Center	VAV box replacement	
Sullivan Building	Lighting Upgrade	
Sullivan Building	Flooring Replacement	
Student Center/LRC	Generator replacement	
Sullivan Building	RTU replacement	

Assignable Square Feet		
	N/A	
	N/A	
	N/A	
	3,200.00	
	1,775.00	
	11,575.00	
	N/A	
	N/A	
	N/A	
	N/A	
	N/A	
	107,000.00	
	N/A	
-	N/A	
	N/A	

Cost (000)	Year
\$760	2021
\$2,400	2021
\$820	2021
\$600	2022
\$1,300	2022
\$4,500	2022-2023
\$2,314	2023-2025
\$1,300	2023
\$1,500	2025
\$1,200	2026
\$1,500	2025-2026
\$1,700	2026-2027
\$750	2025
\$550	2024
\$3,500	2024-2026

\$500,000 or more
Wasylean Hall	Roof replacement
Learning Resource Center	Replace wiring/ceiling 1st floor

N/A
40,990.00

\$1,600	2025
\$1,900	2021-2023

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below FY2022 Audit not available until October 2022 so current year is FY2021

#### STANDARD SEVEN: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

#### Description

#### Human Resources

As shown in Data First Forms for Standard Seven, Worcester State University employed 947 individuals in FY22; 550 of were employed full time and 397 were employed part time. Data First Forms show that total numbers employed per year since FY19 have fluctuated between a low of 871 in FY21 and a high of 1006 in FY20. Such fluctuations are due mostly to numbers of individuals employed part-time; the number of individuals employed full-time has remained relatively constant, ranging between a low of 548 in FY21 and a high of 563 in FY19.

Depending on the title and responsibilities of a position, an employee may be hired as a Non-Unit Profession (NUP) or into one of three recognized unions: the Association of Professional Administrators (APA); the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); and the Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA). Employees who are hired into a union position are provided with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement, which provides details on the terms of employment and the procedures for evaluation and promotion keyed to their specific position.

Established by the authority of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Worcester State University offers regionally competitive salaries, along with a typical state employee benefits package that includes a range of paid holidays, personal days, vacation days, and sick days. Critical benefits include health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, long-term disability insurance, flexible spending plans, and retirement plans. Supplemental benefits include tuition waivers, supplemental retirement programs, employee discounts, AFLAC disability, and other optional insurances. Additionally, professional development opportunities are available to faculty and staff through institutional programming.

Hiring processes are coordinated by the university's Human Resources office. Employees are hired and employed consistent with federal and state employment laws. All new employees are subject to an onboarding process that includes an orientation session and distribution of Worcester State University's Employee Handbook, which contains detailed policy information. The <u>Office of Diversity</u>, Inclusion, <u>Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity</u> (ODIAA/EO), in partnership with Human Resources, supports the university's goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the hiring process by providing programs and services that foster and promote a supportive and safe environment for the university's diverse population, including:

- Investigating all claims of discrimination, as defined by federal and state law
- Monitoring employee recruitment and hiring procedures to ensure they are consonant with the university's goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Conducting CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) checks for employees and students who volunteer, intern, or work in settings that require CORI checks
- Providing diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice training for the campus community
- Collaborating with student organizations and academic departments to sponsor campus events about different cultures and ethnic groups
- Conducting community outreach by working with community centers, agencies, and others as an institutional representative

A component of ODIAA/EO is the <u>Bias Incident Report Team</u> (BIRT). Faculty or staff members or students who experience or witness a bias or discrimination incident may report the incident using an online form, which is directed to the equal opportunity officer. This report is then routed to the BIRT for review.

#### Financial Resources

Goal 6 of *Beyond 150: Lead, Succeed, Engage*, the university's 2020-2025 strategic plan, states that the institution will "Develop sustainable revenue streams adequate to support the university's academic mission and institutional priorities, and invest in physical infrastructure and technology with a commitment to financial and environmental sustainability."

Managing this commitment is the Division of Administration and Finance (A&F), which is led by the vice president for Administration and Finance. As shown in institutional organization charts, this division includes the offices of Human Resources; Payroll; Budget; Planning and Policy Development; Fiscal Affairs; Procurement; Accounts Payable; Student Accounts; and Facilities.

Financial decisions focus primarily on directly or indirectly supporting the teaching, learning, and research objectives outlined in the institution's <u>strategic plan</u>, among other considerations deliberated by the Executive Cabinet (EC) and the institution's Board of Trustees (BOT). The table below shows the total revenue (by fiscal year), and the percentage of total expenses associated with instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarship.

Year	Total Revenue	Total Functional Expenses (Instruction, Academic Support, Student Services, Scholarships)	%
2017	\$96,913,053.00	\$56,513,141.00	58%
2018	\$100,432,534.00	\$59,892,965.00	60%
2019	\$108,050,559.00	\$62,396,764.00	58%
2020	\$109,555,959.00	\$66,871,313.00	61%
2021	\$107,707,658.00	\$65,115,108.00	60%
Grand Total	\$522,659,763.00	\$310,789,291.00	59%

#### Table 7.1 Percentage of Total Expenses Associated with Academics

Comparing the above categories and percentages to May 2022 <u>data shown</u> in Figure 2 from the section "Postsecondary Institution Expenses" in National Center for Educational Statistics' *Condition of Education* shows that Worcester State University's average of 59% of total revenue dedicated to instruction, academic support, student services, and student aid (scholarships) is in line with similar aggregate expenditures for instruction; academic support, student services, and institutional support; and net grant aid to students reported at 50% for public four-year institutions.

As shown in Data First Forms for Standard Seven, total operating and non-operating revenue increased by approximately 7%, from \$100,432,00 in FY18 to \$107,709,000 in FY21. During that period, the university's operating revenue, derived mainly from student tuition and fees, and thus affected by decreased enrollment due to pandemic conditions, decreased approximately 10%, from \$65,056,000 in FY18 to \$58,241,000 in FY21. These figures do not include revenues from the institution's component unit, the Worcester State

Foundation (an IRS-approved 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization) nor any of the Foundation's affiliated entities. However, over the same time period, net non-operating revenue, represented mostly by state appropriations, but augmented by COVID-19 relief funds from state and federal sources, increased approximately 40%, rising from \$35,376,000 in FY18 to \$49,461,000 in FY21. The university witnessed relatively stable maintenance of total assets, from \$164,316,000 in FY19 to \$164,741,000 in FY21, again, excluding the Worcester State Foundation and its affiliated entities.

Operating expenditures over the same period increased by approximately 2%, from \$105,779,000 in FY18 to \$108,170,000 in FY21. The institution's total liabilities decreased from \$110,023,000 in FY18 to 93,366,422 in FY21. Worcester State University's current liquidity ratio, which compares current assets to current liabilities (the quintessential benchmark of an institution's ability to meet its short-term obligations), rose from 2.01 in FY18 to 2.84 in FY21. Finally, as shown by Data First Forms for Standard Seven, the institution's net assets (total assets minus total liabilities) increased from \$54,293,000 in FY19 to \$71,376,000 in FY21.

The university relies on an annual participative budgeting model, beginning with department managers evaluating prior-year spending and current needs, and anticipating future departmental needs. Budget managers are provided with information and context at the onset of this process. Completed budgets are then provided to area supervisors. After multiple levels of review, these requests are coordinated with divisional priorities before submission to the respective area vice president. The results of this process are then reviewed by the EC, which evaluates and prioritizes divisional requests. This prioritized information is ranked and then funded based on the availability of resources. Final approval of the coming year's budget is made by the Board of Trustees (BOT) at its June meeting. On a quarterly basis, financial reports are provided to the BOT for review and approval.

The institution operating budget is audited annually by the certified public accounting firm <u>Bollus Lynch</u>, <u>LLP</u>, which conducts an internal controls review. A full audit report is submitted to the standing Finance and Facilities Committee of the BOT. Representatives from Bollus Lynch attend a full board meeting to present the audited financial statement. Additional external reviews include an annual financial rating review with representatives from Moody's and Standard and Poor's Global Ratings, an annual update of financial ratio analysis with the BOT, and an annual update of the university's Capital Financing Plan with the BOT. Documentation supporting this self-study summarizes the kind and frequency of external reviews.

The university follows internal safeguards to ensure continued ethical and prudent financial management, including requiring conflict-of-interest and ethics training for employees and members of the governing board, performing an internal review of financial controls by the director of Internal Controls and Risk Assessment, demonstrating segregation of duties, employing electronic expenditure approvals, limiting the number of individuals who have administrative rights to bank accounts, and carrying out frequent account reconciliations. These safeguards are outlined by the university in the Internal Control Questionnaire Plan, which is submitted annually to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In relationship with the institution's Division of University Advancement, the Worcester State Foundation participates in fundraising for private gifts and holding ongoing funds, such as endowed scholarship monies and the institution's endowment, to support the university's mission. An IRS-approved 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization, the Worcester State Foundation publishes a 32-page Fundraising and Gift Acceptance Policy that oversees the philanthropy directed to the university. Fundraising goals and priorities for the institution are developed by University Advancement, in collaboration with academic deans and vice presidents across campus. The net assets of the Worcester State Foundation increased by 126% over the past 10 years, from \$15,511,683 in FY11 to \$35,116,273 in FY21. The tables below show that, since FY13, total fundraising from all sources by University Advancement has regularly met or exceeded annual fundraising goals.

FY	16	17	18	19	20	21
Goal	\$3,000,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,650,00
Actual	\$3,268,895	\$5,936,479	\$5,858,179	\$4,474,376	\$4,537,477	\$4,011,051

#### Table 7.2a: University Advancement Fundraising Goal/Actual Comparison, FY16-21

 Table 7.2b: University Advancement Fundraising Goal/Actual Comparison, FY12-15

FY	12	13	14	15
Goal	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,200,000
Actual	\$1,942,980	\$5,443,840	\$3,643,855	\$3,498,296

## Information, Physical, and Technological Resources

#### **Facilities**

Worcester State University's 58-acre campus includes seven principal buildings that house administrative, student service, athletic, and academic offices; athletic competition venues; performance venues; an art gallery; a structured parking facility; and instructional space for classrooms, lecture halls, teaching laboratories, and research laboratories. The university's inventory of instructional space – general-purpose and specialized instructional space as defined by The National Center for Education Statistics – includes 74 general-purpose classrooms, four large lecture halls, and 37 specialized instructional laboratories/spaces, all of which total more than 113,000 square feet. Additionally, the campus is home to four residence halls whose housing designs range from a traditional first-year hall to semi-suite, full-suite, and townhouses, all of which total 1,577 beds. During the past ten years, the university has increased its residential bed total by 34% through new construction projects.

Capital construction and major renovation projects for residence halls and parking garages are funded through, and are owned by, the Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA). The remaining buildings on campus (excluding the Foundation-owned May Street Building) are property of the Common-wealth of Massachusetts; the state's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) has oversight of these campus assets. The university, in conjunction with both the MSCBA and DCAMM, plans both short- and long-term large capital improvement projects. The institution is responsible for maintenance and operation of all campus buildings and grounds. The most recently completed major capital projects were the mixed-use building Sheehan Hall, which opened in 2014, and the Wellness Center, which opened in 2016. The university's campus master plan was last updated in 2011-2012.

## Library

The library is a campus center where students, faculty, staff, and members of the public converge, collaborate, learn, and discover. Library staff, including six librarians belonging to the campus's MSCA chapter, eight staff members belonging to the AFSCME unit, and one non-unit administrator, assist users at the research help desk and by phone, email, and online chat. Library staff provide classroom instruction on information literacy and research skills, helping students understand the contours and the changing dynamics of the world of information.

Open 101.5 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters, the library is located in the Learning Resource Center and, pre-pandemic, generated 250,000 annual visits. The library features a variety of spaces to meet user needs, including collaborative areas with large, flat-screen displays; individual carrels for independent study; tables with ample space to spread out; lounge chairs with built-in desks; and comfortable seating. Electronic collections include over 200,000 e-books, 150,000 e-journals, and a diversified selection of 300+ databases from EBSCO, Gale, ProQuest, and other authoritative publishers. Remote access to electronic materials is available 24/7/365. Print collections include more than 130,000 books, 200 journals, magazines, and newspapers, and 3,000 multimedia materials. The Worcester State University Archives and Special Collections includes more than 200 linear feet of materials related to Worcester State University's history, more than 400 rare books, and the papers of poet and activist Dennis Brutus.

The Library facilitates access to resources from surrounding libraries via interlibrary lending and through partnerships with multiple consortia, including the Higher Education Libraries of Massachusetts, a network of thirteen Massachusetts public higher education institutions, and the Academic and Research Collaborative, a coalition of libraries from Worcester-area institutions including the American Antiquarian Society, Assumption University, Clark University, the College of the Holy Cross, the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

#### Information Technologies

Information Technology Services (ITS) is responsible for the university's network and database resources. As part of the university's employment on-boarding process, staff computer and other technology device requirements are keyed to job descriptions. Faculty computer and technology needs are assessed similarly, with standard builds available in Apple Macintosh and Microsoft Windows configurations. For all employees, the default computer hardware configuration is a laptop, external keyboard, monitor, and mouse to facilitate hybrid work flexibility, which was a trend accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its concurrent remote work requirements. All employee computers receive a standard software build, which can be customized for specific individual needs; additionally, all employee computers are fully encrypted and are enrolled in standard patch management systems to ensure their functionality and security. The university has subscriptions and licenses for major productivity applications such as Microsoft's Office Suite, SPSS, Adobe's Creative Cloud applications, and Kurzweil's assistive technologies. Most of the university's end-user application catalog is available to users through a variety of devices and can be delivered virtually through Microsoft's terminal services. Enterprise applications, such as Ellucian's Colleague (the university's enterprise database), Blackboard Learning Management System, and Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge (University Advancement's fundraising platform) are available via secured connections on an individual user basis.

Increasingly, the institution's faculty and staff supplement university-owned hardware with personal devices, most frequently smartphones and tablet computers. **ITS** has developed a robust **BYOD** ("bring your own device") protocol to accommodate such flexibility: all users must authenticate against the university's identity management database to gain access to network connectivity and other online campus resources. In instances in which access to protected data or specialized applications is necessary, employees can connect to the campus network via the university's VPN (virtual private network) and, as necessary, access resources via remote terminal service connections. These practices are designed to establish baseline quality of service expectations for university employees, while at the same time accommodating the wide range of connected computing devices that users rely on to meet their position requirements. At any given time, approximately 3,400 wireless devices are connected to the campus' secured network, and wireless users are authenticated against the university's network via eduroam, and residence hall students can register gaming consoles and other specialty devices to the university's network.

The university has detailed disaster recovery plans to enable business continuity in the event of a system or facility failure. Key campus data is backed up on a daily basis, with backup media stored in secure locations. In many instances, parallel environments are maintained to minimize operational downtime; network and

hardware redundancies are regularly tested for quality assurance. In addition to having its own internal monitoring processes, the university regularly contracts with third-party vendors to ensure PCI/PII compliance. Technology-based policies are regularly proposed and vetted by faculty governance and the university's Non-Academic Policy Committee.

Over 95% of all campus classrooms are technology enabled to facilitate curriculum delivery and to expand collaborative learning opportunities. Campus classrooms have ethernet or wireless connectivity – in most instances, both. Wireless access points are located to enable high-quality student network access in most classrooms, and the university has established standard classroom technology configurations to facilitate user support. A typical classroom technology build has a standard Windows-based computer, LCD projection, and audio capabilities. Typical replacement cycle for classroom technology builds is approximately four to five years; at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the university standardized on HoverCam's teaching stations for classroom use (installed in approximately 75% of classrooms), which embeds a Windows computer and touchscreen monitor into a podium that also has advanced display capabilities to support distance learning and synchronous streaming activities. Worcester State University has a long-established undergraduate student laptop requirement, which has shifted demand away from traditional computer labs toward network-based distributed resources. The university has one general-purpose computing lab, and the limited number of computer labs on campus are keyed for specialty use associated with specific academic programs, such as Communication or Geography; these resources are configured and maintained in consultation with their primary-use departments.

#### Appraisal

#### Human Resources

As noted above, Data First Forms for Standard Seven show overall staffing levels have remained relatively stable. The university continues to support and invest in the employee training, retention, and recruitment efforts necessary to fulfill its mission, including significant training and equipment investments made in FY20 and FY21 to assist faculty with converting courses from a traditional in-person format to an online format, in deference to pandemic conditions. However, recent <u>faculty survey</u> results (n = 123) reveal that faculty desire additional training in pedagogy and classroom management: 32.5% desired additional programming by the university's Center for Teaching and Learning; 37.3% desired additional programming arranged by their academic departments; 28.4% desired additional programming by the Office of Academic Affairs; and 47.9% desired access to programming by external bodies/agencies.

As an extension of Strategy 5.2 of the institution's strategic plan ("Recruit, retain, and reward high quality and diverse faculty and staff committed to educating and supporting a diverse student body"), the university aims to increase the percentage of ALANA/BIPOC (African, Latine, Asian, Native American and/or Black, Indigenous, People of Color) hires in the next 10 years, establishing a faculty employee population that mirrors the labor market in the greater Worcester region. Useful in this endeavor will be a baseline utilization report that will account for 2020 census data, as those data relate to affirmative action/equal opportunity, and will allow Worcester State University to examine how the institution represents the available labor force in Massachusetts.

The university continues to refine its efforts relating to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education's Equity Agenda, which is also reflected in the institution's strategic plan. In addition to the Bias Intervention Response Team described above, the university has established or advanced the following initiatives:

• <u>Campus Climate Committee</u>: Works collaboratively on a multi-stage approach to evaluate diversity, inclusion, and equity, utilizing quantitative and qualitative data to propose, design, and assess short-and long-term systemic initiatives, and makes recommendations annually to the university's president.

- <u>Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action</u>: Evaluates institutional compliance with respect to equal opportunity, diversity, and affirmative action programs, and makes recommendations annually to the university's president as well as to respective campus and governance committees concerning effective implementation of the institution's Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan.
- <u>Diversity Mini-Grant Committee</u>: Invites students, faculty, and staff to submit ideas for increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion within the Worcester State University community; ideas that meet the mini-grant guidelines may be funded up to \$300.
- <u>LGBTQ+ Advisory Group</u>: Advocates for the needs of the LGBTQ+ community and works towards a campus culture where members of the LGBTQ+ community are welcomed and respected.

Although advances have been made, these initiatives remain a work in progress. In early 2022, the results of the Worcester State University Equity Audit (Inclusivity Appraisal Report) were published, including the conclusions of the review team, which noted, "Diversity and Inclusivity initiatives are generally performative, ineffective, and/or lack clear structure."

#### Financial Resources

As with most state universities, state appropriations have increased over the past 10 years, but these appropriations do not necessarily reflect cost increases associated with salary, technology needs, and general inflation. In FY11, for example, Worcester State University received a total of \$25,931,430 in state appropriations, which included fringe benefits provided to employees by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, net of tuition remitted to the Commonwealth. In comparison, in FY21 the university received a total of \$42,192,196. Although the institution expects that state appropriations will remain relatively stable, appropriations are the result of complex legislative and political processes influenced by economic challenges and, most recently, compounded by general uncertainties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consistent with regional and national trends, Worcester State University has anticipated a generational undergraduate enrollment decline that will impact tuition and fee revenue. Primary factors expected to influence this decline are a reduction in the number of traditional-age high school students; lower enrollment at local community colleges limiting numbers of prospective transfer students; and, perhaps temporarily, fewer international students as a result of travel and residence restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as federal policy changes made in years prior to the pandemic affecting international students. Although the total undergraduate and graduate enrollment headcount has remained relatively stable (5,708 in fall 2010, according to the university's Fact Book for that year, to 5,724 in fall 2021, as shown in Data First Forms for Standard Five), enrollment data show decreases in full-time equivalent (FTE) and unduplicated credit from FY11 to FY21: FTE of 5,062 in FY11 to 4,595 in FY21 (a decrease of 9.3%); and unduplicated credit headcount of 9,251 in FY11 to 7,737 in FY21 (a decrease of 16.4%). Additionally, total first-year applications dropped from 4,896 in the fall 2010 admission cycle to 4,770 in the fall 2020 cycle, a decrease of 2.5% over the past 10 years.

In order to address the long- and short-term impacts of enrollment decline — both the expected generational decline and the intensifying factor of the pandemic — the university has increased recruitment and retention efforts, joined the Common Application (Common App), and introduced innovative academic initiatives such as MajorPlus, which a market positioning study commissioned by the university indicates will draw more applicants from within and without the institution's normal admissions catchment area. Additionally, the university worked closely with Becker College, which closed in 2021, and its students to offer guaranteed admission to those in good academic standing, so they could complete their academic programs with minimal disruption, a measure that significantly raised new transfer enrollment in fall 2021.

Nevertheless, sharp declines in first-year enrollments in FY21 and FY22 – total first-year, full-time headcount of 1,255 in FY20, as shown in Data First Forms for Standard Five, declining to 1,106 in FY21 and 1,033 in FY22 – occasioned by pandemic conditions have left the university with a projected \$9 million budget deficit for FY23. As an immediate measure, the university's Board of Trustees approved on June 14, 2022 a "bridge" budget for FY23 – the "bridge" meant to provide time for the university to assume a better financial footing for FY24 and allow for a potential enrollment rebound.

In this "bridge" budget, total operational costs for FY23 are at \$97,919,586. State appropriations, state fringe benefits, state operating grants, institutional revenue and federal COVID-19 relief funds cumulatively offset costs in the amount of \$95,045,956. The remaining budget gap of \$2,873,630 is funded by an appropriation of unrestricted reserves. This resource plan reflects reliance on \$6,520,581 of one-time grants from the federal and state government, in addition to the draw on reserves. However, this plan to offset the budget gap of approximately \$9 million is not sustainable beyond FY23. Full explanation of the FY23 budget is documented in BOT materials for the Board's June 14, 2022 meeting.

In order to address the challenges and uncertainties noted above, in late 2021 the university created a Financial Sustainability Task Force composed of members who represent the university's different constituencies, including unit members from the MSCA, APA, and AFSCME bargaining units, and MSCA leadership. Phase 1 for the task force resulted in a series of recommendations, informed by the university's strategic plan, that primarily focuses on:

- developing strategies to create intentional efficiencies across all areas of the university;
- identifying new/increased net revenue opportunities that can be achieved over the next three fiscal years; and
- identifying areas of operational and cost containment, while maintaining a consistent and appropriate service level.

Phase 1 was completed by the close of FY22 and was approved by the university's governing board on June 14, 2022. Phase 2 Task Force members are participating in a process of operational review intended to ensure that the university is fiscally healthy and focused on student success, while achieving the goals of its strategic plan. Participants will develop specific recommendations for achieving greater efficiencies, realizing cost savings, and increasing revenues for future fiscal years. The work of Phase 2 began in July 2022 and will continue through November 2022, at which time the task force will report the results of its work. It is anticipated that the task force will remain active through 2024. Activities will include the rollout of implementation plans and assessment of those activities, in addition to evaluation of additional prioritized initiatives identified in Phase 2 by applying a continuous improvement framework.

The institution continues to review and streamline its external grants administration and generation efforts. These efforts led to the creation, in 2021, of the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR), along with the hiring of a director. A pre-awards grants officer was added in July 2022. As shown in institutional organizational charts, OGSR is a department within the Division of University Advancement, whose objective is to promote the goals of the university through the pursuit, acquisition, and management of external funding from governmental and independent funding agencies. OGSR coordinates the grants development process for faculty and staff, provides technical assistance for those who wish to obtain grant funding, serves as a liaison with funding agencies, and provides leadership of post-award grants management. These additions in grants generation and administration are greatly needed. In FY11, for example, the university received a total of \$12,722,573 in external grants and contracts, while in FY21 it received a total of only \$11,566,478 – a 9% decrease. The university is optimistic that additional grant opportunities will be identified and realized, leading to an increase in grant funding, which will positively impact faculty and student recruitment and retention.

#### Information, Physical, and Technological Resources

#### **Facilities**

All campus building projects, as well as daily operations and maintenance work, adhere to applicable staterequired codes, regulations, executive orders, and mandates. All campus buildings are inspected annually by the State Building Inspector to ensure all safety and code requirements are met in order to achieve occupancy permits. Additional reviews for life safety and public safety systems and equipment are performed annually, or more frequently, by the respective authority having jurisdiction to ensure compliance.

In 2017, a campus facility assessment was completed by the state's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) for each of the state universities. This process resulted in Worcester State University having its operating funds augmented, over a five-year period, with a \$12.4 million infusion of state capital appropriations that will allow the institution to complete \$21.4 million of deferred maintenance and capital adaptation projects. This funding has allowed the university to replace all end-of-life mechanical systems and roofing systems in its Ghosh Science and Technology Center and to refurbish its athletic competition field; resurface multiple roadway and parking lots, while addressing parking accessibility deficiencies; modernize elevators; and perform other deferred maintenance system upgrades throughout campus. During the summer of 2021, work began on a campus-wide \$15 million electrical infrastructure project. This project, fully funded by DCAMM, will replace all manhole, duct, wiring, and transformers on campus with a reliable loop distribution system. This project also includes replacing several building electrical main panels that are well past their useful life expectancy. The resulting electrical distribution system will eventually be owned by the area's electrical service utility rather than the university, thereby removing the future burden and expense of repairs and maintenance on all system components.

Recognizing that, aside from occasional capital infusions from the Commonwealth, budget funding for building capital and deferred maintenance is limited, projects are prioritized to ensure that life safety and building operating system needs are addressed prior to investing in space revitalization. The most recent Gordian Sightlines analysis, finalized in February 2022 with FY21 data, shows that since 2011, 76% of existing space spending has been invested in higher return-on-investment envelope and building systems projects. The campus building portfolio reveals that 50% of its space is constructed, or has been renovated, post-1991, thereby having a higher technology complexity with its operating systems as compared to university peers. The institution invests in preventative maintenance activities at a rate higher than its Gordian peer group and higher than all Massachusetts state universities, in an effort to maintain systems at their optimal performance levels and to extend useful life for all system components.

A continuing facilities concern for the institution is the May Street Building, the former Temple Emanuel building acquired by the Worcester State Foundation in 2015 and transferred to WSF Real Estate, Inc., an affiliated entity of the Worcester State Foundation. Planning for renovation and/or possible expansion of the structure and repurposing it as primarily academic instructional space began in 2017 and, by fall 2019, had begun to take shape as the university worked with DCAMM and architectural firms to create preliminary plans, which were presented to the institution's Board of Trustees on Sept. 10, 2019. Planning continued until the onset of pandemic conditions. Since then, continuing pandemic conditions have prevented any progress on repurposing the building. In the meantime, the building's systems have begun failing, and the university has moved all operations out of the building, pending restart of the planning process.

The university's Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) has worked with the institution's utility suppliers, as well as with department project managers and various architect/engineering teams, on cost-effective collaboration and strategic energy reduction design plans for campus capital and deferred maintenance projects, which have resulted in the university avoiding annual costs of over \$620,000 in fossil fuel expenses. In 2018, EHS, worked with the university's chemical hygiene officer to implement a campus-

wide chemical hygiene plan (CHP) that addresses policies, standard operating procedures, training, and record keeping to ensure safety of employees and students when working with chemicals and/or hazardous materials. All tenure-track and adjunct faculty in appropriate disciplines have received (CHP) training on an annual basis since the plan's adoption by the university.

In 2019-2020, the campus engaged the services of Core America to review and redevelop custodial standards and work assignments for all non-residence-hall buildings. Training and deployment of these updated standards/work assignments for all three shifts of custodial staff was completed. This work is intended to improve cleaning standards throughout all buildings and provide measurable success metrics. Custodial staff employ a green product program to further assist with environmental initiatives on campus.

## Library

The library has revitalized nearly all of its resources and services, and more than three-fourths of the current library staff were hired in the last decade following staff retirements. Position descriptions were rewritten to address contemporary needs, and the university has significantly expanded its electronic databases, serials, and e-books, with improved access for both users on campus and remote. Additionally, the university's print collection was inventoried for the first time in decades, which resolved thousands of catalog errors and enabled remapping with the OCLC WorldCat bibliographic database. A funding allocation formula was developed to track monographic expenditures and expand e-book purchases.

Library staff have been actively engaged in the development of Open Educational Resources (OER) initiatives. The library launched its <u>Open Educational Resources Initiative</u> to support faculty who adopted OER in their courses. This initiative has reached more than 5,000 students and saved students an estimated \$259,000. The library has effectively managed financial resources by negotiating with vendors for lower rates and/or multi-year contracts, offering savings. The library also adopted procedures to regularly review usage data and cancel subscriptions with low use to cover costs for other pre-existing subscriptions or, in some cases, to start new subscriptions with high demand. However, if library subscription costs continue to increase as forecast by professional library associations, the university will need to invest additional resources so the library can meet the growing needs of users, especially in support of online learning and the university's MajorPlus initiative.

#### Information Technologies

The university has adopted a lease-based model for some employee computer and classroom technology acquisitions in order to maintain a stable replacement cycle. This practice has enabled Information Technology Services (ITS) to better anticipate recurring and additional expenses associated with its operations. While pandemic conditions necessitated all areas of the university to rapidly adjust operations and priorities, as described below, they also highlighted the need for consistent long-term planning. In response, ITS has contracted with third-party consultants to help define classroom resources specifications, and third parties have assisted in developing planning protocols for the department. Nevertheless, long-term strategic technology planning, both in terms of resource deployment and budgeting, needs to be improved to better utilize resources and to achieve greater efficiencies associated with expenditures.

The university is actively exploring expanded use of cloud storage and software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions to increase efficiencies, better guarantee service uptime, and leverage greater economies of scale. The increased use of mobile devices has necessitated increased awareness of security best practices, and ITS has implemented a robust security training program that has multiple points of contact and assessment with all employees. Finally, the university has begun a limited pilot of multi-factor user authentication (MFA) to increase network, data, and resource security as the institution accommodates increasing levels of distributed work, teaching, and learning. The goal to implement MFA authentication is fall 2022.

The associate vice president/chief information officer is a member of the President's Cabinet, and the university has established administrative and academic technology advisory groups to facilitate development and implementation of technology practices and policies. It would be prudent for the university to build upon this solid foundation to establish a more robust ITS governance process, which could assist in establishing broad priorities, performance metrics, and user support expectations. While ITS has a robust help desk operation and offers drop-in hardware and software consultation for all members of the campus community, users report relatively low degrees of satisfaction, with faculty in particular noting a disconnect between classroom technology planning and specific course and department needs, and administrative users reporting occasional frustration with not being able to leverage technology resources to their fullest extent. These reports suggest that the university's current IT governance model should be reviewed for necessary adjustments and potential reallocations.

## **COVID-19 and Institutional Resources**

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on Worcester State University and its institutional resources. Although the majority of these effects have been undeniably negative (and, in some cases, difficult to quantify), the institution recognizes that its overall response to the pandemic highlighted its flexibility and adaptability, and many of the lessons learned during the pandemic will strengthen the university in years to come. Response activities included:

<u>Community Involvement</u>: Worcester State University was utilized as a large-scale vaccination clinic. This resulted in the administration of approximately 83,000 COVID-19 vaccines over the course of four months. The university's Latino Education Institute trained student health ambassadors, who in turn distributed over 80,000 masks and health kits in Worcester. Additionally, the Worcester State University dormitories housed medical first responders during the height of the pandemic.

<u>Operational Flexibility:</u> Due to coordinated efforts among ITS, Human Resources, and Academic Affairs, the university immediately adapted to remote learning and working environments, resulting in process improvements, efficiency gains, and the recognition of increased instructional and working modality options in the future.

<u>Student Assistance</u>: The institution successfully administered \$24,888,214 in federal COVID-based relief grants. Approximately \$11 million of these funds were issued directly to students who most needed financial support.

<u>Safe Offices and Classrooms</u>: Facilities continued all core operations throughout the pandemic, including all required preventative maintenance services. These services were performed in conjunction with drastically increased cleaning/sanitizing protocols, air control system modifications to allow for 100% fresh air intake, and review and modification of all instructional space to ensure six feet of social distance for all room occupants.

## Human Resources

Although the COVID-19 pandemic impacted a relatively short portion of the review period, it caused unprecedented challenges for faculty and staff, which significantly impacted the Human Resources office. The office is re-evaluating its processes to minimize hiring delays and lost opportunities, in anticipation of projected labor shortages. Additionally, where possible, all administrative processes have moved from paperbased to electronic-based. Although incremental, these steps are designed to collectively reduce administrative burdens on faculty and staff, allowing for increased attention to primary job responsibilities.

## Financial Resources

The FY21 budget was subjected to many adjustments as the pandemic continued to impact operations. There was significant contraction in spending, as students and employees continued to operate in a remote environment. Savings were achieved throughout the budget as an emergency operating model was deployed that suspended and/or deferred the majority of on-campus expenditures. Critical to this was the influx of COVID-19-based institutional relief grants, which provided funds necessary to offset costs associated with the university's COVID-19 response plan during a period of revenue decline due to the virus's impact. The net result of these factors contributed to closing FY21 with a net operating surplus of \$3,330,690, inclusive of the net posting of year-end accruals related to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Pension and Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) (net position) of \$1,259,106.

As reported to the university's governing board on June 14, 2022, during FY22, university operations began to return to a more traditional model. The university administration expects operations to be relatively free of pandemic restrictions in FY23, and consideration has been given to the prioritization of limited resources in an effort to ensure a quality experience for the student body and funding for existing obligations. For example, beginning to restore in-person programming, events, activities, and operations requires the selective add-back of scaled funding for expenses such as food, speakers, and travel, at a cost of \$900,000. Activities restored include 100% programming for Division III athletic programs, Graduate School commencement, New Student and Parent Orientations, Family Weekend, fundraising events, admissions events, and centralized travel funds with each division.

#### Information, Physical, and Technological Resources

#### **Facilities**

As observed in the university's COVID-19 Response Assessment Report, "New capacities for every single space on campus was determined and new layouts to maintain social distancing were implemented in every space that would be utilized." During the pandemic, the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) office worked with both Facilities and Residence Life managers to develop sanitizing protocols and mechanical/plumbing operating parameters in accordance with both state and federal recommendations.

#### Library

The university's COVID-19 Response Assessment Report notes that, even while operations moved to remote modality for many classes, "The library maintained academic support for students and provided spaces for students to study, take exams, and attend remote classes."

#### Information Technologies

Pandemic conditions accelerated the pace of change in ITS. Network and data storage became increasingly critical for the university's back-office functions and its ability to deliver academic programming. Worcester State University has invested in resource redundancy to minimize downtime and to protect its digital assets. Both the primary and secondary data centers are situated in different campus locations and have fallback power generation. Similarly, the university has two five-gigabyte external network connections hosted by different service providers, with automatic failover. On an average workday, the university rarely uses more than three gigabytes of connectivity, with student users consuming approximately 95% of this amount. Both ethernet and wireless connectivity is widely available on campus and in its satellite locations, and connectivity regularly is surveyed for quality and demand. Outcomes from the university's COVID-19 Response Assessment Report indicate that campus Wi-Fi service was a significant issue during the height of pandemic demand for remote learning.

## Projections

#### Continue to Diversify the University's Workforce

By the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, the Employee Services office will assist the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in employee recruitment and retention efforts, including updates to workplace policies, recruitment efforts, and benefits within the institution's control. The Employee Services office will reduce the university's turnover rate by implementing programs in the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic years to create career development and advancement opportunities within the institution.

#### Focus on Gaining a Better Financial Footing for the Institution

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Financial Sustainability Task Force will identify opportunities for transformative change that will shift the focus of university operations towards intentional choices to create efficiencies and enhanced revenue generation while maintaining high quality educational opportunities and a focus on student achievement. This comprehensive review of operations and continuous assessment will ensure the financial sustainability of Worcester State University beyond FY23. The task force will evaluate high-priority initiatives and recommend improvements intended to create efficiencies and/or enhanced revenue. The work of the task force will continue into FY24.

#### **Re-Engage Capital Projects**

The Office of Facilities will implement the next phase of programming in the 2022-2023 academic year for the May Street Building, including forming an 18-month construction calendar, dependent upon fiscal resource acquisition. The Division of Administration and Finance, in conjunction with the Division of Student Affairs, will work with the state's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to complete a physical and financial assessment of the capital renewal requirements of the Learning Resource Center and the Student Center to determine the best plan for future renewal or replacement.

## Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness (Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates)

lent Success Measures/ r Performance and Goals	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	(FY 2019)	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023
IPEDS Retention Data	()	()	()	(= = = = = )	(
Associate degree students					
Bachelors degree students	78%	78%	78%	73%	7.
IPEDS Graduation Data (150% of time)	1070	1070	1070	1370	,
Associate degree students					
Bachelors degree students	58%	59%	63%	61%	6
IPEDS Outcomes Measures Data	5070	5770	0370	0170	
First-time, full time students					
Awarded a degree within six years	58%	59%	61%	59%	6
Awarded a degree within six years	58%	59%	60%	59%	6
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	1%	1%	0%	0%	0
First-time, part-time students	1 70	170	070	070	
Awarded a degree within six years	40%	11%	17%	11%	1
	17%	33%	40%	43%	
Awarded a degree within eight years					3
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Non-first-time, full-time students	£ 40 /	(20)	(00/	(50)	
Awarded a degree within six years	64%	62%	69%	65%	6
Awarded a degree within eight years	64%	63%	66%	64%	6
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	1%	1%	1%	1%	
Non-first-time, part-time students	100/		<b>=</b> 10 /		
Awarded a degree within six years	48%	54%	54%	64%	6
Awarded a degree within eight years	44%	51%	51%	57%	5
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	3%	4%	2%	2%	
Other Undergraduate Retention/Persistence Rates (Add def	initions/methodolo	gy in #1 below)			
Other Undergraduate Graduation Rates (Add definitions/me	ethodology in # 2 b	elow)			
Definition and Methodology Explanations					
Data for FY 2021 not finalized.					

<sup>2</sup> Note: complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (See Standard 8.1)

# Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness (Student Success and Progress Rates and Other Measures of Student Success)

Bachelor Cohort Entering Associate Coho							
Category of Student/Outcome Me	easure	6 years ago	4 years ago	6 years ago	4 years ago		
? First-time, Full-time Students							
Degree from original institution		59%	46%				
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution		3%	18%				
Degree from a different institution		7%	6%				
Transferred to a different institution		17%	19%				
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolle	d	14%	11%				
? First-time, Part-time Students							
Degree from original institution		11%	29%				
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution		11%	14%				
Degree from a different institution		11%	0%				
Transferred to a different institution		56%	14%				
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolle	d	11%	43%				
? Non-first-time, Full-time Students							
Degree from original institution		62%	62%				
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution		4%	7%				
Degree from a different institution		7%	3%				
Transferred to a different institution		13%	14%				
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolle	d	14%	14%				
? Non-first-time, Part-time Students							
Degree from original institution		54%	53%				
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution		3%	22%				
Degree from a different institution		7%	2%				
Transferred to a different institution		11%	8%				
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolle	d	25%	16%				
Measures of Student Acl	nievement and Succ	ess/Institutional	Performance and	l Goals			
	3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current Year	Next Year		
	(FY 2019)	(FY2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)		
Success of students pursuing higher degrees (a					100/		
1 National Student Clearinghouse- Graduate Degree 2	21%	17%	14%	19%	18%		

3			
4			

106

Other measures of student success and achievement, including success of graduates in pursuing mission-related paths (e.g., Peace Corps, public service, global citizenship, leadership, spiritual formation) and success of graduates in fields for which they were not explicitly prepared (add more rows as needed; add definitions/methodology in #2 below)

1			
2			
3			
4			

8.2

#### Definition and Methodology Explanations

1

2

**Revised October 2018** 

Percentage of graduated students from the 6 year graduation cohort that enrolled in graduate school.

#### Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness (Licensure Passage and Job Placement Rates and Completion and Placement Rates for Short-Term Vocational Training Programs)

		3-Years Prior		2 Year	2 Years Prior		1 Year Prior		Recent ear	
		(FY	2019)	(FY	(FY 2020)		2021)	(FY 2022)		
? State Licensure Examination Passage Rates										
		# who took	# who	# who took	# who	# who took	# who	# who took	# who	
Name of exam		exam	passed	exam	passed	exam	passed	exam	passed	
NBCOT		24	24	19	19	19	19	41	41	
NCLEX		56	56	39	39	39	39	50	48	
MTEL		52	52	45	42	101	101	127	119	
5										
National Licensure Passage Rate	es	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	
		# who took	# who	# who took	# who	# who took	# who	# who took	# who	
Name of exam		exam	passed	exam	passed	exam	passed	exam	passed	
Praxis Test in Speech Language Patholo	gy	26	26	22	22	27	27			
,										
1										
5										
Job Placement Rates					•	•		•		
Ē										
Major/time period	*	# of grads	# with jobs	# of grads	# with jobs	# of grads	# with jobs	# of grads	# with jobs	
Occupational Therapy		24	21	19	19	19	19	41	41	
Nursing		27	26	31	25	39	26			
Education		107	90	108	87	120	99			
Speech-Language Pathology		31	31	21	21	27	27			
5										
* Check this box if the program rep	ortec	l is subject to	"gainful empl	oyment" requ	irements.	•	•	•	•	
Web location of gainful employn	nent	report (if app	olicable)							
		- 、 11	. ,							

#### Completion and Placement Rates for Short-Term Vocational Training Programs for which students are eligible for Federal **Financial Aid**

					Next Year	
3 Yea	<i>'ears</i>	2 Years	1 Year	Current	Forward	
Prio	rior	Prior	Prior	Year	(goal)	
(FY 2	(2)	(FY2 )	(FY 2 )	(FY 2 )	(FY 2 )	

1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
?	Placement Rates			

1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Job placements are based on number of students who completed survey. For MTELs, DESE data is behind, so the years reported are FY2015, FY 2016, FY 2017.

includes students employed in MA.

FY2022 exam/job placements not available until Sept

Education job placement only

Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness (Graduate Programs, Distance Education, Off-Campus Locations)

dent Success Measures/ or Performance and Goals	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	(FY 2019)	(FY2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)
Master's Programs (Add definitions/methodology in #1 bel	ow)				
Retention rates first-to-second year	90%	95%	89%	82%	80
Graduation rates @ 150% time	83%	82%	95%	91%	88
Average time to degree	3	3	3	3	
Other measures, specify:					
Doctoral Programs (Add definitions/methodology in #2 bel	low)				
Retention rates first-to-second year Graduation rates @ 150% time					
Average time to degree					
Other measures, specify:					
Ouler measures, speeny.					
First Professional Programs (Add definitions/methodology	in #3 below)				
Retention rates first-to-second year	,				
Graduation rates @ 150% time					
Average time to degree					
Other measures, specify:					
Distance Education (Add definitions/methodology in #4 b					
Course completion rates	n/a	98%	91%	95%	95
Retention rates	n/a	n/a	99%	86%	9.
Graduation rates	n/a	n/a	n/a	67%	68
Other measures, specify:					
Branch Campus and Instructional Locations (Add definition	ns/methodology	in #5 below)			
Course completion rates		,			
Retention rates					
Graduation rates					
Other measures, specify:					
Definition and Methodology Explanations		1	1		
Includes full-time and part-time students. 150% graduation = 3 ye	ears, projection ba	ised on average c	nange.		
Course completion = did not withdraw or fail, Retention= retained	ed 1st year to seco	nd year, projectio	on based on avera	nge	

## STANDARD EIGHT: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

## Description

Worcester State University offers educational programming at the baccalaureate and master's degree levels, including programming that offers pre-college students pathways to its degree programs. Most recently, the university, with permission from the Commission, began offering a limited number of fully online master's degree programs in education and nursing.

Aside from any content found in institutional marketing materials, the institution makes <u>public</u> statements about educational expectations and gains through institutional-level learning outcomes (ILOs) and programlevel learning outcomes (PLOs). At the course level, statements of educational expectations and gains are made in student learning outcomes (SLOs) identified in <u>course syllabi</u>.

Documentation from the university's Office of Institutional Assessment and Planning shows that draft ILOs were created in February 2018 by a working group constituting the assistant vice president for Assessment and Planning, the faculty assessment coordinator, and the academic deans. These draft ILOs were presented to the Leadership Council (a body of administrators and academic department chairs whose input has been sought during the Cabinet and Executive Cabinet decision-making process) in May 2018. In September 2018, the Office of Assessment and Planning presented the draft ILOs to the university community through a survey that drew 326 responses (181 students, 61 faculty members, 69 staff members, three alumni, and one member of the university's governing board). A follow-up survey, presenting the draft ILOs revised by feedback from the first survey, was distributed to faculty and staff members in October 2018; the follow-up survey drew 144 responses from faculty and staff members. The revised ILOs were presented to the President's Cabinet in December 2018 and approved by the Cabinet in February 2019. They were forwarded to the university's Board of Trustees for the Board's June 2019 meeting.

The ILOs are as follows:

- 1. Demonstrate effective writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills to communicate across different contexts and audiences
- 2. Critically evaluate information, make connections across disciplines and perspectives, and apply knowledge gained in one situation to new situations
- 3. Respectfully interact, communicate, and learn from diverse peoples to work towards equity and justice
- 4. Demonstrate the skills necessary to effectively engage in a diverse workforce and global community including: technological literacy, information literacy, leadership, and adaptability
- 5. Develop the skills necessary for life-long learning including: curiosity, independence, initiative, and reflection

These ILOs apply the same educational values to all students: undergraduate or graduate, first-year or transfer, matriculating or non-matriculating. Evidence of student learning determining the effectiveness of these ILOs would be collected through both direct and indirect methods during students' undergraduate and graduate careers and after graduation. While some ILOs may be assessed with direct evidence (e.g., examinations, individual assignments, portfolios), others require indirect assessment methods, including alumni and employer surveys, focus groups, and job placement statistics. The ILOs were designed in advance of, and in expectation of the development of, <u>Beyond 150: Lead, Succeed, Engage</u>, the institution's 2020-2025 strategic plan. As the ILOs are relatively new, assessment of how they align with all <u>PLOs</u> is still at a formative stage.

In 2017, the Commission indicated, as part of its <u>response</u> to the institution's interim five-year report, that "a culture of assessment is beginning to emerge at WSU." The assessment culture has grown since then, and programs assess summative student learning to validate PLOs close to the end of each programs' coursework. For example, in 79% of undergraduate academic majors, students complete a capstone course that provides

materials for program-level assessment. The most common artifacts used to assess undergraduate achievement of PLOs are portfolios (33%), examinations (21%), evaluation of written work (21%), and surveys (17%). Some programs may use multiple artifacts. At the graduate level, portfolios (75%), a thesis (50%), and/or examinations (50%) are commonly used to evaluate student achievement of program outcomes. To fit the unique aspects of each graduate program, these end-of-program student assessments are most commonly evaluated collaboratively, by departmental committees or the entire department. A smaller number of programs utilize a course instructor or an advisory committee.

Changes to curricula are made, in large part, based on data gathered from these assessments. These range from changes to assignments, to alterations in course content, to changes in the major curriculum. For example, the Department of Chemistry responded to program-level student assessment data by developing a scaffolding process to assist students in gaining skills in creating laboratory reports by building on skills gained as students move through the curriculum. The Spanish program, in the Department of World Languages, implemented curriculum changes as a result of assessment data, such as creating a Spanish for Native Speakers undergraduate course to promote the success of matriculated native speakers.

At the course level, faculty members lead evaluation in accordance with course student learning outcomes (SLOs). As part of the teaching process, faculty members examine what does or does not improve student learning, via use of formative and/or summative assessments, and use those observations to make changes to their courses, pedagogy, and programs.

The institution tracks retention, transfer, and graduation rates and submits findings annually to the federal Integrated Postsecondary Data System of the National Center for Educational Statistics (IPEDS/NCES); these findings are also published in the university's annual <u>Fact Book</u>. Cohort loan repayment and default rates are also submitted to IPEDS/NCES. Individual academic departments may maintain records of licensure passage rates (for example) and use those data for program assessment and improvement.

In 2016 and in 2018, the university surveyed graduates of the Class of 2015 (831 students) and the Class of 2017 (1,062), respectively. In April 2019, the institution surveyed graduates of the Class of 2018 (812). Throughout all of this, a response rate has increased with each subsequent survey, peaking at 31.4% for the Class of 2018 Postgraduate Report. The university has also collected information for the graduating classes of 2019 and 2020. The Postgraduate Report and First Destination Survey present the following information: the percentage of responding baccalaureate graduates that are employed and/or enrolled in graduate school; the average starting salary for employed graduates; the primary industries in which graduates are employed; the time allotted between graduation and employment for employed graduates; a list of employers at which employed graduates are enrolled for additional education. The surveys also assess the rates at which graduates believe that their academic programs at Worcester State University prepared them for employment. Moving forward, the university's Career Services office will continue to utilize the First Destination Survey to track outcomes of recent graduates and assess their post-graduation satisfaction with academic programs.

As part of preparation for this self-study, the institution conducted an <u>alumni survey</u> for graduates (n = 42 respondents) from the classes of 2012 through 2020 to gain their input about the ways in which their education at Worcester State University prepared them for their careers or graduate school post-graduation. Results indicated that 62.5% of alumni respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their educational experience prepared them to succeed in the workforce, and 72.4% agreed or strongly agreed that their undergraduate education prepared them for graduate school. A similar survey covering graduates from the classes of 2007 through 2019 (n = 85) shows that 82% of respondents rated their educational experience at Worcester State University at four or five on a five-point scale. The institution gathers concrete evidence of pre- and post-graduation achievement. For example, <u>three recent stories</u> from institutional publications show significant

career preparation or career outcomes for students pursuing or graduating from the university's biotechnology program.

## Appraisal

#### Institutional and Program Assessment

The university's Office of Institutional Assessment and Planning led development of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) in 2018 by seeking input from all constituencies of the campus community through the President's Leadership Council. However, since their initial inception, the university has no evidence of wide-spread awareness and/or use of the ILOs in institutional- and program-level assessments. As a framework for the direction of the educational structure of the university, the institution would benefit from validating the ILOs by submitting them through governance for the sake of transparency and accountability. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), while they exist for all programs, are not always found with ease in public-facing institutional media or materials.

The undergraduate <u>Academic Program Review process</u> is an important means for gathering assessment information and making changes in curriculum and/or academic programming. However, as noted in discussions of educational assessment in Standard Two and Standard Four of this self-study, follow-through on the academic review process is uneven, especially with regard to integrating findings from the process into institutional-level planning and resource allocation.

In order to facilitate more regular, perhaps annual, assessment of academic program effectiveness, the Office of Institutional Assessment and Planning may benefit from additional administrative resources to oversee academic assessment. This arrangement may include an administrative point-person within the office dedicated solely to assessment to assist with annual reporting, departmental program reviews, and program accreditations. Examination of staffing in institutions similar to Worcester State University, such as nearby Framingham State University, shows a staff member who works exclusively on assessment of the university and of undergraduate and graduate programs, and who acquires assessment resources. As it stands, there is one staff member responsible for assisting academic departments, programs, and administration with all assessments, strategies, research, and analyses. Adopting such an arrangement would also allow clarifications within the <u>institutional assessment booklet</u> to distinguish between parameters for institutional assessments, programmatic assessments, and course level assessments. An assessment liaison role could work with the <u>university-wide Institutional Assessment Committee</u>, which is meant to report periodically to the campus community on assessment efforts in support of the strategic plan. As well, the Institutional Assessment Committee would benefit from a higher profile within the university, as it has not met since before the onset of pandemic conditions and is a critical component for assessing the institution and its programs.

Worcester State University's new undergraduate academic framework, <u>MajorPlus</u>, requires undergraduate students to complete a major and minor (or two majors) for graduation, an initiative resulting from findings of a <u>2017-2018 market positioning study</u> that the university commissioned from the Art & Science Group, LLC. The goal of the study was to develop an empirically informed institutional strategy for the university to pursue in recruiting traditional-aged undergraduate students in coming years. Faculty and staff from across the university participated in meetings to develop the survey questionnaires, and a campus working group was established to review the data findings. One of the key findings from the study was that potential students were attracted to the idea of pursuing a major and a minor or two majors. To round out these findings, during summer 2019, two cross-divisional working groups were commissioned to focus on majors/minors and the Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum (LASC), the university's undergraduate general education program. It was from these working groups that the changes to <u>LASC</u> in MajorPlus were determined.

To ensure maximum flexibility for students entering under the MajorPlus requirement, changes were made through institutional governance to LASC. First, a capstone course is no longer required as part of the general education program; instead, individual academic departments determine their own capstone or culminating course experience(s). Second, three "Across the Curriculum" designations (Writing Across the Curriculum, Diversity Across the Curriculum, and Quantitative Literacy Across the Curriculum) were retired. In place of Diversity Across the Curriculum (DAC), a <u>Diversity label</u> has been added as a LASC content area course requirement, in response to results from a student survey about the DAC requirement. These results demonstrated that about 50% of student respondents who had completed the DAC requirement did not realize they had done so, indicating that their DAC courses did not adequately address topics in diversity, as those topics would be recognized by students. Further analysis revealed that the DAC criteria were too weak to ensure that courses in that category engaged with diversity issues in a substantive and explicit manner.

Historically, one of the main institutional challenges for assessing LASC has been the question of how to effectively coordinate evaluation of twelve overarching goals - i.e., if each goal followed a two-year cycle, and one goal was analyzed each time, it would take 24 years to completely assess the program. LASC had previously undergone official program review in 2017, a process that included surveys of faculty members and students about their perception of LASC, as well as objective assessments of written communication, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning. These latter assessments included data from evaluations of student writing taken three times between 2010 and 2014; of critical thinking, which was analyzed once in 2012; and of quantitative literacy which was evaluated in 2014. Results from the student survey data on LASC effectiveness showed that over 50% of the survey respondents indicated that LASC program goals are extremely or very important. Results of a survey administered to faculty members indicated a general concern that LASC does not facilitate integrative learning and fails to achieve the goal of interdisciplinarity. Despite this concern, there was general agreement that LASC is philosophically and academically sound, organizing classes around content areas with content-specific learning outcomes. Since 2017, LASC has been assessed informally through campus-wide surveys. For example, a survey was administered to students to evaluate the LASC First-Year Seminars (FYS). This survey showed that students had concerns about the inconsistency among different seminars. To address this issue, a governance proposal regularizing the FYS curriculum was developed and went into effect in fall 2021.

Moving forward, the university is implementing a new assessment process for LASC under the new MajorPlus guidelines, which will run once following spring and summer and once following the fall. This assessment includes surveys jointly developed by the university's Center for Teaching and Learning and associate vice president for Assessment and Planning. The <u>first</u> of these surveys was released in the fall of 2021 to assess the spring/summer 2021 terms.

The university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education has begun tracking success rates among the recently launched limited portfolio of fully online graduate programs, referred to institutionally as AOPs (Accelerated Online Programs). Data show that of a total of 451 students enrolled across all active programs, a 75.8% active rate against a 15.7% withdrawal rate, with 8.4% having completed a fully online program (these were recently initiated). Early data on the overall retention rate from 2020 to 2021 across three active programs show 80.3% returning or having graduated against 19.7% not returning or having withdrawn. The overall average for student grade point averages across seven active programs is 3.80. Institutional data show some variance across active/graduated/withdrawn percentages among individual programs.

#### Student Demographics and Equity Measures

A main change between the university's <u>2015-2020</u> and <u>2020-2025</u> strategic plans has been an emphasis on incorporating goals of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Higher Education's <u>Equity</u> <u>Agenda</u> into institutional strategic planning. The expectation is that, by embracing the objectives of the equity

agenda, Worcester State University will enhance economic and social mobility for all constituents, but particularly for those that have historically been underserved and underrepresented, especially ALANA/BIPOC students. In addition to acknowledging the changing demographics of the students that the university serves, it is critical to ensure that all educational effectiveness activities are informed by the needs and experiences of non-traditional students — first-generation, ethnically diverse, adult students, and other recognizable demographic groups.

Within the past few years, specific efforts have been made to get students connected as early as possible with resources on campus. Prior to the fall 2021 semester, all incoming first-year students were assigned academic advisors from the Academic Success Center (ASC). The ASC academic advisor would survey incoming students, build their fall semester schedules, keep them abreast of important updates and deadlines, and communicate with them regularly to answer questions and address concerns. Beginning with the fall 2021 semester, the ASC academic advisor additionally remains in contact with the student throughout the entire first academic year, even as they are assigned faculty academic advisors from their academic departments.

As students graduate, they may benefit from additional resources and staff support within the Office of Career Services. The current staff in Career Services evaluate internship placements, schedule career fairs, and provide course support for résumé and cover-letter writing and other career-oriented skills. If a measure of educational effectiveness is career tracking, job placements, and advanced educational placements data for graduates, then further resources may helpfully support the work being done in that office.

# **COVID-19 and Educational Effectiveness**

Pandemic conditions caused well-documented medical and educational disruptions to the lives of students, staff, and faculty. As a result of this impact, Worcester State University provided many supports to faculty and students to promote academic success through the challenges created by COVID-19.

The university developed several COVID-19 response teams, composed of faculty and staff members, students, and administrators to develop policies of support, outreach, and student and faculty success.

The Center for Teaching and Learning supported faculty by augmenting its website with videos, tutorials, and other resources for transitioning to remote teaching and learning, including offering Quality Matters training in distance learning course design.

Institutional Technology Services installed new technology in classrooms to allow remote participation in the classes that benefitted from being offered on campus. Academic departments changed course scheduling to allow optimum support for student modality needs. For students in need of computer resources for remote learning, the university implemented a laptop loaner program.

Finally, the Office of Retention organized, trained, and led 100 volunteers from faculty, staff, and administration in contacting all registered undergraduate students by phone, text, and/or email during spring 2020 and fall 2020 to ascertain students' academic and mental health concerns.

# Projections

# Submit Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to University Governance

To ensure recognition and integration of ILOs in institutional and academic assessment, in academic year 2022-2023 the university will submit the ILOs for approval through the institutional governance process.

Evaluate the Success of Implementing the Undergraduate "Roadmap for Advancing Student Excellence"

New undergraduate and new transfer students bringing fewer than 45 credits to the university who enter in fall 2021 are required to complete a major and a minor or double major to graduate (<u>MajorPlus</u>). This initiative enables more cross-counting of courses within programs to help students achieve timely graduation, including a more flexible approach to the undergraduate Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum, the university's general education program. As soon as feasible for the fall 2021 cohort, the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will assess student achievement of outcomes from the plan, including the expectation that students would be attracted to, and benefit from, a robust educational and campus experience. In the meantime, the Division of Academic Affairs will begin baseline measurements of entering students' decision times for selecting majors and minors or second majors.

## Integrate Equity Considerations into Educational Assessment Processes

Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Office of Assessment and Planning will validate that all educational effectiveness activities are informed by the needs and experiences of non-traditional students, including first-generation, ethnically diverse, adult students, and other recognizable demographic groups.

#### Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure (Integrity)

? Policies	Last Updated	Website location where policy is posted	Responsible Office or Committee
Academic honesty	4/8/2020	https://catalog.worcester.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/academic-honesty/	Provost's Office
Intellectual property rights	2017-2020	Collective Bargaining: https://mscaunion.org/	MSCA Union
Conflict of interest	2017	Employee Handbook	Human Resources
Privacy rights	6/27/2018	Website privacy: https://www.worcester.edu/Privacy-Policy/; FERPA: https://catalog.worcester.	Marketing; Institutional Research,
Fairness for students	2022-2023	https://www.worcester.edu/you-are-welcome-here/; https://catalog.worcester.edu/undergraduate/general-	Diversity, Inclusion, Affirmative Action,
Fairness for faculty	2017-2020	https://mscaunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/MSCA-Day-CBA-2014-2017-final-revised.pdf	MSCA Union
Fairness for staff / AFSCME	2020-2023	https://www.mass.edu/shared/collbargaining/afscme.pdf	ASFCME Union
Fairness for staff / APA	2017-2020	https://www.maapa.org/APA_SIGNED.pdf	APA Union
Academic freedom	2017-2020	Collective Bargaining: https://mscaunion.org/	MSCA Union
Research	unknown	https://www.worcester.edu/Research/; https://www.worcester.edu/Scholarship-and-Research/	Academic Affairs
Title IX	2021	https://www.worcester.edu/Title-IX/	Title IX officer
Other; specify			

#### Non-discrimination policies

Recruitment and admissions	9/28/2018	https://catalog.worcester.edu/undergraduate/general-information/policy-nondiscrimination/	Office of Admissions
Employment	9/28/2018	https://www.worcester.edu/diversity/ (link to Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan)	
Evaluation	2017-2020	Collective Bargaining: https://mscaunion.org/	MSCA Union
Disciplinary action	8/15/2022	https://www.worcester.edu/Community-Standards/ (link to Code of Conduct and Student Handbook)	Community Standards
Advancement	9/29/2018	Follows Worcester State Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan	Diversity, Inclusion, Affirmative Action,
Other; specify			

#### Resolution of grievances

Students	7/14/2022	Undergraduate Grading: https://catalog.worcester.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/undergraduate-	Academic Affairs
Faculty	7/27/2022	https://www.worcester.edu/diversity/ (link to Discrimination Complaint Form and Bias Incident Report Form)	Diversity, Inclusion, Affirmative Action,
Staff	7/27/2022	https://www.worcester.edu/diversity/ (link to Discrimination Complaint Form and Bias Incident Report Form)	Diversity, Inclusion, Affirmative Action,
Other; specify			

5	Other	Last Updated	Website location or Publication	Responsible Office or Committee

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

#### Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure (Transparency)

Information	Website location and/or Relevant Publication(s)
How can inquiries be made about the institution? Where can questions be addressed?	https://www.worcester.edu/Contact-Us/
Notice of availability of publications and of audited financial statement or fair summary	https://www.worcester.edu/Student-Consumer-Information/
Processes for admissions	https://www.worcester.edu/Admissions/
Processes for employment	https://www.worcester.edu/careers
Processes for grading	Undergraduate: https://catalog.worcester.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-
Processes for assessment	https://www.worcester.edu/Institutional-Assessment/
Processes for student discipline	https://www.worcester.edu/Community-Standards/ Includes links to Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook
Processes for consideration of complaints and appeals	https://www.worcester.edu/Community-Standards/ Grade appeals: https://catalog.worcester. edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/undergraduate-appeal-procedure/

List below the statements or promises made regarding program excellence, learning outcomes, success in placement, and achievements of graduates or faculty and indicate where valid documentation can be found.

 Statement/Promise
 Website location and/or publication where valid documentation can be found

 A Woreceter Sate University education prepares our students for a wide range of professional and education activities after graduation—and much more. From careers in health care, business, education, and more, to working on master's degress at universities such as Ruigers, Syracuse, and WPI, our graduates are improving their lives and those of their families.
 https://www.woreester.edu/Graduate-Outcomes/

 Image: State Careers in health care, business, education, and more, to working on master's degress at universities such as Ruigers, Syracuse, and WPI, our graduates are improving their lives and those of their families.
 https://www.woreester.edu/Graduate-Outcomes/

 Image: State Careers in health care, business, education, and more, to working on master's degress at universities such as Ruigers, Syracuse, and WPI, our graduates are improving their lives and those of their families.
 https://www.woreester.edu/Graduate-Outcomes/

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Date of last review of:	
Print publications	
Digital publications	

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

# Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure (Public Disclosure)

Information	Website location
Institutional catalog	https://www.worcester.edu/Catalogs-and-Calendars/ or https://catalog.worcester.edu/
Obligations and responsibilities of students and the institution	https://www.worcester.edu/Student-Consumer-Information/
Information on admission and attendance	https://www.worcester.edu/Admissions/
Institutional mission and objectives	https://www.worcester.edu/Mission-Statement/
Expected educational outcomes	https://www.worcester.edu/Graduate-Outcomes/
Status as public or independent institution; status as not-for-profit or for-profit; religious affiliation	https://www.worcester.edu/About/
Requirements, procedures and policies re: admissions	https://www.worcester.edu/Admissions/
Requirements, procedures and policies re: transfer credit	https://www.worcester.edu/Transfer-Students/
	https://www.worcester.edu/Articulation-Agreements/
A list of institutions with which the institution has an articulation agreement	
Student fees, charges and refund policies	https://www.worcester.edu/Paying-for-College/
Rules and regulations for student conduct	https://www.worcester.edu/Community-Standards/
Procedures for student appeals and complaints	https://www.worcester.edu/Community-Standards/
Other information re: attending or withdrawing from the institution	https://www.worcester.edu/SP-Withdrawal-and-Leave-Services/ (login required)
Academic programs	https://www.worcester.edu/Majors-Minors/ https://www.worcester.edu/Graduate-
Courses currently offered	https://www.worcester.edu/Majors-Minors/ https://www.worcester.edu/Graduate-
Other available educational opportunities	https://www.worcester.edu/Additional-Learning-Opportunities/
Other academic policies and procedures	https://www.worcester.edu/Student-Consumer-Information/
Requirements for degrees and other forms of academic recognition	https://www.worcester.edu/Student-Consumer-Information/
List of continuing faculty, indicating department or program affiliation, degrees	https://www.worcester.edu/Departments/
Names and positions of administrative officers	https://www.worcester.edu/Administrative-Offices/
Names, principal affiliations of governing board members	https://www.worcester.edu/Trustees/
Locations and programs available at branch campuses, other instructional locations, and overseas operations at which students can enroll for a degree, along with a description of programs and services available at each location Programs, courses, services, and personnel not available in any given academic	
Size and characteristics of the student body	https://www.worcester.edu/University-Data/
Description of the campus setting	https://www.worcester.edu/Campus-Renewal/
Availability of academic and other support services	https://www.worcester.edu/Student-Services/
Range of co-curricular and non-academic opportunities available to students	https://www.worcester.edu/Student-Involvement/
Institutional learning and physical resources from which a student can reasonably be expected to benefit	https://www.worcester.edu/Student-Involvement/
Institutional goals for students' education	https://www.worcester.edu/about/mission-vision-core-values/

Success of students in achieving institutional goals including rates of retention and graduation and other measure of student success appropriate to institutional mission. Passage rates for licensure exams, as appropriate	https://www.worcester.edu/Graduate-Outcomes/
Total cost of education and net price, including availability of financial aid and	https://www.worcester.edu/Paying-for-College/ and https://www.worcester.edu/Net-Price-
Expected amount of student debt upon graduation and loan payment rates	https://www.worcester.edu/Paying-for-College/
Statement about accreditation	https://www.worcester.edu/Recognition-and-Accreditation/

## STANDARD NINE: INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

## Integrity

Worcester State University is constituted under Massachusetts state law (Mass Gen. L. ch. 15A, §5). As a public institution, it complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations that address ethical responsibility and integrity. It also complies with collective bargaining agreements that structure working conditions and expectations for members of the faculty, staff, and administration.

Conflict-of-interest policies are prescribed in state law (Mass. Gen. L. ch. 268A). All employees are required annually to complete a State Ethics Commission online training and certification process on conflict-of-interest regulations. The institution's governing board undergoes an annual orientation to the state's conflict-ofinterest policies and documents any potential conflict of interest on a form filed with the Office of the President. Students are held to a <u>code of conduct</u> described in the annually updated <u>Student Handbook and</u> <u>Student Code of Conduct</u>.

Worcester State University values academic freedom for faculty and students. Institutional policies and provisions within collective bargaining agreements support integrity in academic programs and activities. <u>Collective bargaining agreements for faculty</u> define and describe academic freedom and balance academic freedom against faculty members' academic responsibilities (MSCA Article V.A and B; DGCE Article IV.A and B). They also define and describe intellectual property rights. The institution's academic honesty policy is published in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs; <u>a link to the policy</u> is provided in the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. The university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) oversee ethical practices in academic research. Chairs of both the IRB and IACUC are represented on the university's Research Advisory Board, as is the research integrity officer, who would respond to any allegations of research fabrication, falsification, and/or plagiarism.

The institution fosters a diverse faculty and student body; it is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. It adheres to a <u>published</u> policy on nondiscrimination and to policies and procedures to address claims of discrimination. Any grievances raised by students against faculty are structured and protected by grade-appeal policies published in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs and the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. Any grievances raised by faculty against administrators are structured and protected by terms in the collective bargaining agreements for faculty. The process for pursuing Title IX complaints is found in the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct and is <u>published</u> on the institution's website.

The university was first accredited by the then-Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (CIHE-NEASC) in 1957 and has continued its transparent relationship to regional accreditation with the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). Statements in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs describe the university's accreditation status with NECHE. Previous self-studies, interim reports, and other correspondence submitted to CIHE-NEASC and NECHE show openness, honesty, and a sincere motive to examine the institution for the purposes of renewal and improvement. The university has engaged in a good-faith effort of comprehensive self-examination for this decennial self-study.

# Transparency

Worcester State University provides information to students and prospective students to make informed decisions about their education. Academic department chairs and appropriate administrative offices annually review the undergraduate and graduate catalogs; academic and administrative departments are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the catalog content within their areas. Catalogs since 2015 are archived and accessible on the institution's <u>website</u> in electronic format and downloadable PDF. Catalogs prior to 2015 are archived and accessible in downloadable PDF or hard copy. Print and digital communications officially representing the institution are consistent with undergraduate and graduate catalogs' content, and they accurately portray the conditions and opportunities available at Worcester State University, including information on tuition and fees and student financial aid.

The institution's home web page features an <u>Apply</u> tab, through which prospective students can fill out an electronic admission application; the application page lists admissions deadlines. Instructions for filling out the application are provided in English and Spanish. Other web pages provide information for first-year students, transfer students, international students, graduate students, and military and veteran students. The university recently joined the Common Application (or "Common App"), which allows greater access for students.

The undergraduate and graduate catalogs describe grading policies and procedures, including computation of semester and cumulative grade point averages through the university's grade point scale, procedures for declaring pass/fail status in a course, the use of incomplete grades, the rationale for retroactive change of grade, and academic honesty policies and procedures.

The university publishes a <u>document</u> titled "Investigation and Resolution Procedures for Complaints of: Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Retaliation" ("Investigation and Resolution Procedures") and provides a form for filing such complaints. The institution's website explains the process for student appeals of grades for both <u>undergraduate</u> and <u>graduate</u> students, and for dismissal. The grounds for an appeal of a resolution of a student conduct violation is described in the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct, while grounds for an appeal of a resolution of a Title IX complaint are described in the same document. (The appeal process for resolution of a Title IX complaint is also described in a Massachusetts Board of Higher Education document that applies to public universities in the state, titled "<u>Equal Opportunity</u>, <u>Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan</u>.") The appeal process after resolution of a complaint about discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and retaliation is found in the Investigation and Resolution Procedures document.

The institution's website includes <u>a page</u> listing the university's main phone number, detailed contact information for primary offices, and a link to an online telephone/email directory. The website's home page includes a <u>link</u> titled "Public Records Requests," which navigates users to a web page with information about the Massachusetts Public Records Law, instructions for requesting public records from the university, and contact information for the institution's records access officer. Those seeking employment with the institution may access the <u>web page</u> titled "Employment Process," which describes job application procedures and contains a link to a list of open positions. A <u>web page</u> titled "Student Employment" explains the Federal Work-Study Program and other on-campus employment. The university publishes its annual Jeanne Clery Disclo-<u>sure of the Campus Security Policy</u>; the <u>Campus Crime Statistics Act</u>; the Fire Safety Report; and information <u>about its financial status</u>. In addition to publishing its most recent <u>audited financial statement</u> on a publicly accessible web page, the institution posts its <u>Independent Auditor Reports</u>. Materials and minutes from Board of Trustees' meetings are published and archived on a publicly accessible <u>web page</u>.

Any statements about program effectiveness or student success are generalized to preparation for projected employment paths or are documented with references to data or other research results.

## **Public Disclosure**

Worcester State University's status as a comprehensive state university within the Massachusetts State University system is described on the <u>website</u> for the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. This status is reflected in the university's mission statement and the vision and values statements published on the university's <u>website</u>. The university <u>publishes</u> its mission statement in its undergraduate and graduate catalogs and on the institution's website. The catalogs describe degree requirements and standards of progress, including requirements for the undergraduate general education program and individual undergraduate major and minor programs. The university lists institutional learning outcomes for students' education with its mission, vision, and core values on the same <u>web page</u>. Individual academic programs articulate student learning outcomes and expectations for students, but only program-level learning outcomes and expectations for undergraduate majors, with the exception of the individual, self-designed Liberal Studies major, are published on the institution's website through links to the undergraduate catalogs. Program-level learning outcomes and expectations for the Liberal Studies undergraduate major and for all graduate programs are not readily available to prospective students and other interested parties.

The institution publishes on its <u>website</u> admissions and transfer credit policies and articulation agreements that it maintains with partner institutions. The <u>website</u> also shows undergraduate student tuition and fee costs. The <u>undergraduate</u> and <u>graduate</u> catalogs publish tuition refund policies; information about academic programs, including courses currently offered; academic policies and procedures; and degree requirements and the qualifications for academic recognition, such as the Dean's List and Latin honors. Likewise, the catalogs contain information on attending, and withdrawing from, the institution. The <u>Student Handbook and Student</u> <u>Code of Conduct</u> describes expectations for student conduct and the student process for appealing academic matters or filing complaints; the catalogs also contain the student process for appealing academic matters or filing complaints.

Worcester State University <u>lists</u> its tenured, tenure-track, and full-time temporarily employed faculty in the undergraduate catalog, providing each faculty member's name, academic rank, and departmental affiliation. The list names institutions and type(s) of degree awarded to each faculty member. The current website also lists full-time faculty members with name, academic rank, and departmental affiliation, grouped by department – although these listings are often incomplete or out of date. The university <u>publishes</u> a list of professors emeriti. Names and positions of administrative officers are found on the institution's website, within each department or division, typically found through a Contact link in the sidebar (e.g., Provost's Office). The university's <u>website</u> contains the names and brief biographies of members of its Board of Trustees.

The university <u>publishes</u> detailed information about student achievement and institutional performance. Rates of retention and graduation are provided in the annually issued Fact Book, assembled by the Office of Institutional Research; these rates are further broken down by demographic categories. The <u>Fact Books</u> provide comprehensive information about the size and characteristics of the student population and disclose the number of undergraduate and graduate degrees awarded, by department and major. Worcester State University has a single campus at which students may enroll for a degree, although it offers classes at a limited number of additional locations, including the university-affiliated Worcester Center for Crafts, where the institution offers courses in visual art, art history, and music composition. The undergraduate and graduate catalogs, the institution's website, and the <u>Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct</u> variously describe academic programs and academic support services such as the university's Academic Success Center and tutoring services, extra-curricular and student life programming, and the print/media/electronic resources available to students through the university's Library.

Inquiries as part of the institution's self-study did not identify any programs or services that have not been available during a given academic year during the reporting period. The provost and academic department chairs reported in interviews that they are aware of the requirement that if a course is listed as current, it must be taught at least once every three years. The responsibility for ensuring this standard is met falls largely on academic department chairs.

The Office of Financial Aid <u>publishes</u> on the university's website the total costs of attendance, including instate and out-of-state costs, and standardized costs for full-time students. The same office also <u>publishes</u> a web page labeled "Financial Literacy," which contains a section labeled "Personal Finance Overview" that offers admonitions about student debt and the figure for the average federal student loan debt of Worcester State University student borrowers. Further, the office publishes a <u>web page</u> titled "Sources of Financial Aid" which describes grants and scholarships, tuition waiver programs, parental and student loans, and campus-based student employment opportunities. Finally, the office <u>publishes</u> instructions for applying for scholarships and provides a single online application that can match students with any scholarship for which they are eligible. Cohort default rates for the years 2016-2018 are accessible through the College Navigator search engine found under the Related Links section on the Office of Financial Aid's main <u>web page</u>.

Mandated and otherwise important consumer information is provided publicly on the university's website, with one-click access from the institution's homepage. Information provided in this link includes, but is not limited to, program licensure information, consumer financial information, and health and safety information. The university publishes on its <u>website</u> accurate notification of its accreditation status with the New England Commission of Higher Education. The institution identifies professional accrediting bodies for applicable graduate programs on the same page.

## Appraisal

## Integrity

In <u>interviews</u> carried out expressly in appraisal of the institution's performance relative to Standard Nine, administrators, staff, and department chairs expressed dedication to behaving ethically and supported having clear policies and procedures that helped ensure fair and equitable dealings with fellow employees, students, prospective students, and the general public. Interviewees repeatedly used terms or phrases such as "student-centered," "my loyalty is to the institution, not individuals," and "we are a process- and standards-driven department."

Interviewees cited ethical, legal, and integrity requirements found in federal and state laws and regulations, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Many stated also that they were guided by standards codified in ethical guidelines of various organizations and associations, whether or not the institution was a member of said organization or association, and pointed to integrity policies contained in the various collective bargaining agreements, professional academic accreditation standards (e.g., graduate programs in the Education Department and Nursing Department and the Police Career Incentive Pay Program for the undergraduate curriculum in the Department of Criminal Justice), the institution's own internal policies and procedures, and the policies of particular academic and administrative departments and program areas at the university. Any respondents who reported experience with an integrity issue stated that their department or program area had responded to the concern and followed up with clarification or creation of a policy or procedure, or the department/area directed that specific training would occur.

In a survey carried out in appraisal of the institution's performance relative to Standard Nine, faculty respondents were in general agreement with the following statements:

- "Institutional leadership fosters an atmosphere where issues of integrity can be openly discussed." (61% agreed; 31% disagreed)
- "Institutional leadership at WSU acts responsibly, ethically, and with integrity." (61% agreed; 28% disagreed)

Concerning academic freedom, interviewees were in general agreement with one faculty member who stated, "respecting academic freedom is one of WSU's important legacies. In the time I've been here, we've had freedom to explore ... [any] questions. We can teach the way the discipline has taught us." However, survey results were more mixed. In response to the statement, "WSU protects and fosters my academic freedom,"

76% of faculty respondents agreed, while 10% disagreed, with the remainder neutral. In response to the question, "Do you believe institutional leadership or someone else at WSU has ever violated your academic freedom?" 18% of faculty respondents responded "yes." There was no common theme to the handful of survey comments, which included "subtle expectation of politically correct attitudes" and "mandating textbooks for large-scale classes." Thus, despite some variances, appraisal of the institution's performance relative to Standard Nine did not reveal any systemic interference with the academic freedom of faculty and students.

The institution's commitment to diversity and inclusion is reflected in its mission and vision statements; its ongoing alignment with the <u>Equity Agenda</u> of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education; employee multicultural competency training; welcoming of international students; and responses to campus incidents involving disrespect of and insensitivity toward racial, ethnic, cultural, or other identity groups. The university maintains an office of Diversity, Inclusion, Affirmative Action, & Equal Opportunity, an Office of Multicultural Affairs, and a Student Accessibility Services Office. It requires members of search committees to undergo an orientation session that includes discussion of implicit bias and tips to avoid it. Interviewees were unanimous in their support for creating and fostering a diverse and inclusive campus. Empirically, the university increased its enrollment of ALANA/BIPOC-identifying students from 14% of full-time students and 13% of part-time students in 2008 to 32.1% of degree-seeking students in 2020. The percentage of faculty identifying as ALANA/BIPOC increased from 17.7% in 2008 to 25% in 2020. The university understands that more can be done; it is acting affirmatively on a number of fronts, as reflected in its <u>most recent Strategic Plan</u>.

Interviewees who had experience with student grievances stated they found the procedures were generally fair but noted that students frequently didn't know what procedures were available to them. Most interviewees involved in responding to student grievances or student violations of the <u>Honor Code</u> stated they did not keep track of the number of such complaints or their outcome. In <u>interviews</u>, several academic department chairs mentioned that students may be hesitant to complain about treatment or a grade from faculty because of fear of retaliation.

In faculty <u>survey responses</u>, there was strong agreement with the statement, "I am able to determine students' grades, status in my courses, and outcomes of violations of the student Honor Code without interference from institutional leadership." (83% agreed; 9% disagreed). In the survey, two faculty commented that they had been "pressured" to change a grade for a student(s).

In response to a widespread belief that the university had too many informal policies, the institution instituted a Non-Academic Policy Committee in 2018. It has made strides in identifying non-academic unformalized or unwritten policies and procedures so that they may be subject to formal review and codification. As of this writing, the committee has reviewed 124 policies and approved 56.

## Transparency and Public Disclosure

The university publicly discloses information through its website — much of which is described above. The institution has attempted to improve access; for example, it created a chat bot ("Woo Bot") that can assist students and others in their search for information. However, because the website has been developed over many years through ad-hoc processes rather than a systematic, coherent, and strategic process, some information is incorrect, outdated, duplicated, in error, or difficult to access. Other information is only found behind intranet portals that require institutional logins.

The institution launched a revamped website on July 5, 2022, but much information has yet to be updated for the benefit of public information. For example, the About page for the university lists only the offices of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity and Employee Services (Human Resources) in the roster of administrative offices.

Some improvements have been accomplished within the current infrastructure. For instance, one administrator noted that the university's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education is launching a templated graduate catalog that will standardize language and content for 30+ programs written in different frameworks over time to ensure consistency. However, the need for a large-scale overhaul has been apparent for some time. The <u>2012 NECHE self-study</u> noted the deficiencies found by a consultant and recommended, among other things, hiring of IT personnel in the areas of web support and content management, and a faculty liaison "who would assist in the transition to the new website design." As discussed elsewhere in this self-study, the institution has launched this past July, and is in the process of refining, a major redesign of its website, which should make information much easier to search for and find, for both internal and external constituencies, and should help to ensure that content is current, non-duplicative, accurate, available, and accessible.

In <u>interviews</u>, department chairs mostly indicated that their departments meet the requirement that listed courses be offered least every three years. Of those that did not meet the requirement, department chairs variously indicated that their departments have some "dead weight" courses or that the number of their department's catalog courses constituted "wishful thinking." Others noted constraints such as a decline in student interest in a particular course or having insufficient faculty to cover all courses. One chair stated that they relied on the Office of the Registrar to notify them if courses were not being offered every three years. It does not appear that the Registrar's Office actually tracks this requirement; rather, the obligation falls on department chairs. It is not clear either whether the Office of the Provost tracks this requirement.

Based on the above findings, deans and department chairs, with informational support from the Office of Institutional Research and technical support from the Division of Enrollment Management and the Registrar's Office, began work in July 2022 to weed the undergraduate catalog of courses that have not been offered at least every three years (excluding from this process courses that have recently been approved but have not yet been taught). By the end of that month, eight of the 22 academic departments had completed review and archiving of undergraduate courses that have not been offered over the past three years. The remaining departments have work ongoing, as do the Graduate Program directors in the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education. This weeding process will manifest itself in the university's catalogs in the 2023-2024 editions.

The institution does not make promises about academic or professional outcomes. Any statements about student achievement are generalized or based on documentable fact. As an example of the former, Worcester State University reports on its <u>website</u> that it has "a long tradition of academic excellence," and, "we prepare our students to take on real-world challenges with portfolios that include critical thinking, teamwork, problem solving, communication, technology, and global awareness skills." Likewise, individual departments may make general claims, rooted in both curriculum and industry expectations. The Computer Science Department states on one of its <u>web pages</u>, regarding the concentration in bioinformatics: "information obtained by computational biology and computational chemistry is used in the design of new drugs to treat a variety of diseases. Major drug and biotechnology companies are seeking people trained in bioinformatics." On the same page it references rankings from Princeton Review in support of its claim of academic excellence. In <u>a survey</u>, 82% of faculty agreed with the statement, "The programs offered by my department provide students with the scope and depth of learning that the programs claim to offer." Other claims of academic excellence contain links to supporting information. For instance, the Visual and Performing Arts Department states on one of its <u>web pages</u>, "83% of respondents to a survey of 2015 graduates said that they either agree or strongly agree that their academic program prepared them for employment."

The university's website contains information concerning faculty in at least two places: the undergraduate catalog and within each department's web page. (Faculty are not listed in the graduate catalog.) Faculty information could be both more consistent and in-depth. The undergraduate catalog lists faculty for each department and includes their rank, types of degrees, and institutions granting them. However, while department

web pages list faculty names and rank, their degrees and institutions are not always provided (e.g., Department of Criminal Justice web page). Worcester State University appears not to publish a public notice denoting when faculty members are on sabbatical in a given semester or year.

## COVID-19 and Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure

Worcester State University proactively responded to the challenges posed by COVID-19 and continues to disclose both relevant data and current policies to external and internal constituencies. In 2020, the university instituted a Safe Campus program, whose purpose was to decrease risks involving COVID-19 to campus constituencies and the larger community while maintaining both continuity of services and academic rigor. Once the institution was able to return from fully remote operations, such policies required all students, staff, and faculty to be vaccinated, and later boosted, unless an exemption is allowed. They also mandated that appropriate face coverings be worn inside all structures, later narrowed to only classrooms and other academic spaces. Safe Campus policies were developed on the basis of the best medical evidence and with the input of multiple campus constituencies and were based upon local, state, and federal public health guidance; the policies were communicated through the institution's website, internal email communications, and a regular Safe Campus update meeting held on Zoom. The university utilized the software application CoVerified, requiring students, staff, and faculty to sign up and report their vaccination status as well as their daily symptoms (or lack thereof) before coming to campus.

The <u>Safe Campus web page</u> has been regularly updated, and has provided important information, including vaccination and masking requirements, COVID-19 testing protocols, the Testing Center schedule, and a detailed description of the four operational levels of the University's Operations Status Plan. The Safe Campus web page also has provided contact information for answers to various COVID-19-related questions and a link to a COVID-19 testing dashboard, which was designed to show both seven-day data and historical data for testing numbers, including number of tests, number of positive results among employees and students, and percentage of positive tests. The Testing Dashboard page also showed data for the City Worcester and listed a number of answers to Frequently Asked Questions. (Given that the university is no longer conducting surveillance testing nor offering PCR tests, and that antigen test-takers rarely report results, the website no longer offers a testing dashboard.)

# **Projections**

## Present Information to Public and University Constituencies

In the 2022-2023 academic year, the university will dedicate sufficient and ongoing resources through the Division of Enrollment Management to ensure its new website, launched July 5, 2022, contains information that is required by law; useful to students, faculty, staff, the community, and other constituents; accurate, current, clear, non-duplicative, and non-contradictory; easy to access and search; and compliant with applicable sections of the Americans with Disabilities Act. As part of this redesign, the institution will ensure that when faculty are listed, their degrees are as well. The Office of Communications and Marketing will conduct an audit of the website to scrub out-of-date content and replace it with accurate current content; as part of this action, the university will make training available to all campus users, in both navigating the website and updating it.

Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the university will institute a formalized system of keeping track of complaints/grievances filed by any campus constituency. Each department that deals with internal complaints will keep detailed records relating to them.

## Address Academic Concerns
By the end of the 2022 fall semester, the Provost's Office, working with the academic deans, academic department chairs, and the vice president for Enrollment Management, will develop a system to ensure that listed courses that are not taught at least every three years are archived, and that current descriptions of the rotation of courses is accurate from year to year.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Provost's Office will improve communication about the availability of processes for complaints and appeals by students and will find multiple means to inform students.

# **APPENDIX I**













Non-Unit Professional

APA

Classified











MSCA Non-Unit Professional APA Classified Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs History and Political Science





# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Philosophy









# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Sociology









## Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs World Languages





Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Visual and Performing Arts Lois Wims Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs Russ Pottle Dean for the School of



MSCA Non-Unit Professional APA Classified





# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Biology

MSCA

Non-Unit Professional

APA

Classified



# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Chemistry





# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Communication Science and Disorders



MSCA Non-Unit Professional APA Classified

# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Computer Science





# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Earth, Environment, and Physics



MSCA
Non-Unit Professional
АРА
Classified





# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Health Science





# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Mathematics



MSCA
Non-Unit Professional
АРА
Classified







#### Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Academic Success Center





# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Assessment and Planning









Classified

# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs International Programs





Classified

# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Latino Education Institute









# Worcester State University Division of Academic Affairs Multicultural Affairs







#### Worcester State University Division of Administration and Finance Human Resources and Payroll




Worcester State University Division of Administration and Finance Budget, Planning and Policy Development



Non-Unit Professional				
ΑΡΑ				
Classified				
АРА				

## Worcester State University Division of Administration and Finance Fiscal Affairs



Non-Unit Professional			
APA			
Classified			

#### Worcester State University Division of Administration and Finance Procurement/Accounts Payable



Non-Unit Professional				
ΑΡΑ				
Classified				

Worcester State University Division of Administration and Finance Student Accounts and One Card Office



Non-Unit Professional				
APA				
Classified				







Non-Unit Professional			
APA			
Classified			



Non-Unit Professional			
АРА			
Classified			

# Worcester State University Division of Enrollment Management Financial Aid





# Worcester State University Division of Enrollment Management Registrar





# Worcester State University Division of Enrollment Management Retention



Non-Unit Professional

APA

Classified



#### Worcester State University Division of Student Affairs Career Services





#### Worcester State University **Division of Student Affairs** University Police



Classified

APA

## Worcester State University Division of Student Affairs Associate Dean of Health and Wellness



Non-Unit Professional
APA
Classified

## Worcester State University Division of Student Affairs Binienda Center for Civic Engagement



Non-Unit Professional		
APA		
Classified		





### Worcester State University Division of Student Affairs Athletics







Assistant I



# **APPENDIX II**



New England Commission of Higher Education 3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100, Burlington, MA 01803-4514 Tel: 781-425-7785 | Fax: 781-425-1001 | www.neche.org

#### AFFIRMATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS RELATING TO TITLE IV

Periodically, member institutions are asked to affirm their compliance with federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

1. Credit Transfer Policies. The institution's policy on transfer of credit is publicly disclosed through its website and other relevant publications. The institution includes a statement of its criteria for transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education along with a list of institutions with which it has articulation agreements. (NECHE Policy 95. See also *Standards for Accreditation* 4.29-4.32 and 9.18.)

URL	https://www.worcester.edu/admissions-aid/ undergraduate-admissions/transfer-students/	
Print Publications	Catalog	
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	page 34 as of 7/8/2022	

2. Student Complaints. "Policies on student rights and responsibilities, including grievance procedures, are clearly stated, well publicized and readily available, and fairly and consistently administered." (*Standards for Accreditation* 5.18, 9.8, and 9.18.)

· · · · ·	https://www.worcester.edu/continuing-education/online-degrees-
URL	courses/information-for-online-students/
Print Publications	Student Handbook
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	Page 89 and 90

3. Distance and Correspondence Education: Verification of Student Identity: If the institution offers distance education or correspondence education, it has processes in place to establish that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit. . . . The institution protects student privacy and notifies students at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity. (NECHE Policy 95. See also *Standards for Accreditation* 4.48.)

		Worcester State University creates specific user accounts once a student's application is			
	Method(s) used for verification	Excepted and sends them via U.S. Mail to each student. All students will be als use multi-factor authentication by the end of September 2022	b be required to		
	Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	Page 37			

4. FOR COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS ONLY: Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Opportunity for Public Comment: The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public of an upcoming comprehensive evaluation and to solicit comments. (NECHE Policy 77.)

URL	https://www.worcester.edu/about/recognition-accreditation/accreditation-self-study/		
Print Publications	Worcester Telegram		
Self-study Page Reference	N/A		

The undersigned affirms that <u>Worcester State University</u> (institution name) meets the above federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including these enumerated above.

Chief Executive Officer:

Date: 18 August 2022

2

# **APPENDIX III**

<b>Degree</b> program	(1) Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	(2) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the program outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	(3) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g., annually by the curriculum committee)	(4) What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence?	(5) Date of the most recent program review (for general education and each degree program).
Biology	We have the learning outcomes on an internal Google Drive, but they are not actually published anywhere public at this point.	a portfolio. We also administer an exit exam as part of the seminar that includes content	We used to have a Biology Assessment Committee, but that has fallen by the wayside in recent years. So the short answer is that individual instructors teaching Bio Seminar do look at the portfolios and exit exam results (and we looked at the exit exam data for our last Program Review), but we do not have in place a formal structure for reviewing these data on a regular basis and assessing needed changes.	A number of years ago, it was apparent that students were not getting sufficient Human Biology content to be able to pass the high school licensure exam in Biology. Therefore, we revamped the Human Biology core course that is required of all majors.	3/20/2019

Biotechn	The learning	Our capstone	The biotechnology	The capstone course	4/1/2019
ology	outcomes are	course (BT 410 -	program	previously (pre-2016)	
(Undergr	maintained in	Biotechnology	coordinators	had included students	
aduate)	internal Google	Seminar) is a 1	interpret the	create a research proposal	
	Drive files and	credit capstone	evidence. We have	but this was removed in	
	previous program	course where we	had occasional	order to emphasize the	
	review documents,	emphasize skills	biotech curriculum	post-graduation skills	
	but are not actually	that they will need	committee	they need to enter the	
	published anywhere	to enter the	meetings, but need	biotechnology industry or	
	public on the	workforce	to reassemble this	graduate programs. We	
	university website	(presentations,	for the future	are currently designing a	
		cover letter and	academic year with	new exit assessment to	
		resume building).	the transition to	more accurately assess	
		We also administer	new biotechnology	student learning	
		an exit examination	coordinator. The	outcomes based on	
		that covers content	data is also shared	curriculum updates. The	
		spanning the major	with an external	existing exam has not	
		required courses	advisory board	been updated in >10	
		(biology,	comprised of	years.	
		biotechnology, and	industry		
		chemistry courses)	representatives at		
		with a goal of 80%	our partner		
		of the students	biotechnology		
		getting 80% or	companies (such as		
		higher on the exam.	AbbVie, Sanofi		
		We also administer	Genzyme, Charles		
		an exit survey to	River Laboratories,		
		solicit feedback	Biomere, and more)		
		about students'	to ensure that our		
		plans for the future,	curriculum is		
		strengths and	meeting		
		weaknesses of the	expectations for		
		program from their	graduate to be		
		perspective, and	successful in		
		any additional	entering the		
		thoughts.	industry.		

Biotechn	There is a brief	The program	The thesis	A Master's program in	10/11/2018
ology	description of the	includes a thesis	committee for each	Biology was first offered	
M.S.	program in the	research project	student is	in 1975, underwent a few	
	catalog. There are no		comprised of the	minor changes and was	
	specific learning	Also, students have	program	revised and replaced by	
	outcomes for the	been administered	coordinator and two	the M.S. in	
	program.	an exit exam and	full-time faculty	Biotechnology program	
		complete an exit	from the Biology	in 1998. In the Spring of	
		student satisfaction	and/or Chemistry	2017, a review of the	
		survey.	department. This	program was undertaken	
			committee assesses	to bring the program up	
			the student's work,	to date. This review was	
			presentation and	precipitated by a decrease	
			ability to answer	in student interest in the	
			questions related to	WSU program and new	
			the their thesis	competitive programs in	
			project. This format	the surrounding	
			is considered a	geographical area that	
			comprehensive	drew on the same	
			exam and along	potential student	
			with coursework,	population as the WSU	
			fulfills the degree	program. A departmental	
			requirements. Exit	committee was formed to	
			surveys and exams	discuss program revisions	
			have been reviewed	in the M.S. in	
			by the program	Biotechnology program	
			coordinator.	and the combined	
				B.S./M.S. program in	
				Biotechnology. In the	
				spring of 2019, program	
				revisions were submitted	
				for approval to	
				governance. These	
				changes included the	
				requirement for a	
				statistics based course,	
				either Biostatistical	
				Analysis or Experimental	
				Design as one of the new	
				core required courses.	
				The program also	
				required electives, as in	
				the previous program,	
				however, one of these	
				electives could be	
				fulfilled by a Master's	
				level Business course.	
				This revision is of	

		r	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
				particular interest to those	
				students who have an	
				interest in the business	
				side of the biotechnology	
				industry. Furthermore,	
				the research component	
				was more well-defined,	
				with the introduction of	
				three specific courses to	
				guide the students	
				through the research	
				process. All of these	
				courses have defined	
				goals and expectations, a	
				welcomed change for	
				both students and faculty	
				advisors. These courses	
				placed an increased	
				emphasis on the research	
				and writing component	
				which sets the WSU	
				program apart from other	
				local competing	
				programs that are	
				non-research programs.	
				Future goals of the	
				program assessment	
				would be to revise the	
				assessment and student	
				exit satisfaction survey to	
				bring these tools more in	
				line with the revised	
DC	37			program.	4/1/2014
BS,	Yes.	Capstone Course;	The department	We keep a close eye on	4/1/2014
	https://sites.google.c		faculty have regular	our students. Evidence	
, MPAP,	om/view/urban-studi	courses; advising	meetings at which	that suggests more direct	
MPM	es/academic-progra		time, especially in	faculty involvment	
	ms?authuser=0		the spring semester,	(beyond simply teaching)	
			student progress	nominally results in	
			and achievement is	faculty members reaching	
			discussed. There are	out to them to provide	
			also less formal	guidance and assistance.	
			discussion when		
			faculty see		
			performance fallter		
			among the		
			department's		
1			students.		

BSN,	University Catalog	BSN: Capstone	Faculty Curriculum	As a result of the annual	4/10/2013
MSN		course, NCLEX	Committee meets	review by Faculty	
		(licensure exam)	monthly to review	Committee several	
		MSN: Portfolio	curriculum,	changes are made each	
			Systematic Program	year. At the BSN level	
			Evaluation	examples are: 460	
			Committee (SPE)	capstone	
			meets monthly; All	MS Program based on	
			yearly reports are	evidence, and yearly	
			examined at Annual	Focus Group comprised	
			Review by Full	of recent graduates and	
				alum, currently enrolled	
			voted on and	students and employers.	
			implemented	The recommendations	
			-	made by Focus Group are	
				brought to curriculum	
				committee. An example	
				of changes made in 2020	
				to reduce practicum hours	
				by 25 hours as required	
				for NU 951. Vote brought	
				to Full Faculty from	
				GCC. Changes	
				implemented.	
Chemistr	Describe properties	Reading	Assessment	1. Lab report scaffolding	2/16/2020
у	of matter, explain	comprehension	Committee within	process- In the first	
	the changes it	exam	the department	semester focus is only on	
	undergoes and	Lab skills		graphs and tables and	
	calculate the energy	evaluation		then develops through the	
	associated with these			4 years of the program in	
	changes 2. Identify	poster presentation		level of complexity to a	
	appropriate			full lab report writing 2.	
	equipment to			Introduction of a	
	perform analyses			literature seminar to	
	and safely execute a			address gaps in literature	
	previously published			search and understand	
	procedure with			literature. 3. Developing	
	minimal input from			the resources and	
	the instructor 3.			infrastructure to make it	
	Read and			possible to obtain	
	communicate			certification from	
	accurate scientific			American Chemical	
	information to			Society 4. Introduction of	
	different audiences			labs to develop solution	
	using a variety of			making and pipetting	
	media (lab reports,			skills throughout the	
	scientific reviews,			curriculum	
	oral presentations) 4.				

	D C			1	
	Define green				
	chemistry and				
	critically assess				
	greenness of a				
	process 5. Apply				
	critical thinking and				
	logical reasoning				
	skills to chemical				
	systems ALSO				
	Students will be able				
	to apply selected				
	concepts in				
	chemistry Atomic				
	Theory Bonding				
	Equilibrium Kinetics				
	Nomenclature				
	Stoichiometry				
	Thermodynamics				
	Reaction				
	Mechanisms				
	Spectroscopy 2.				
	Students will be able				
	to read and				
	communicate				
	scientific				
	information 3.				
	Students will be able				
	to prepare solutions				
	with a specified				
	concentration a.				
	Correctly prepare a				
	solution b. Follow				
	appropriate safety				
	techniques c. Verify				
	concentration 4.				
	Students will be able				
	to perform safely				
	and proficiently in				
	lab.				
Commun	Course Catalog and	Capstone Course	The department	Stronger collection of	5/21/2014
ication	Capstone Syllabus	and Portfolio	curriculum	student work as they go	<i>5,21,2</i> 017
icution	Supstone Synabus	Review	committee reviews	through the program for	
			senior capstone	evidence of learning	
			digital portfolios	gains along with a	
			annually	revamp of the capstone	
			amuany		
				course.	

Commun	Communication	The evidence that is		Evaluation of CSD UG	12/10/2020
ication	Sciences and		The members of the	students writing skills	
Sciences	Disorders	graduates have	Undergraduate	indicated that CSD	
and	Department's	achieved program	-	students show a slight	
Disorders	Program Goals are	outcomes of the	the data and	albeit not significant,	
	published solely in	degree are listed	propose courses of	increase in writing skills	
nt	internal documents.	below.	action to the	across the program and	
	The program goals		Department.	within each category of	
	were used to develop	Students must	Department	the Written	
	the Student Learning	complete all the	members discuss	Communication VALUE	
	Outcomes (SLO).	CSD Department	and decide on the	Rubric (Context, Content	
	The SLOs appear on	Student Learning	steps during	Development, Genre,	
	every syllabus. A	Outcomes (based	department	Sources and Syntax). The	
	summary of the	on the program	meetings or the	average ratings were low	
	goals appears in the	learning outcomes)	annual retreat. For	(2-3 on a 4 point scale)	
	WSU Undergraduate	over the course of	instance after the	indicating this program	
	Catalog	the program of	writing assessment,	and student learning	
	https://catalog.worce	study.	additional writing in	outcome needs	
	ster.edu/undergradua		courses was	improvement. The CSD	
	te/school-education-	Students are	encouraged, starting	Department is continuing	
	health-natural-scienc	expected to achieve	with writing	to discuss ways to	
	es/communication-s	a minimum grade	assignments in the	increase writing	
	ciences-disorders/	of "C" in each of	freshmen year,	proficiency of the	
		the CD courses.	using APA style,	undergraduate students.	
		Students are not	and learning to	The current consensus is	
		permitted to retake	evaluate research.	to increase the number of	
		any CD course	Graduating	writing assignments and	
		more than once.	students' feedback	to have students use the	
			had a common	standard APA format.	
		Students must	theme of 'lack of	students receive written	
		indicate the	preparation for life	assignments from their	
		development of a	after graduating	freshmen year to increase	
		clear direction for	with a degree in	exposure to, and	
		post graduation		improvement in writing	
		plans, based on the	course was	skills. Students are also	
		career binder	developed to	encouraged to use the	
		portfolio in CD	address this	WSU Writing Center in	
		410.	concern.	their written assignments.	
		Students must have			
		had multiple		Feedback from students	
		opportunities to		revealed that they felt	
		develop writing and		unprepared for their post	
		critical reasoning		graduation steps. The	
		skills and show		senior capstone course	
		improvement over		(CD 410) was developed	
		the course of the		to provide students with	
		program of study.		knowledge and skills in	

career planning,	
professional practices and	
successful interpersonal	
communication. Students	
use technology to explore	
career options and	
develop job seeking skills	
and gain experience	
writing cover letters/letter	
of intention and increase	
preparedness for a job or	
advanced-degree	
admission's interview. As	
part of this course	
students design a plan for	
transition post-graduation	
and identify a wide range	
of	
post-degree\employment	
and educational	
opportunities. Students'	
create and submit a	
career binder reflecting	
their short and long-term	
career plan. The	
individualized career	
binder holds evidence of	
their accomplishments,	
important documents,	
contacts, and applications	
needed to follow-through	
on their post graduation	
career plan.	
The critical thinking	
skills (Critical	
ThinkingVALUE Rubric)	
of CSD students with 90+	
credits were significantly	
higher when compared to	
other Massachusetts	
schools and the	
Multi-State	
Collaborative. The range	
of scores (2.8-3.5 on a 4	
point scale) indicated that	
this is still an area in need	
of improvement. This	

				academic year, two	
				undergraduate courses	
				were selected to evaluate	
				critical thinking skills	
				developed over the	
				course of the semester.	
				One freshman and one	
				junior course taught by	
				the same professor	
				received a similar	
				assignment where critical	
				thinking is evaluated. In	
				both courses students get	
				opportunities to develop	
				critical thinking in	
				written assignments. The	
				data will be analyzed at	
				the end of the semester.	
Compute	https://catalog.worce	Capstone courses –	Artifacts produced	a. CS-286	4/1/2017
r Science	ster.edu/undergradua	CS-448 Software	in the two capstone	Database Design and	
	te/school-education-	Development	classes are reviewed		
	health-natural-scienc	Capstone and	annually by the	Software Process	
	es/computer-science/	-	departmental	Management became	
	major-computer-scie	Analytics Capstone	curriculum	core courses for all	
	nce/		committee using	majors (moved from	
			agreed-upon rubrics	concentrations).	
			0 1	b. CS-248	
				Algorithm Analysis was	
				added to the core based	
				on program review.	
				c. Programming	
				component (Python) was	
				added to CS-101 Basics	
				of Computer Science.	
				d. A Data Science	
				minor was created	
				e. More shell	
				scripting was added in	
				CS-282 Unix Systems	
				Programming.	
				f. Mobile	
				operating systems were	
				added as a topic to	
				CS-373 Operating	
				Systems.	
				g. Non-relational	
				databases were added as	
				a topic in CS-286.	

				h. Visualization	
				and statistical analysis in	
				R were added as topics in	
				CS-453 Data Mining.	
				-	
				methodology and collaborative	
				programming have been	
				added in many courses.	4/1/2016
Criminal	ON WSU website	Capstone review.	Assessment	Changes in pre-requisites,	4/1/2016
Justice		Questionnaire for	Committee and	addition of courses,	
		graduating	Curriculum	addition of core courses,	
		students. Surveys	Committee	Capstone and Criminal	
		with alumnus and		Law. Archiving of	
		Advisory Board		courses, merging of	
		members, survey of		courses, updating of	
		site supervisors for		course descriptions and	
		CJ internships.		addition of Criminal	
				Justice minor.	
Early	Not published but	Capstone Course &	A practicum grade	Curriculum Committee	11/9/2021
Childhoo	available on Dept	Practicum Grade	of B- or above is	development of other	
d	Share Drive		evidence	Non-licensure programs	
Educatio					
n and					
Care					
Economi	In the catalog and on	Capstone Course -	Economics Faculty	We have been collecting	4/30/2021
cs	some course syllabi	evaluation of	evaluate student	student work over three	
		student work;	work produced in	years to build a larger	
		Survey Data -	the Capstone and	sample of student work to	
		self-reported data	interpret the survey	evaluate and base	
		from recent	data	changes on. We created	
		graduates		the survey right before	
		-		the Pandemic hit and plan	
				to send it out at the end of	
				the current academic year	
				(2020-2021)	
	1	1	1		1

English	Currently, learning	The English	The Department's	Development of new	4/15/2021
0	outcomes are	Department will	Undergraduate	structure for the major;	
	published on the	establish a regular	Curriculum	development of new	
	English	cycle of assessment	Committee on a	minors; implementation	
	Department's	based on	schedule as outlined	of faculty development	
	intranet site, pending		above. Data and	workshops; pilots of	
	catalogue update on	of student	results are sent to	different models of	
	www.worcester.edu	performance as	the Dean of	currculum delivery.	
	and university	measured against	Humanities and		
	migration to new	the minor's	Social Sciences, the		
	web platform, on	overarching goals	Director of		
	which the learning	and learning	Assessment; and the		
	outcomes will be	outcomes.	Provost.		
	published on the	Assessment will	Additionally, this		
	English	take place every	data is compiled		
	Department's	other year as part of	-		
	subsite. Learning	the department's	critical tool for the		
	outcomes have been	overall five year	Department's five		
		review cycle.	year self-study.		
	the new English	Courses offered as	yeur sen study.		
	major, which was	part of the revised			
	approved Spring	minor will be			
	2021. The major's	assessed against the			
		minor's student			
	outcomes are as	learning outcomes.			
	follows:	Every fifth year, the			
	OUTCOMES 1.	minor will be			
	Analyze and	reviewed for any			
	document the	necessary program			
	history, conventions,	revisions.			
	methodologies, and				
	practices of literary,	Assessment will be			
	cultural, and	based on			
	rhetorical studies as	representative			
	a form of academic	student work drawn			
	inquiry, a pathway	from enrolled			
	for personal growth	students in the			
	and expression, a	minor every second			
	framework for	spring semester			
	engaging with	after			
	critical moral and	implementation.			
	ethical issues, and a	These samples will			
	site of analysis of	be evaluated			
	identity construction	against a rubric			
	and power	based on the			
	inequities. 2.	learning outcomes			
	Analyze texts across	for the minor.			
	historical,				

 1 . 1 . 1		l	
geographical, and			
cultural boundaries			
and interrogate			
workings of			
difference,			
hierarchy, and			
power, both within			
and across texts,			
including the			
intersections of			
multiple identity			
categories including			
ability, class,			
ethnicity, gender,			
nationality, race,			
religion, and			
sexuality. 3.			
Interpret a variety of			
forms, genres, styles,			
structures, and			
modes of writing,			
while articulating			
and demonstrating			
the value of close			
reading in the study			
of literature, creative			
writing, rhetoric,			
media, and other			
forms of discourse.			
4. Design, conduct,			
and deliver research			
projects effectively			
and ethically. 5.			
Produce and analyze			
writing across a			
wide range of			
modes, including			
creative,			
professional,			
personal, print, and			
digital expression. 6.			
Apply the content			
and methodologies			
of literature and			
writing studies			
outside of the			
classroom, in civic			
and professional			

	of the department's minors (Minor in				
	Writing; Minor in				
	Narrative Studies of				
	Health and				
	Medicine; Minor in				
	Literature) all have				
	minor-specific				
	learning outcomes,				
	which follow a				
	similar publication				
	schedule as outlined				
	above.				
Environ	Available to faculty	Students must	Department	The capstone course was	
mental	on EEP Team drive	complete a	conducts a retreat	modified after a review	
Science	https://docs.google.c	capstone course	after graduation to	of student completion	
	om/spreadsheets/d/1	which includes	review the spring	rate to change the term	
	x39QBgLiv5wLsP_	portfolio	capstone results.	project to a review paper	
	Ex4g3B9toDCZ1og	development.	The department's		
	dE/edit#gid=220821	Students are	external advisory		
	989	encouraged to	board participates in		
		participate in the	student interviews		
		celebration of	as part of the		
		scholarship to	capstone class. In		
		present on their	addition the		
		capstone project.	advisory board		
			participates in the		
			Celebration poster		
			session to review		
			the posters as		
Casarah	Associatela ta faculta	Canatana alaas	judges. The instructor for	The constant class	4/9/2016
	Available to faculty	Capstone class	The instructor for	The capstone class	4/8/2016
У	through Google	including the	capstone class	structure was changed to	
	drive	development of a student portfolio.	evaluates the materials in the	eliminate the research	
	https://drive.google. com/drive/u/0/folder	Students have the	class. The	project requirement which can be done by	
	s/11scxgP2heJOoC5	option of	department	students who wish to.	
	8-fTlDOds-HwCOd	developing a	advisory board	The portfolio requirement	
	ofv	presentation for the	assists in evaluation	was strengthened and	
		Celebration of	Celebration	mock interviews and	
		Scholarship.	presentations.	resume development was	
		Senorarsinp.	presentations.	added. In addition the	
				class participates in the	
				annual Green Career Fair.	
History	https://sites.google.c	Capstone course;	Assessment	Revision of major	3/10/2020
listory	om/a/worcester.edu/	also sophomore	committee.	requirements and	5/10/2020
1	IOHI/A/WOICESIELEOH/				
	hi-po-assmt/student-	methods course;	Suspended during	development of a new	

	learning-outcomes	portfolio review of	COVID and	track for history	
		Education/History	program review	educators.	
		double majors.	year.		
History	https://sites.google.c	Portfolio	Graduate committee	We have sought to make	3/10/2021
M.A.	om/a/worcester.edu/	Review/Masters	(portfolio) or thesis	changes for a more	
	hgrad/program-slos	Thesis	committee.	structured and scaffolded	
				program but were told it	
				would require BHE	
				approval. So, none.	
Interdisci	NA	Capstone / Public	There is a capstone	The capstone process is	6/29/2016
olinary		performance,	professor of record.	currently under review by	
Visual &		presentation, or	Students also work	a committee of faculty.	
Performi		exhibit	with a mentor and	a commute of facaty.	
ng Arts		CALIFOR	select a committee		
15 / 1105			to review the work.		
			Grade is assigned		
			by Professor of		
			record in		
			consultation with		
			committee members		
			(including mentor).		2/0/2021
Mathema	Program Level	Capstone course,	The capstone	More preliminary	3/8/2021
tics	Outcomes are	department	instructor(s) each	assessment of	
	internal	assessment	semester, as well as	pre-requisite knowledge	
		committee	the assessment	and incorporation of	
			committee each	pre-requisite reviews in	
			semester.	several courses, and in	
				some cases, testing on	
				pre-requisite knowledge	
				in the first two weeks. We	
				have also changed the	
				credits awarded for some	
				courses. Finally, we have	
				added a capstone section	
				led by another instructor	
				to account for the	
				diversity in math major	
				concentrations, as well as	
				capstone topics.	
Nursing	program outcomes	capstone course,	annually by the	any and all changes are	4/10/2013
	are listed in the	and clinical	curriculum	made based on	
	catalog	evaluations for	committee	data/evidence	
		each clinical laden			
		course			
Occupati	Complete the BSOS	NA			5/5/2021
onal		11/1			5/5/2021
	degree. Students				
Therapy	with a 3.0 GPA and				
	sufficient GRE score				

	receive conditional				
	status for the MOT				
	Program at the start				
	of their senior year.				
Political	On governance	Capstone course.	Will be part of	N/A: the program does	3/10/2020
Science	proposal; internally		assessment plan of	not yet exist.	
(starting	within department.		Dept. Assessment		
fall 2021)			committee.		
Psycholo	https://catalog.worce	As a department,	The department	The Department	4/30/2016
gy	ster.edu/undergradua	we have assessed	assessment	Assessment Committee	
	te/school-humanities	program level	committee assesses	found the particular	
	-social-sciences/psyc	outcomes by	progress toward	exercises used did not	
	<u>hology/</u>	reviewing student	meeting program	completely assess the	
		writing samples	level outcomes. 3-4	specific Program Level	
		and by	program level	Outcomes and as a result	
		administering	objectives are	we are currently	
		knowledge	assessed each year.	developing new, more	
		questions. This		appropriate means of	
		assessment process		assessment which will	
		has been informed		allow for standardized	
		by		assessment across	
		recommendations		courses and clear	
		made by the		identification of those	
		American		areas in which students	
		Psychological		need additional support.	
		Association.			

Public	We submitted a	Capstone course.	We have a program	Based on the results from	12/1/2018
Health	request to marketing	Practicum in Health		our last program review,	, -,
	to include the	is the final,	years.Due to the	changes were made to the	
	learning outcomes in	,	number of Faculty,	department's curriculum.	
	the WSU website.	for all Health	we all participate in	The changes are as	
	The learning	Science major	the assessment	follows:	
	outcomes are	seniors: it satisfies	process. After every	Health education	
	published in our	both the LASC	program review, all	curriculum was revised to	
	Health Sciences	Capstone and	full-time faculty	emphasize skills-based	
	internal website and	Writing Across the	attend a year-end	learning over	
	in the program	Curriculum (WAC)	retreat to interpret	content-based learning.	
	review. The learning	requirements; it	the evidence and	This change better aligns	
	outcomes are linked	provides students	create action plans	the curriculum with the	
	with the The Eight	with the	based on the data.	National Commission for	
	Areas of	opportunity to	We also have	Health Education	
	Responsibility	apply knowledge	students' survey we	Credentialing (NCHEC)	
	contain a	from coursework in	analyze annually.	areas of responsibility of	
	comprehensive set	challenging		the Health Education	
	of competencies and	internships that also		Specialist.	
	sub-competencies	provide		We developed 8 new	
	defining the role of	opportunities to		courses and made	
	the health education	develop skill and		changes in the ancillary	
	specialist. These	experience that can		courses, major and	
	responsibilities were	help prepare them		interdisciplinary	
	verified by the 2020	for work in health		electives.	
	Health Education	professions.		Public Health Major	
	Specialist Practice	Work experience		increased its rigorous. We	
	Analysis II (HESPA	from the internship		made changes to	
	II 2020) project and	is supported by		emphasize writing skills,	
	serve as the basis of	assignments that		by including Technical	
	the CHES® and	integrate service		Writing as an ancillary,	
	MCHES® exam	learning and		and Introduction to	
	0 0	academic work to		Research, besides the	
	Eight Areas of	develop the		Research seminar to the	
	Responsibility for	competencies		major courses.We also	
	Health Education	needed for		included a pre-practicum	
	Specialists: Area 1:	professional		lab to help students be	
	Assessment of	employment.		better prepared for the	
	Needs and Capacity	Pre-requisites: The		practicum and for their	
	Area II: Planning	field experience in		transition into the	
	Area III:	Health Education		workforce.	
	Implementation	requires the			
	Area IV: Evaluation	integration and			
	and Research Area	application of			
	V: Advocacy Area	knowledge and			
	VI: Communication	skills learned in			
	Area VII:	previous courses;			
	Leadership and	therefore, the			
Management Area	successful				
------------------	----------------------	--	--		
VIII: Ethics and	completion of 10				
Professionalism	major courses,				
	including HC-415				
	Program Planning				
	and Evaluation, is				
	required. The field				
	experience also				
	provides an				
	exploration of				
	career opportunities				
	while being				
	engaged in				
	meaningful work				
	that can develop				
	valuable new skills				
	and networking				
	opportunities.				

Spanish	https://catalog.worce	An array of	Individual faculty	To address specific	3/4/2019
~ P	ster.edu/undergradua	embedded	members interpret	linguistic deficiencies of	-,
		assignments in	the evidence	native/heritage speakers:	
	-social-sciences/span	-	produced in the	new course	
	ish/major-spanish/	assess linguistic	individual courses	SP390-Spanish for	
		and content based	they teach	Native Speakers as a sort	
		knowledge,	(discussions,	of remedial course that	
		independent	exams, etc.), as it	prepares students to be	
		learning, critical	relates to their own	successful in a writing	
		thinking, and/or	field of expertise. It	intensive course such as	
		information	is standard practice	SP321 (prerequisite for	
		literacy. Different	that assessment for	most upper level SP	
		assignments will	oral presentations,	courses).	
		target one or more	short response	To improve linguistic	
		of these goals. For	essays, and research	understanding and	
		instance, end of the	projects is based on	performance: new course	
		semester research	a rubric that in turn	in Advance Grammar.	
		projects and oral	addresses different	To expand intercultural	
		presentation	objectives. These	competence and	
		projects in 300- and	·	content-based	
		400- level courses	available to the	knowledge, not only	
		-beside linguistic	student either in	among students in the	
		competence	their syllabus or via	Department of WL, but in	
		(written in	Blackboard.	the WSU community as a	
		Spanish) assess	Elaboration,	whole: designed and	
		content knowledge,	implementation,	created a new minor in	
		independent	and interpretation of	Latin American and	
		learning, and	each rubric is also	LatinX Cultural Studies.	
		information	an academic	To further promote	
		literacy. In-class	purview of each	independent learning and	
		discussions or	instructor/faculty	information literacy:	
		discussion boards	member.	mentor and encourage	
		evaluate	Quality of the work	students to present their	
		intercultural	produced in	research work at local	
		competence and	Internships is	and regional venues.	
		critical thinking,	evaluated both by	Other steps to address	
		besides linguistic	the site supervisor	deficiencies pointed out	
		accuracy.	and by the	by the date collected	
		By the nature of the	academic	include slight	
		discipline,	supervisor.	pedagogical or	
		completion of	Capstone projects	procedural changes in	
		curriculum program	are evaluated by the	individual courses.	
		in itself expose	faculty member	Examples of these may	
		students to	directing the	be completing written	
		multicultural	capstone as well as	assignments in class	
		contents and	by the faculty	rather than as homework	
		develops their	committee before	(eliminates the possibility	
		intercultural	which students	of using	

awareness.	defend their thesis.	computer/machine	
Capstones,		translations); or	
internships and		incorporating more	
portfolios		technology in the	
completed during		classroom (apps,	
the student senior		podcasts, etc.).	
year are also tools		Other program initiatives	
to determine		aimed at improving	
graduates have		students' linguistic	
achieved the		proficiency and	
Spanish program		understanding of	
learning outcomes.		Spanish-speaking	
		societies include:	
		Developing closer ties	
		with the greater	
		Worcester community	
		and Institutions in order	
		to create opportunities for	
		collaboration (in the form	
		of internships or	
		otherwise); organizing	
		and conducting	
		faculty-led study abroad	
		programs; exploring and	
		implementing alternative	
		methods of tutoring	
		(Spanish Clinic now	
		offers online services),	
		facilitating	
		extracurricular activities	
		for the students, whether	
		bringing guest-speakers	
		to campus, encouraging	
		service-learning projects,	
		or revamping the Spanish	
		Club.	

Spanish	While all individual	An array of	Individual faculty	To better address student	
M.A.	courses have their	embedded	members interpret	learning outcomes and	
	own student leaning	assignments in	the evidence	improve the quality of the	
	outcomes, there are	graduate courses	produced in the	program (most students	
	no written	assess linguistic	individual courses	are teachers in the public	
	overarching	and content based	they teach	school system who need	
	outcomes that	knowledge,	(discussions,	a M.A. to obtain their	
	appear published in	independent	exams, etc.), as it	professional license),	
	the Catalog for the	learning, critical	relates to their own	there has been a shift	
	graduate Spanish	and analytical	field of expertise. It	from more content-based	
	program.	thinking, cultural	is standard practice	courses to applied	
		awareness, and/or	that assessment for	knowledge, in which	
		information	oral presentations,	students learn how to	
		literacy. Different	short response	teach the course content.	
		assignments will	essays, creation of	Likewise, more	
		target one or more	didactic units and/or	traditional assessment	
		of these goals. For	portfolios, and	tools like midterm or	
		instance, research	research projects is	final exams have been	
		projects and oral	based on a rubric	replaced by hands-on	
		presentation	that in turn	assignments, such as the	
		projects assess	addresses different	design of teaching units	
		content knowledge,	objectives. These	or teaching portfolios, or	
		independent	rubrics are made	even teaching a	
		learning, and	available to the	micro-lesson in class.	
		information	student either in		
		literacy; creation of	their syllabus or via	To aid with information	
		portfolios or	Blackboard.	literacy and independent	
		didactic units	Elaboration,	learning, faculty	
		assess applied	implementation,	members have developed	
		knowledge; in-class	-	closer ties with librarians,	
		discussions,	each rubric is also	and -with their	
		discussion boards,	an academic	assistance- workshops on	
		or exams evaluate	purview of each	how to conduct research	
		intercultural	instructor/faculty	or how to navigate the	
		competence and	member.	library databases have	
		critical & analytical		been incorporated to the	
		thinking, besides	With regards to	course content &	
		linguistic accuracy.	comprehensive	calendar.	
			exams, each faculty		
		A comprehensive	member evaluates	**Answer to question 5:	
		exams prior to	the exam section	There is no	
		obtaining their	that pertains to	formal/official program	
		degree also serves	his/her own area of	review for graduate	
		as an assessment	expertise.	programs.	
		tool for content,			
		skills, and aptitudes			
		acquired or			
		developed upon			

	completion of the		
	whole program of		
	study.		

Degree Program	(1) Professional, specialized, State or programmatic accreditations currently held by	(2) Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.	(3) List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action	(4) Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board or bar pass rates,	(5)Date and nature of next scheduled review
	the institution (by agency or		letter or report.	employment rates, etc).	
Chemistry	program name) American chemical	April 2010 /	None THe periodic	https://www.acs.org/con	12/31/2021
Chemistry	Society certified	Annual reports so	review is as follows:	tent/acs/en/education/p	12/51/2021
	program	we submitted one	ACS-approved	olicies/acs-approval-prog	
	program	in 2020	institutions must	ram/apply.html	
		11 2020	report the following	Some examples of what	
			annually to the ACS	ACS is looking for :	
			Committee on	An approved chemistry	
			Professional Training:	program requires	
			Ū	continuing	
			Number of degrees	and stable financial	
			granted by the	support.	
			chemistry program	There must be at least	
			Gender and	five full-time permanent	
			race/ethnicity data on	faculty members wholly	
			all bachelor's degree	committed to the	
			graduates	chemistry program. Most	
			The number of	vigorous and sustainable	
			bachelor's degree	approved programs have	
			recipients that	a larger number.	
			completed the ACS	Currently approved	
			approved curriculum	programs	
			(i.e. the number of	with fewer than five	
			certified graduates)	permanent faculty will	
			Supplemental	have until 2025 to meet	
			information on the	this	
			curriculum and	requirement. In cases	
			faculty	where faculty contracts	
				are renewed on a regular	
				basis, the individuals in	
				these positions should	
				hold the expectation for	
				both long-term and	
				full-time employment.	
				• At least 75% of the	
				permanent chemistry	
				faculty members must	

Nursing	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Accreditation for 10 years, awarded in 2016. and approved by born, born appr each year	2013 - written report submitted 2012, site visit 2013. At five year mark a Continuous Improvement Progress Report (CIPR) was submitted outlining continuous actions taken by the program to meet standards.	2013 review found all standards were met, 10 year full accreditation awarded. Continuous Improvement Progress Report (CIPR) submitted 2013. No actions necessary.	hold the Ph.D. or an equivalent research degree. They are mostly curricular and resource oriented - not assessment oriented. Systematic Program Evaluation Committee (SPE) meets monthly to evaluate departmental needs for improvement, National Council of Licensing Exam (NCLEX) results yearly, Employment Rates	1/1/2023
Occupatio nal Therapy	Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education	April 2015	None noted	Pass rate for the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy	2031
Speech Language Pathology	Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology	4/2/2019	None cited.	Praxis pass rates, program completion rates , employment rates	4/1/2027

# **APPENDIX IV**

# WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY

# (AN AGENCY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS WITH SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION, STATISTICAL INFORMATION AND OTHER REPORTS

> YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020 AND INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS WITH SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION, STATISTICAL INFORMATION AND OTHER REPORTS

YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020

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# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Trustees Worcester State University

#### **Report on the Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the business-type activities of Worcester State University (an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) (the "University") and the financial statements of Worcester State Foundation, Inc., its discretely presented component unit, as of and for the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020 and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the University's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Worcester State University and Worcester State Foundation, Inc., its discretely presented component unit, as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, and the changes in its net position, and its cash flows for the years then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

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#### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (Continued)

#### **Other Matters**

## Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the Management's Discussion and Analysis on pages 3 through 13 and certain information pertaining to liabilities recorded in accordance with Government Accounting Standards Board Statement Number 68, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions* and GASB Statement No. 75, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions* on pages 45 through 51 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

#### **Other Information**

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise Worcester State University's basic financial statements. The supplemental schedules and statistical information are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements.

The supplemental schedules on pages 52 through 56 are the responsibility of management and were derived from and relate directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the supplemental schedules are fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

The statistical information on pages 57 through 62 has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements, and accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

# Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated \_\_\_\_\_\_, 2021, on our consideration of Worcester State University's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of Worcester State University's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Worcester State University's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Ballus Lynch, LLP

Worcester, Massachusetts October 21, 2021 MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (UNAUDITED)

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

As management of Worcester State University, we offer readers of Worcester State University's financial statements this narrative overview and analysis of the financial activities of Worcester State University for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. This discussion is provided by management and should be read in conjunction with the financial statements and notes thereto.

Worcester State University was founded in 1871 and is one of nine comprehensive public colleges/universities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The University affirms the principles of liberal learning as the foundation for all advanced programs of study and offers programs in the traditional liberal arts and science disciplines, while maintaining its historical focus on teacher education. The University offers 59 undergraduate majors and minors, 29 graduate programs, 82 study abroad programs, and a student-to-faculty ratio of 17:1. The University currently has 4,958 full and part-time undergraduate students and 766 full and part-time graduate and professional students.

# **Financial Highlights**

- The assets and deferred outflows of resources of Worcester State University exceeded its liabilities and deferred inflows of resources at the close of the most recent fiscal year by \$62,171,098 inclusive of year end accruals related to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Pension and Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) (net position) of \$58,672,987.
- The University's total net position increased by \$3,330,690. Pension and insurance expense increased by \$1,259,106, as a result of recording University's portion of the Commonwealth's postretirement obligations. Overall the revenues earned, when combined with non-operating revenues, exceeded operating expenses excluding depreciation expense (non-cash item) and the additional pension accrual to reflect the University's portion of the Commonwealth's liability.
- The University's Net Position as June 30 2021 was \$62,171,098. Unrestricted Net Position from Operations as of June 30, 2021 was \$47,866,408. The healthy operational reserves is offset by the University's allocation of the Commonwealth's accumulated Net Retirement Obligations of \$19,435,051 related to Pensions and \$38,809,888 related to OPEB, resulting in Net Unrestricted Reserves of (\$10,378,531).
- Auxiliary Services, specifically Residence Life and Housing, closed the year with an operating deficit of \$627,127 for the year ended June 30, 2021. This is the second consecutive year that this trust fund has closed with an operating deficit due to COVID-19 effects on operations. The FY 2021 budget had been significantly reduced in scope in response to the anticipated decline in occupancy. The scaled back budget and debt restructuring implemented by the Massachusetts State College Building Authority help to mitigate operating losses.

### **Overview of the Financial Statements**

This discussion and analysis is intended to serve as an introduction to Worcester State University's basic financial statements. Worcester State University's basic financial statements comprise two components: 1) the financial statements and 2) the notes to the financial statements. This report also contains other supplementary information in addition to the basic financial statements themselves.

The Financial Statements are designed to provide readers with a broad overview of Worcester State University's finances in a manner similar to a private sector college.

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

The Statement of Net Position presents information on all of the University's assets and deferred outflows of resources, as well as liabilities and deferred inflows of resources, with the difference between these reported as net position. Over time, increases or decreases in net position may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the University is improving or deteriorating.

The Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position presents information showing how the University's net position changed during the most recent fiscal year. All changes in net position are reported as soon as the underlying event giving rise to the change occurs, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Thus, revenues and expenses are reported in this statement for some items that will only result in cash flows in future fiscal periods (e.g. the accrual for compensated absences.)

The Statement of Cash Flows is reported on the direct method. The direct method of cash flow reporting portrays net cash flows from operations as major classes of operating receipts (e.g. tuition and fees) and disbursements (e.g. cash paid to employees for services.) The Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements 34 and 35 require this method to be used.

The financial statements and related footnotes are presented separately from this Management Discussion and Analysis.

The University reports its activity as a business-type activity using the full accrual measurement focus and basis of accounting. The University is a component unit of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Therefore, the results of the University's operations, its net position and cash flows are also summarized in the Commonwealth's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report in its government-wide financial statements.

Notes to the financial statements: The notes provide additional information that is essential to a full understanding of the data provided in the financial statements and are presented separately.

Other information: In addition to the financial statements and accompanying notes, this report also contains certain required supplementary information concerning Worcester State University.

### **Financial Analysis**

As noted earlier, net position may serve over time as a useful indication of Worcester State University's financial position. In the case of Worcester State University, assets and deferred outflows of resources exceeded liabilities and deferred inflows of resources by \$62,171,098 at the close of Fiscal Year 2021.

By far the largest portion of the Worcester State University's net position reflects its investment in capital assets (e.g. land, buildings, machinery, and equipment), less any related debt used to acquire those assets that are still outstanding, including capital leases. Worcester State University uses these capital assets to provide services to students, faculty and administration; consequently, these assets are not available for future spending. Worcester State University's investment in its capital assets is reported net of related debt.

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

# Worcester State University's Net Position as of June 30, 2021, with comparative data as of June 30, 2020

	2021	2020
Current and other assets Capital assets	\$ 71,611,180 93,130,666	\$ 62,237,656 97,697,525
Total assets	164,741,846	159,935,181
Deferred outflows of resources	15,587,867	15,128,539
Non-current outstanding liabilities Other liabilities	78,439,471 14926951	80,901,382 14,603,707
Total liabilities	93,366,422	95,505,089
Deferred inflows of resources	24,792,193	20,718,223
Net position Invested in capital assets, net of related debt Restricted Unrestricted	71,503,288 1,046,341 (10,378,531)	75,835,001 793,392 (17,787,985)
Total net position	\$ 62,171,098	\$ 58,840,408

The following schedule presents an analysis of Worcester State University's net position as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively:

	2021	2020
Invested in capital assets, net	\$ 71,503,288	\$ 75,835,001
Restricted reserves, expendable for: Other Capital projects	902,011 144,330	653,958 139,434
Total restricted reserves, expendable	1,046,341	793,392
Unrestricted net position Unrestricted reserves from operations Accumulated Commonwealth of Massachusetts retirement obligations -	47,866,408	39,197,848
Pension Accumulated Commonwealth of Massachusetts retirement obligations -	(19,435,051)	(17,767,478)
OPEB	(38,809,888)	(39,218,355)
Total net unrestricted reserves	(10,378,531)	(17,787,985)
Total net position	\$ 62,171,098	\$ 58,840,408

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

A portion of the Worcester State University's net position (1.7%) as of June 30, 2021, represent funds that are subject to external restrictions on how they must be used. Unrestricted net reserves from operations of \$47,866,408 at June 30, 2021 may be used to meet the University's ongoing obligations to its stakeholders. The University's net position increased by \$3,330,690 during the year ended June 30, 2021. At the end of the current fiscal year, Worcester State University reports a positive balance in restricted reserves, a positive balance in unrestricted reserves from operations and accumulated net negative obligations for the allocated share of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts pension and OPEB plans.

The University's primary reserve ratio, calculated as expendable net position divided by total expenses, is 45.22% and 35.21%, respectively, for the years ended June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020. This ratio provides a snapshot of financial strength and flexibility by indicating the percent of operating expenses that could be funded by expendable reserves without relying on additional net position generated by operations.

The implementation of GASB 68 and GASB 75 requires the annual accrual of the University's allocation of the Commonwealth's Net Pension and OPEB Liability. The additional accrual of pension and insurance expense of \$1,259,106 in FY 2021 and \$3,090,904 in FY 2020 was recorded to reflect the University's allocation of the Commonwealth's accrued obligation of Pension and OPEB liabilities.

The application of GASB 68 and GASB 75 requires certain reporting and disclosures with regard to the Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System (MSERS) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Other Post-Employment Benefit (OPEB) Plan. The authority for establishing and amending these provisions rests with the Massachusetts Legislature, Chapter 32A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The allocation provided to the University from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Comptroller's Office reflects the University's proportionate share of the net pension and OPEB liability related to its participation in MSERS and OPEB. The University's participation in MSERS and OPEB is directly related to the share of annual payroll subject to retirement assessment that is funded from campus-based resources in contrast to payroll expended from annual operating appropriations allocated to the University from Commonwealth resources. In FY 2021 annual payroll subject to retirement assessment for FY 2021 was \$38,664,740.

The University's return on net position ratio, calculated as the change in total net position divided by total net position – beginning of the year, is 5.66% and (3.80)%, respectively, for the years ended June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020. This ratio measures total economic return including capital investment and positive operating results. An improving trend indicates increasing net position which provide for increased financial flexibility.

The ratios in FY 2021 and FY 2020 are impacted by the GASB required postretirement benefit accruals necessary to reflect the campus share of the Commonwealth's liability related to the third party management of the retirement assets. When the postretirement benefit accruals are removed the return on net position ratios improve respectively, at 7.80% and 1.25%, for the years ended June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020.

The net operating revenue ratio is 2.99% and (2.09)%, respectively, for the years ended June 30, 2021, and June 30, 2020. The ratio measures whether an institution is living within its available resources. Worcester State University strives to achieve an annual operating surplus as measured by this ratio as part of its long-term plan to improve its primary reserve and viability ratios and maintain a healthy annual return on net position. These ratios are also deflated as a result of the postretirement benefit accruals at year end. When removed, the ratios improve to 4.12% and .69%, respectively, as of June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020.

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

In FY 2021 the University experienced a net operating surplus of \$3,330,690, inclusive of the net posting of year end accruals related to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Pension and Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) (net position) of \$1,259,106.

The net operating surplus is partly the results of capital appropriations received from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as part of a five-year spending plan benefitting public higher education institutions. Despite the ongoing demands of the pandemic the University continued to provide matching funds to the program in order that grants funds provided by the program would remain available to address critical infrastructure repairs. Critical repair projects completed during the year included the Student Center elevator replacement, Ghosh Science Center fume hood refurbishment, Ghosh Science Center roof replacement and electrical system and ceiling replacement on the first floor of the Learning Resource Center with a cumulative cost of \$2,150,714. In addition, WSU received \$1,087,918 in small repair funds from the Commonwealth. The majority of these projects provided for upgrades and repairs to buildings so they can continue to be occupied. Most projects did not extend the useful lives of buildings noting several were constructed over 50 years ago.

The FY 2021 budget was subjected to many adjustments while the pandemic continued to impact operations. There was significant contraction in spending as students and employees continued to operate in a remote environment. Savings were achieved throughout the budget as an emergency operating model was deployed that suspended and/or deferred the majority of on campus expenditures.

In addition, COVID institutional relief grants provided the funds necessary to offset the cost associated with the University's COVID response plan while the University experienced a significant revenue decline due to the virus's impact. The net result of these factors also contributed to closing the year with a net operating surplus.

Net capital assets decreased by \$4,566,859 in FY 2021, while depreciation expense on capital assets was \$5,600,362. Land improvements of \$554,620 where capitalized, and leases of \$508,383 where capitalized.

The University's viability ratio, calculated as expendable net position divided by long term debt, is 1 : 2.23 and 1 : 1.73 respectively, as of June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020. The viability ratio measures the availability of expendable net position to cover debt as of the statement of net position date. A ratio of 1:1 or greater indicates an institution has sufficient expendable net position to satisfy its debt obligations as of the statement of net position date.

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

Worcester State University's Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position for the year ended June 30, 2021 with comparative data for the year ended June 30, 2021.

	2021	2020
Operating Revenues Tuition and fees, net of scholarships discounts and allowances Operating grants and contributions Sales and services of auxiliary enterprises and other sources	\$ 45,695,427 12,477,068 68,139	\$ 49,988,138 14,286,525 629,708
Total operating revenues	58,240,634	64,904,371
Operating Expenses Instruction Public support Academic support Student service Institutional support Operations and maintenance of plant Scholarships Depreciation Debt service Auxiliary enterprises	$\begin{array}{r} 43,283,761\\ 350,653\\ 5,821,750\\ 11,208,328\\ 12,990,731\\ 15,570,731\\ 4,801,269\\ 5,600,362\\ 602,865\\ 7,939,352\end{array}$	45,100,954 6,152,467 11,188,502 12,592,784 15,220,970 4,429,390 5,472,690 645,168 12,773,826
Total operating expense	108,169,802	113,576,751
Net operating loss	(49,929,168)	(48,672,380)
Non-operating revenues State appropriation, including fringe benefits provided to employees by the Commonwealth, net of tuition remitted to the Commonwealth Federal Assistance Investment income Other and transfers	42,192,196 7,525,638 (217,423) (33,387)	41,086,913 1,934,404 1,519,274
Total non-operating revenues	49,467,024	44,540,591
Loss before other revenues, expenses, gains or losses	(462,144)	(4,131,789)
Capital appropriations	3,792,834	1,807,178
Change in net position	3,330,690	(2,324,611)
Net position - July 1	58,840,408	61,165,019
Net position - June 30	\$ 62,171,098	\$ 58,840,408

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

During FY 2021 the University continued to be eligible to drawdown Federal COVID relief funds. Funding during the year was provided by the following institutional awards:

- Cares Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)I in the amount of \$2,111,416
- Cares Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)II in the amount of \$5,283,382

The Federal relief grants provided enough resources to fund the FY 2021 Safe Return to Campus Budget in the amount of \$5,655,358 which was created to implement the WSU Safe Return plan. During FY 2021 the University expended \$4,171,395 of Institutional CARES Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds on its pandemic response. Emergency relief in the form of a FEMA reimbursement is in process for \$638,200 for costs associated with the University's on campus COVID testing protocol. An additional FEMA reimbursement of \$349,645 is in process to recover costs associated with hosting a community vaccination clinic in collaboration with St. Vincent's Hospital.

Direct grants to students of \$2,366,398 were made during FY 2021 as provided for in the CARES Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds to Students.

In FY 2021 the University received its third year of funding with regard to the Commonwealth's five-year campus infrastructure critical repair funds in the form of state capital appropriations. During FY 2021 over \$3,792,834 of critical repair, small repairs and deferred maintenance projects were accomplished of which approximately \$554,620 worth of improvements were capitalized.

State appropriations are reported net of the amount of in-state day school tuition collected by the University on behalf of the Commonwealth. The in-state day tuition collected is remitted back to the Commonwealth as dictated by Massachusetts General Law. Included in State appropriations are the fringe benefit costs for University employees paid by the Commonwealth. Capital appropriations are funded by Massachusetts General Obligation Bonds which are issued to fund Commonwealth infrastructure improvements. The funds are provided to the campus in the form of a capital grant and as such the University is not responsible for repayment of the funds.

The following schedule details the Commonwealth appropriations received by the University for the years ending June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020, respectively.

	2021	2020
State Appropriations	\$ 31,123,377	\$ 30,320,953
Appropriations to cover fringe benefits provided to employees of the Commonwealth Tuition remitted back to the State	11,571,048 (502,229)	11,070,784 (304,826)
Net appropriations	42,192,196	41,086,911
Additional State capital appropriations	3,792,834	1,807,178
Total Appropriations	\$ 45,985,030	\$ 42,894,089

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

### Loss from Operations

State appropriations are a significant source of funding for the University. Under GASB 35, appropriations are considered non-operating revenue. As such, the University incurs a loss from operations. The Commonwealth's Board of Higher Education sets tuition for the day division. The University's Board of Trustees sets all fees and tuition of the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education. The University's Board of Trustees approves the annual budget with the intention of mitigating losses after consideration of Commonwealth appropriations while balancing educational and operational needs. The following schedule presents Worcester State University's incurred losses from operations for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

	2021	2020	Change
Net Tuition and Fee Revenue Other Revenue, net of Student Financial Aid Operational Expenses	\$ 45,695,427 12,545,207 (108,169,802)	\$ 49,988,138 14,916,233 (113,576,751)	\$ (4,292,711) (2,371,026) 5,406,949
Operating loss	(49,929,168)	(48,672,380)	(1,256,788)
Direct State appropriations, fringe benefits for employees on the Commonwealth's payroll, net			
of remitted tuition to the Commonwealth	42,192,196	41,086,913	1,105,283
Federal assistance	7,525,638	1,934,404	5,591,234
Investment and non-operating income	(250,810)	1,519,274	(1,770,084)
Capital appropriations	3,792,834	1,807,178	1,985,656
Change in net position	\$ 3,330,690	\$ (2,324,611)	\$ 5,655,301

### **Capital Assets and Debts of the University**

Capital Assets: Worcester State University's investment in capital assets as of June 30, 2021 amounts to \$93,130,666 net of accumulated depreciation, compared to \$97,697,525 net of accumulated depreciation as of June 30, 2020. The University's investment in capital assets includes, land (including improvements), building (including improvements,) furnishings and equipment, and books. In FY 2021 gross capital assets increased by \$1,063,003. The increase was related to land improvements and capitalized leases for information technology equipment.

Capital assets are defined by the University and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as assets with an initial, individual cost of \$50,000 or greater. Information about the Worcester State University's capital assets can be found in the notes to the financial statements.

#### Long-Term Debt

#### **Compensated Absences**

The accrual for compensated absences consists of the long-term portion of sick and vacation pay relating to employees on the University's payroll and is anticipated to be funded by future state appropriations.

#### MHEFA Financing

On December 4, 2002, the College entered into a financing agreement with MHEFA to receive \$14,000,000 for renovations to the Sullivan and Administration Buildings. A call provision became available on this bond issue in December 2012. As a result, the issue was refunded on December 18, 2012, with \$10,585,000 MDFA Revenue Bonds, Worcester State University Series 2012. There is no debt service reserve related to this issue. Annual principal payments range from \$665,000 to \$875,000 through November of 2032.

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

#### Massachusetts Development Financing Agency (MDFA) Clean Renewable Energy Bond.

On November 9, 2007, the College entered into a financing agreement with MDFA to receive \$310,000 to facilitate the financing of the installation of a 100 KW Photovoltaic Panel, mounting system and inverter on the roof of the Learning Resource Center. The bond proceeds are non-interest bearing and are to be re-paid in equal annual installments of \$20,667 over a fifteen-year period beginning December 31, 2007.

# Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA) WSU Student Life Project

MSCBA issued revenue bonds for various projects on December 20, 2012. Included in the issue was a component to provide \$15,000,000 of debt financing to Worcester State University's Wellness Center in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between, the Commonwealth, MSCBA and the University. The proceeds from the bond issue, combined with funds earmarked by the University and General Obligation bond funds earmarked by the Commonwealth, provided the resources for construction of a new Wellness Center at WSU. The Wellness Center will be an asset of the Commonwealth and recorded as a fixed asset on the University's financial records. The MSCBA holds Debt Service Reserve funds of \$249,214 on this component of the issue. On July 1, 2020, MSCBA closed on a restructuring of outstanding debt from a multiple series of bonds including those issued to finance the Wellness Center. The restructuring provided for debt service relief in FY 2021 with interest only payments during the year and a 50% reduction in principal payment in FY 2022. The project debt remains on schedule to be extinguished in May 2042 with annual principal payments ranging from \$212,316 in FY 2022 with the largest annual payment of \$777,000 in 2037. Campus trust funds provide the revenue source for the annual debt service.

#### Economic Factors that will affect the Future

The University continues to respond to the ever changing circumstances brought on by the pandemic and its effect on enrollment and operations. In response to the uncertainty surrounding the path forward during the pandemic a provisional budget was approved for FY 2022. This budget provides the framework for University operations for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021. As with the FY 2021 operating budget, the FY 2022 provisional budget reflects anticipated declines in enrollment across all course offerings as a result of the pandemic. In addition, ancillary revenue streams historically relied upon to support operations have been detrimentally impacted by the pandemic and there is significant uncertainty with regard to the ability to recover these revenue streams, or the period over which such recovery could be predicted. Operating revenue budgeted in FY 2022 is approximately \$6M lower than FY 2021 original budget.

The final FY 2021 budget reflected significant reductions in areas of discretionary spending related to in person events such as food, speakers and consultants. In addition travel, conferencing and professional development were budgeted close to zero. All part-time employment lines were significantly scaled back due to most campus functions being remote and a desire to deploy faculty in the classroom to the fullest extent possible. As we reconciled actual spending in FY 2021 and planned for FY 2022 we identified activities that would be funded closer to pre-pandemic levels. Budgeted expenditures increased by approximately \$5M in FY2022 across various spending categories as it was deemed necessary to continue a requisite level of funding across various expenditure categories including Facility Operating Expenses, Professional Services, Operational Services, Equipment Lease/Rent, and Technology Expenses. Special Employees experienced the most significant restoration of funding at \$2.7M as many part-time positions are necessary to support university operations. A \$2 million reduction in Capital Adaptation and Renewal funds has been sustained in FY 2022 while still providing the requisite campus based funds to provide a match towards the critical repair grants provided by the Commonwealth.

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

The FY 2022 budget reflects a sustained decline in revenue, in addition to the need to restore various spending categories which results in a projected budget deficit of \$4,677,152. The projected budget deficit is directly attributable to the projected decline in revenue in response to changes in student attitudes and preferences and suspended activities in response to the worldwide pandemic. The FY 2022 budget is offset with funds from the American Rescue Plan Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) III enacted on March 11, 2021. The university is identified to receive \$13,270,582 of COVID relief funds through this bill, of which \$6,660,064 must be processed as direct payments to students and the remaining \$6,610,518 available to the institution in accordance with federal guidelines. The Department of Education provided additional guidance on use of funds that includes recovery of revenue losses as a result of the pandemic. The guidance directly correlates to our FY 2022 projected budget shortfall which we will continue to monitor in real time. Our intent is to monitor year over year revenue losses at the close of each semester and prepare federal drawdowns based on actual revenue reporting.

The University continues to be eligible to drawdown Federal COVID relief funds. To date we have had access to \$14,309,116 to offset institutional cost and revenue loss incurred in response to the pandemic. The breakdown of institutional awards is as follows:

- COVID-19 Response Grant in the amount of \$303,800
- Cares Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)I in the amount of \$2,111,416
- Cares Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)II in the amount of \$5,283,382
- Cares Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) III (ARP) in the amount of \$6,610,518

The funds available to the University provided enough resources to fund the FY 2021 Safe Return to Campus Budget in the amount of \$5,655,358 which was created to implement the WSU Safe Return plan. The budget addressed the needs identified by various committees that contributed to the plan. The committee continued their work weekly throughout the year to provide division updates and planning for the upcoming year. The entire amount is funded by COVID-19 response grant, HEERF I and \$3,240,142 from HEERF II. FY 2021 closed with approximately 10% of the budget unexpended. The remaining balance of \$544,035 is being carried over to the Safe Return II budget.

The FY 2022 Safe Return II budget was prepared after the state of emergency was lifted by Governor Baker. The budget as presented reflects the University's collective planning for the current academic year which eliminates all social distancing restrictions as permitted in Massachusetts. Enhancements put in place in FY 2021 related to software and subscription services will continue to be funded by the Safe Return II budget. Resources are being provided to supplement classroom materials and supplies and plans to supplement classroom furnishings have been executed. Building standards published by the Center for Disease Control have been further reviewed and the campus Covid response plan, with regard to cleaning, sanitizing and air quality, is being refined to incorporate the University's plans for the fall semester. The budget for the COVID test center, laboratory services and the health screening app continue to be funded at levels similar to spring 2020. The Student Health Services Office will continue to receive additional support through its staffing arrangement with UMass Memorial and additional clinicians have been hired in the Counseling Center to enhance our support services for students this upcoming year.

The remaining trust fund budgets have been updated to reflect the projected decline in revenue with appropriate reductions in spending as necessary. The Residence Hall Trust Fund FY 2022 budget has been prepared with an assumption of 60% occupancy for the year and appropriate reductions in spending including the deferral of maintenance costs to FY 2023 when we anticipate occupancy will be more in line with pre-pandemic levels. The Capital Improvement Trust Fund budget for FY 2022 reflects a plan to assist Worcester State Foundation (WSF) in recovering occupancy costs for past use of the May Street building.

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (Continued)

The FY 2022 budget was approved by the Board of Trustees in March, 2021. Tuition and fees were not increased from FY 2021 levels with the published cost for an in-state student to attend full time and live in the residence halls coming in below \$23,000 a year.

In June of 2018 the Commonwealth announced a plan to address the backlog of infrastructure repairs on Massachusetts Higher Education campuses. The Governor's Capital Investment Plan includes \$250 million over a five year period (FY19-23) to address Critical Repairs. Critical Repairs projects are smaller scale, building-specific, and involve renewal, repair and replacement of equipment and systems. Critical Repairs projects are managed directly by the individual campuses. The five-year allocation represents a new approach that provides predictable discretionary funds, allows more autonomy in campus prioritization over five years, and addresses the highest priority needs as identified through an independent facility condition assessment. Worcester State University will be receiving \$12.4 million of critical repairs funds through 2023. When combined with projected local funding of 5% capital adaptation and renewal funds, the University is on track to invest \$32.4M in campus infrastructure repairs and improvements through 2023.

During FY 2021 Worcester State University expended approximately \$2.2 million on critical repair projects. There is approximately \$5.5M of grants funds available for projects scheduled through FY 2023.

#### **Requests for Information**

This financial report is designed to provide a general overview of the Worcester State University's finances for all those with an interest in the University's finances. Questions concerning any of the information provided in this report or requests for additional financial information should be addressed to the Office of the Vice President of Administration and Finance, 486 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA 01602-2597.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

# STATEMENTS OF NET POSITION

# JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020

				nent Unit
		ate University		ate Foundation
	2021	2020	2021	2020
ASSETS				
Current assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 32,092,870	\$ 23,877,110	\$ 2,002,315	\$ 1,910,469
Cash held by State Treasurer	6,493,862	6,625,482	-	-
Cash held by Foundation	82,004	82,004	-	-
Accounts receivable, net	3,123,416	1,397,295	18,279	19,713
Current portion of loans receivable	109,011	132,137	-	-
Current portion of contributions receivable	-	-	453,587	388,206
Inventories	67,798	314,116	77,425	91,801
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	204,420	413,821	18,939	20,646
Total current assets	42,173,381	32,841,965	2,570,545	2,430,835
Non-current assets:	22.042.626	21 744 152	41 (20 112	20.550.100
Investments	22,043,626	21,744,152	41,638,113	30,550,109
Deposits held with trustee	249,214	249,214	-	-
Loans receivable, less current portion	232,930	274,486	-	-
Contributions receivable, less current portion	-	-	640,862	875,994
Other non-current assets	6,912,029	7,127,839	95,320	153,323
Capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation	93,130,666	97,697,525	3,917,575	4,073,567
Total non-current assets	122,568,465	127,093,216	46,291,870	35,652,993
Total assets	164,741,846	159,935,181	48,862,415	38,083,828
DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES				
Resources related to pension and OPEB obligations	15,185,860	15,052,524	-	-
Loss on refunding of long-term debt	402,007	76,015		
Total deferred outflows of resources	15,587,867	15,128,539		
LIABILITIES				
Current liabilities:				
Current portion of bonds payable	547,983	730,667	2,219,922	19,102
Current portion of capital lease obligation	389,944	412,712	-	-
Accounts payable	3,493,810	2,815,935	103,621	66,346
Accrued payroll and fringe benefits	4,679,624	5,290,247	-	-
Accrued interest and other liabilities	104,884	109,780	35,364	44,373
Funds held for others	-	-	97,446	98,946
Student deposits and unearned revenue	2,062,704	1,682,940	74,736	42,748
Current portion of split-interest agreements	-	-	16,253	25,304
Current portion of accrued workers' compensation	153,665	216,588	-	-
Current portion of accrued compensated absences	3,494,337	3,344,838		
Total current liabilities	14,926,951	14,603,707	2,547,342	296,819
Non-current liabilities:				
Bonds payable, less current portion	21,376,518	21,225,413	450,744	2,670,736
Capital lease obligation, less current portion	258,604	321,693	-	-
Accrued workers' compensation, less current portion	1,368,789	761,882	-	-
Accrued compensated absences, less current portion	2,339,126	2,275,497	-	-
Accrued pension and OPEB obligations	52,672,987	55,778,445	-	-
Refundable grant - federal financial assistance program	423,447	538,452	<u> </u>	
Total liabilities	93,366,422	95,505,089	2,998,086	2,967,555
DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES				
Resources related to pension and OPEB obligations	20,757,812	16,259,912	-	-
Deferred service concession arrangements	4,034,381	4,458,311		
Total deferred inflows of resources	24,792,193	20,718,223		
NET POSITION				
Invested in capital assets, net	71,503,288	75,835,001	-	-
Restricted - Non-expendable	-	-	20,177,209	19,080,476
Restricted - Expendable	1,046,341	793,392	19,438,746	10,779,163
Unrestricted	(10,378,531)	(17,787,985)	6,248,374	5,256,634
Total net position	\$ 62,171,098	\$ 58,840,408	\$ 45,864,329	\$ 35,116,273
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# STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN NET POSITION

# YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020

			Component Unit	
	Worcester State University		Worcester State Foundation	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
REVENUES				
Operating revenues:				
Student tuition and fees	\$ 46,997,815	\$ 48,742,481	\$ 275,945	\$ 308,697
Auxiliary enterprises, student housing	7,155,836	10,336,443	\$ 215,945	\$ 500,077
Less: Scholarship discounts and allowance	8,458,224	9,090,786	-	-
	45 (05 427	40.089.129	275.045	208 (07
Net student tuition and fees	45,695,427	49,988,138	275,945	308,697
Contributions	-	-	2,035,684	3,043,584
Federal grants and contracts	7,502,779	8,295,669	-	-
State and local grants and contracts	1,520,493	1,695,926	-	-
Nongovernmental grants and contracts	2,543,206	3,165,387	-	-
Auxiliary enterprises, other	68,139	629,708	115,388	177,811
Other operating revenues	910,590	1,129,543	350,070	287,044
Total operating revenues	58,240,634	64,904,371	2,777,087	3,817,136
EXPENSES				
Operating expenses:				
Instruction	43,283,761	45,100,954		
	350,653	45,100,954	-	-
Public support		6 152 467	-	-
Academic support	5,821,750	6,152,467	-	-
Student services	11,208,328	11,188,502	-	-
Institutional support	12,990,731	12,592,784	1,135,153	1,291,396
Operation and maintenance of plant	15,570,731	15,220,970	94,453	104,337
Scholarship	4,801,269	4,429,390	625,826	606,382
Depreciation	5,600,362	5,472,690	163,049	167,570
Debt service	602,865	645,168	102,504	103,058
Auxiliary enterprises	7,939,352	12,773,826		
Total operating expenses	108,169,802	113,576,751	2,120,985	2,272,743
Operating loss	(49,929,168)	(48,672,380)	656,102	1,544,393
NON-OPERATING REVENUES (EXPENSES)				
State appropriations	42,192,196	41,086,913		
Federal assistance	7,525,638		-	-
		1,934,404	10 250 781	-
Interest and investment income (loss)	(217,423)	1,519,274	10,259,781	649,834
Other payments to Worcester State University	-	-	(1,222,720)	(1,319,700)
Other non-operating losses	(33,387)		-	(103,702)
Net non-operating revenues	49,467,024	44,540,591	9,037,061	(773,568)
Income (loss) before other revenues,				
expenses, gains, or losses	(462,144)	(4,131,789)	9,693,163	770,825
Capital appropriations	3,792,834	1,807,178	-	-
Additions to permanent endowments			1,054,893	874,573
Change in net position	3,330,690	(2,324,611)	10,748,056	1,645,398
NET POSITION				
Beginning of year	58,840,408	61,165,019	35,116,273	33,470,875
End of year	\$ 62,171,098	\$ 58,840,408	\$ 45,864,329	\$ 35,116,273
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# STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

# YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020

	Primary Government	
	2021	2020
Cash flows from operating activities:	¢ 41.270.7(1	¢ 46.072.110
Student tuition, fees and charges	\$ 41,279,761 7,502,770	\$ 46,073,110
Federal grants and contracts	7,502,779	8,295,669
State and local grants and contracts	1,520,493	1,695,926
Nongovernmental grants and contracts	2,543,206	3,165,387
Auxiliary enterprise charges Employee compensation and fringe benefit payments	68,139	629,708
	(65,919,937) (28,496,393)	(68,034,934)
Payments to suppliers Interest paid		(36,182,300) (981,250)
Loans repaid by students	(582,394) 64,682	(981,230) 119,068
Other receipts (payments)	(1,272,389)	
Other receipts (payments)	(1,2/2,389)	1,104,945
Net cash used in operating activities	(43,292,053)	(44,114,671)
Cash flows from noncapital financing activities:		
State appropriations	42,192,196	41,086,913
Federal assistance	7,525,638	1,934,404
Net deposits	27,089	32,490
Net cash provided by noncapital financing activities	49,744,923	43,053,807
Cash flows from capital and related financing activities:		
Capital appropriations	3,792,834	1,807,178
Purchases of capital assets	(525,120)	(1,861,940)
Proceeds from bonds payable	12,926,359	-
Principal payments of bonds payable	(12,957,938)	(741,361)
Deferred loss on refunding of bonds payable	(351,359)	-
Principal payments of capital lease obligation	(594,240)	(449,857)
Perkins loan program, net funds paid	(115,005)	(242,158)
Other activities	(33,387)	
Net cash provided by (used in) capital and related financing activities	2,142,144	(1,488,138)
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Proceeds from sales and maturities of investments	4,427,558	9,206,376
Purchases of investments	(5,315,243)	(9,015,051)
Interest and investment income	376,811	449,832
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(510,874)	641,157
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	8,084,140	(1,907,845)
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	30,584,596	32,492,441
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	\$ 38,668,736	\$ 30,584,596

# STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

# YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020 (Continued)

	Primary Government	
	2021	2020
Reconciliation of operating loss to		
net cash used in operating activities:		
Operating loss	\$ (49,929,168)	\$ (48,672,380)
Adjustments to reconcile operating loss to net cash	¢ (19,929,100)	\$ (10,072,000)
used in operating activities:		
Depreciation expense	5,600,362	5,472,690
Amortization of other assets	215,810	215,810
Accretion of deferred service concession arrangements	(423,930)	(420,812)
Decrease in deferred loss on refunding of bonds payable	25,367	5,847
(Increase) decrease in operating assets and	,	,
deferred outflows:		
Accounts receivable, net	(1,726,121)	493,824
Loans receivable	64,682	119,068
Inventories	246,318	(263,231)
Prepaid expenses and other assets	203,378	(213,332)
Resources related to pension and OPEB obligations	(133,336)	3,043,561
Increase (decrease) in operating liabilities and		
deferred inflows:		
Accounts payable	677,875	(3,495,475)
Accrued payroll and fringe benefits	(610,623)	(455,363)
Accrued interest and other liabilities	(4,896)	(341,929)
Accrued workers' compensation	543,984	33,541
Student deposits and unearned revenue	352,675	416,752
Accrued compensated absences	213,128	(100,585)
Accrued pension and OPEB obligations	(3,105,458)	(9,784,998)
Resources related to pension and OPEB obligations	4,497,900	9,832,341
Net cash used in operating activities	\$ (43,292,053)	\$ (44,114,671)

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### Organization

Worcester State University (the "University") is a public, state-supported University, located in Worcester, Massachusetts. The University is governed by a local Board of Trustees under the discretion of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. As one of nine four-year, state-supported colleges and universities, the University is empowered to award baccalaureate and masters' degrees in education and in the arts and sciences, as well as programs of continuing education.

The University is an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (the "State", the "Commonwealth"). Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements may not necessarily be indicative of the conditions that would have existed if the University had been operated as an independent institution.

#### Component units

Worcester State Foundation, Inc. (the "Foundation") is a legally separate, tax exempt component unit of the University. The Foundation's primary role is to prudently manage and steward privately contributed resources meant to supplement the resources that are available to the University in support of its programs. The board of the Foundation is self-perpetuating and consists of graduates and friends of the University. Although the University does not control the timing or amount of receipts from the Foundation, the majority of resources, or income thereon, that the Foundation holds and invests are restricted to the activities of the University by the donors. Because these restricted resources held by the Foundation can only be used by, or for the benefit of, the University, the Foundation is considered a component unit of the University and is discretely presented in the University's financial statements.

During the year ended June 30, 2021 and 2020, the Foundation distributed \$1,848,546 and \$1,926,081, respectively, to the University for both restricted and unrestricted purposes. Complete financial statements for the Foundation can be obtained from the Worcester State University Business Office at 486 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA 01602.

### Basis of presentation

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (US GAAP). The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is responsible for establishing GAAP for state and local governments through its pronouncements (Statements and Interpretations).

The University has determined that it functions as a business-type activity, as defined by GASB. The effect of interfund activity has been eliminated from these financial statements. The basic financial statements for general purpose governments consist of management's discussion and analysis, basic financial statements including the University's discretely presented component unit, and required supplementary information. The University presents statements of net position, revenues, expenses, and changes in net position and cash flows on a University-wide basis.

Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of the related cash flows. Grants and similar items are recognized as revenue as soon as all eligibility requirements have been met. The accompanying statement of activities demonstrates the degree to which the direct expenses of a given function are offset by program revenues. Direct expenses are those that are clearly identifiable within a specific function. Program revenues primarily include charges to students or others who enroll or directly benefit from services that are provided by a particular function. Items not meeting the definition of program revenues are instead reported as general revenue.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

#### Basis of presentation (continued)

The University's policies for defining operating activities in the Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position are those that generally result from exchange transactions such as the payment received for services and payment made for the purchase of goods and services. Certain other transactions are reported as non-operating activities in accordance with GASB accounting standards. These non-operating activities include the University's operating and capital appropriations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and net investment income.

#### Net position

GASB establishes accounting and financial reporting standards for public colleges and universities. These standards require that, for accounting and reporting purposes, resources be classified into four net position categories, described as follows:

<u>Invested in capital assets, net of related debt</u> - Includes all capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation and the principal balances of any outstanding debt used to construct, acquire or improve the assets.

<u>Restricted net position</u> - These resources are further differentiated between those that are nonexpendable and expendable.

<u>Nonexpendable</u> resources are those that are subject to externally imposed constraints that they be maintained permanently.

<u>Expendable</u> resources are those whose use is subject to externally imposed constraints that can be satisfied by specific actions or by the passage of time.

<u>Unrestricted</u> - These resources are not subject to any externally imposed constraints. Such net position may be designated for specific purposes by action of the governing Board.

#### Accounting estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

#### Subsequent events

The University has evaluated the financial statement impact of subsequent events occurring through October 21, 2021, the date that the financial statements were available to be issued.

#### Cash, temporary investments, and investments

The University considers its cash on hand, cash held by both the State Treasurer and Worcester State Foundation, Inc. for the benefit of the University and all debt securities with a maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 1 - <u>SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES</u> (Continued)

#### Cash, temporary investments, and investments (continued)

The University's investments are recorded at fair value. Realized and unrealized gains and losses are included in non-operating revenues. Realized gains and losses are determined based on the specific identification of the securities sold. Investment income is recognized when earned. The method of allocated interest earned on pooled cash and investments among fund types provides that, unless otherwise restricted, all interest is recorded in the unrestricted current fund. All gains and losses arising from the sale, maturity, or other disposition of investments are accounted for in the trust fund which owns the related asset. Ordinary income derived from investments is accounted for in the trust fund owning such assets.

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board requires government entities to categorize investments to give an indication of the level of credit risk assumed by the University at year end. Category 1 includes investments that are insured or registered, or for which securities are held by the University or its agent in the name of the University. Category 2 includes uninsured and unregistered investments for which securities are held by a trust department in the name of the University. Category 3 includes uninsured and unregistered investments for which the securities are held by a trust department but not in the University's name.

#### Fair value measurements

The University follows the provisions of GASB Statement No. 72, *Fair Value Measurement and Application* (GASB 72). This Statement defines fair value, establishes a framework for measuring fair value in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and expands disclosures about fair value measurements.

The University uses fair value measurements to record fair value adjustments to certain assets and liabilities and to determine fair value disclosures. In accordance with GASB 72, the fair value of a financial instrument is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Fair value is best determined based on quoted market prices. However, in many instances, there may be no quoted market prices for the University's various financial instruments. In cases where quoted market prices are not available, fair values are based on estimates using present value or other valuation techniques. Those techniques are significantly affected by the assumptions used, including the discount rate and estimates of future cash flows. Accordingly, the fair value estimates may not be realized in an immediate settlement of the instrument.

In accordance with GASB 72, the University groups its financial assets and financial liabilities generally measured at fair value in three levels, based on the markets in which the assets and liabilities are traded and the reliability of the assumptions used to determine fair value.

Level 1: Valuation is based on quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the reporting entity has the ability to access at the measurement date.

Level 2: Valuation is based on observable inputs other than Level 1 prices, such as quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities; quoted prices in markets that are not active; or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data for substantially the full term of the assets or liabilities.

Level 3: Valuation is based on unobservable inputs that are supported by little or no market activity and that are significant to the fair value of the assets or liabilities. Level 3 assets and liabilities include financial instruments whose value is determined using pricing models, discounted cash flow methodologies, or similar techniques, as well as instruments for which the determination of fair value requires significant management judgment or estimation.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

# 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

#### Fair value measurements (continued)

The asset's or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques used need to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs. The University's component unit utilizes a similar market approach which uses prices and other relevant information generated by market transactions involving identical or comparable assets, liabilities or a group of assets and liabilities.

#### Allowance for doubtful accounts

Accounts receivable are reported at the amount management expects to collect in the future on balances outstanding at year end. Management estimates allowances for losses based on the history of collections and the knowledge acquired about specific items. Adjustments to the allowance are charged to bad debt expense. Interest is not charged on accounts receivable. Uncollectible amounts are written off against the reserve when deemed uncollectible; recoveries are recorded when received. An amount is considered uncollectible when reasonable efforts to collect the account have been exhausted.

#### Inventories

The University's inventories consist primarily of operating supplies which are valued at the lower of cost or market. Cost is determined by the first-in, first-out (FIFO) method.

# Loans receivable and payable

Loans receivable consist of the Federal Perkins Loan Program ("Perkins"). The federal government provides 90% of the funds to support this program. Loan payments received from students made under the Perkins program may be re-loaned after collection. The 90% portion of the Perkins Loan Program provided by the federal government is refundable back to the federal government upon the termination of the University's participation in the program.

The prescribed practices for the Perkins program do not provide for accrual of interest on student loans receivable or for the provision of an allowance for doubtful loans. Accordingly, interest on loans is recorded as received and loan balances are reduced subsequent to the determination of their uncollectiblity and have been accepted (assigned) by the Department of Education.

#### Capital assets

Capital assets are controlled, but not owned by the University. The University is not able to sell or otherwise encumber these assets since they are owned by the Commonwealth. All capital assets acquired prior to June 30, 1990 are stated at cost or estimated historical cost. Capital assets acquired subsequent to June 30, 1990 are stated at cost. All additions of individual capital assets greater than or equal to \$50,000 are capitalized, in accordance with the Commonwealth's capitalization policy. Donated capital assets are recorded at the estimated fair value at the date of the donation.

Capital assets, with the exception of land, are depreciated using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the asset, which range from 3 to 40 years.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 1 - <u>SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES</u> (Continued)

#### Student deposits and unearned revenue

Deposits and advance payments received for tuition and fees related to the University's Summer Session II program are deferred and are recorded as unrestricted current funds unearned revenue.

# Bond premiums

Bond premiums are being amortized on a straight-line basis, which approximates the effective interest method, over the terms of the related debt agreements.

#### Funds held for others

Funds held for others are agency funds consisting of resources held by the University as custodian or fiscal agent of student organizations, the State Treasurer and others. Transactions are recorded to assets and liability accounts.

#### State appropriations

The University's unrestricted State appropriations amounted to \$42,694,425 and \$41,391,739 for the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively. State supported tuition, in the amounts of \$502,229 and \$304,826 for the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively, were remitted to the State and have been offset against these appropriations. State supported tuition receipts and transfers have been recorded in an agency fund during the year with a net amount due (to) from the Commonwealth of \$(3,661) and \$78,070 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

### Pension plan

For purposes of measuring the net pension liability, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions, and pension expense, information about the fiduciary net position of the Massachusetts State Employee's Retirement System (MSERS) and additions to/deductions from MSERS's fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by MSERS. For this purpose, benefit payments (including refunds of employee contributions) are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. Investments are reported at fair value.

### Other postemployment benefits plan (OPEB)

For purposes of measuring the net OPEB liability, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB, and OPEB expense, information about the fiduciary net position of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions Plan and additions to/deductions from this plan's fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For this purpose, benefit payments are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. Investments are reported at fair value.

## Compensated absences

Employees earn the right to be compensated during absences for vacation leave and sick leave. Accrued vacation leave is the amount earned by all eligible employees through June 30, 2021. Pursuant to statewide experience on sick pay buy-back agreements applicable to state employees, the University accrues sick leave to a level representing 20 percent of amounts earned by those University employees with ten or more years of State service at the end of the fiscal year. Upon retirement, these employees are entitled to receive payment for this accrued balance.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

#### Fringe benefits

The University participates in the Commonwealth's fringe benefit programs, including health insurance, pension and workers' compensation benefits. Health insurance, pension and administrative costs are billed through a fringe benefit rate charged to the University. The University's workers' compensation program is administered by the Commonwealth's Division of Public Employee Retirement Administration. Workers' compensation costs are assessed separately based on the University's actual experience.

### Trust funds

The University's operations are accounted for in different trust funds. All of these trust funds have been consolidated and are included in these financial statements.

#### Tax status

The University is an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is therefore exempt from federal and state income taxes under Code Section 115 of the Internal Revenue Code. The Foundation is exempt from income taxes under the provisions of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

#### New government accounting pronouncements

GASB Statement No. 87, *Leases* is required for periods beginning after June 15, 2021. The objective of this Statement is to better meet the information needs of financial statement users by improving accounting and financial reporting for leases by governments. This Statement established as single model for lease accounting based on the foundational principle that leases are financings of the right to use an underling asset. It requires the recognition of certain lease assets and liabilities for leases that previously were classified as operating leases. Management is in the process of reviewing this statement and potential effects on their financial reporting.

GASB Statement No. 96, *Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA)* is effective for reporting periods beginning after June 15, 2022. The objective of this Statement is to provide accounting and financial reporting guidance for transactions in which a governmental entity contracts with another party for the right to use their software. A right-to-use asset and a corresponding liability would be recognized for SBITAs. Management has not completed its review of the requirements of this Standard and its applicability.

### 2 - <u>RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES</u>

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus outbreak a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern" and on March 10, 2020, declared it to be a pandemic. Actions taken around the world to help mitigate the spread of the coronavirus include restrictions on travel, and quarantines in certain areas, and forced closures for certain types of public places and businesses, including the University. The coronavirus and actions taken to mitigate it have had and are expected to continue to have an adverse impact on the economies and financial markets of many countries, including the geographical area in which the University operates. While it is unknown how long these conditions will last and what the complete financial effect will be to the University, the University expects significant impacts to its business operations from government restrictions and mandated operating protocols surrounding re-opening from prior quarantine and isolation orders.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

#### 2 - RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES (Continued)

During the year ended June 30, 2020, the University was a recipient of allocations from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund ("HEERF") of the CARES Act in the amount of \$2,111,416. Fifty percent of these funds were to be refunded to students and fifty percent of the funds were to cover the institutional costs associated with significant changes to the delivery of instruction due to the coronavirus.

During the year ended June 30, 2021, the University was a recipient of allocations from HEERF of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act ("CRRSAA Act") in the amount of \$5,283,382. A portion of these funds were to be refunded to students, with the remaining funds available for general institutional costs related to the coronavirus.

Subsequent to June 30, 2021, the University was a recipient of allocations from HEERF of the American Rescue Plan Act ("ARP Act") in the amount of \$6,610,518.

Additionally, it is possible that estimates made in the financial statements may be materially and adversely impacted in the near term as a result of these conditions, including the allowances for uncollectible accounts and contributions receivable.

### 3 - CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

The University's cash and temporary investments are as follows as of June 30, 2021 and 2020:

	2021	2020
Carrying amount	\$ 32,092,870	\$ 23,877,110
Bank balance	\$ 35,517,057	\$ 26,480,424
Less amounts		
Covered by depository insurance	1,528,074	1,528,304
Collateralized repurchase agreements	27,011,785	16,412,435
Remaining bank balance	\$ 6,977,198	\$ 8,539,685

The differences between the carrying amounts and the bank balances are attributable to deposits-in-transit and outstanding checks. While the remaining bank balance is uninsured and uncollateralized, the University has lowered its risk of loss by maintaining these funds in high quality financial institutions. Further, as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, the University held \$301,651 and \$893,045 respectively, in money market funds maintained by its investment custodian.

As of June 30, 2021 and 2020, the University was party to a repurchase agreement with a bank. The value of this agreement was \$27,011,785 and \$16,412,435 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

The money market mutual funds constitute a Category 2 investment and the repurchase agreements constitute a Category 3 investment, as defined under GASB accounting standards.

### 4 - CASH HELD BY STATE TREASURER

The University has recorded cash held for the benefit of the University by the State Treasurer in the amounts of \$1,595,294 and \$254,552 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively. In addition, the State Treasurer held cash for certain University trust funds in the amounts of \$4,898,568 and \$6,370,930 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively. None of these cash balances are insured or collateralized.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 5 - INVESTMENTS

The University maintains pooled investments in long-term U.S. Treasury and Agency Securities. The fair value of these investments as of June 30, 2021 and 2020 are as follows:

	Investment Maturities (in years)			
	Fair	Less		Greater
June 30, 2021	Value	Than 1	1 to 5	than 5
Investment type				
U.S. Treasuries	\$ 19,498,689	\$ -	\$ 12,948,488	\$ 6,550,201
U.S. Agencies	2,544,937	1,088,158	1,456,779	
Total	\$ 22,043,626	\$ 1,088,158	\$ 14,405,267	\$ 6,550,201
	Investment Maturities (in years)			
	Fair	Less		Greater
June 30, 2020	Value	Than 1	1 to 5	than 5
Investment type				
U.S. Treasuries	\$ 19,298,200	\$ -	\$ 12,666,268	\$ 6,631,932
U.S. Agencies	2,445,952		2,445,952	
Total	\$ 21,744,152	\$ -	\$ 15,112,220	\$ 6,631,932

### Interest Rate Risk

The University does not have a formal investment policy that limits investment maturities as a means of managing its exposure to fair value losses arising from increasing interest rates. The weighted average life of the maturities is evaluated regularly with the weighted average life of the portfolio being limited to five years or less, whenever possible. The weighted average life of the portfolio as of June 30, 2021 was 3.8 years.

### Credit Risk

The University manages its exposure to credit risk by investing solely in U.S. Treasury and U.S. Agency securities.

### Concentration of Credit Risk

The University places no limit on the amount that may be invested in one issuer, maintaining its cash in bank deposit accounts which, at times, may exceed federally insured limits.

### Custodial Credit Risk

For an investment, custodial credit risk is the risk that, in the event of the failure of the counterparty, the University will not be able to recover the value of its investments or collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party. The University controls this risk by placing its securities in a trust account with a safekeeping agent other than the counterparty.
# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

#### 5 - INVESTMENTS (Continued)

The components of investment income, including investment return on deposits held with trustee, are as follows:

	 2021	 2020
Interest	\$ 370,788	\$ 430,419
Realized gain on investments	43,867	15,653
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	 (632,078)	 1,073,202
	\$ (217,423)	\$ 1,519,274

### Component Unit

Investments of the component unit are stated at fair value and are composed of the following:

	2	021	2020		
	Carrying Value	Fair Value	Carrying Value	Fair Value	
Money market funds Mutual funds - equity based Mutual funds - bonds based	\$ 991,114 23,112,674 8,368,712	\$ 991,114 31,504,184 8,650,882	\$ 1,509,027 17,406,505 7,937,246	\$ 1,509,027 20,383,522 8,300,120	
Limited partnership interest	250,000	491,933	250,000	357,440	
	\$ 32,722,500	\$ 41,638,113	\$ 27,102,778	\$ 30,550,109	

#### 6 - FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used as of June 30, 2021 and 2020.

*U.S. treasury securities and U.S. agency securities:* Valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the individual securities are traded. Fair value hierarchy for each is based on the level of active trading within the respective markets for each asset or liability.

The preceding methods described may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, although the University believes its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

The University's financial assets that are measured at fair value on a recurring basis were recorded using the fair value hierarchy as of June 30, 2021 as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Investments				
U.S. Treasuries	\$ 19,498,689	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,498,689
U.S. Agencies	2,544,937			2,544,937
Total investments, at fair value	\$ 22,043,626	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	\$ 22,043,626

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 6 - FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

The University's financial assets that are measured at fair value on a recurring basis were recorded using the fair value hierarchy as of June 30, 2020 as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Investments				
U.S. Treasuries	\$ 19,298,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,298,200
U.S. Agencies	2,445,952			2,445,952
Total investments, at fair value	\$ 21,744,152	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	\$ 21,744,152

The University does not measure any liabilities at fair value on a recurring or non-recurring basis on the statement of net position.

## 7 - ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Accounts receivable consist of the following as of June 30, 2021 and 2020:

	2021	2020
Students Other	\$ 764,715 2,644,493	\$ 803,147 893,776
Less: Allowance for uncollectible accounts	3,409,208 285,792	1,696,923 299,628
	\$ 3,123,416	<u>\$ 1,397,295</u>

## 8 - CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE - COMPONENT UNIT

Contributions receivable are unconditional promises to give that are recognized as contributions when the promise is received. Contributions receivable that are expected to be collected in less than one year are reported at net realizable value. Contributions receivable that are expected to be collected in more than one year are recorded at fair value at the date of promise. That fair value is computed using a present value technique applied to anticipated cash flows. Amortization of the resulting discount is recognized as additional contribution revenue.

Payments of contributions receivable as of June 30, 2021 are expected to be received as follows:

2022	\$ 461,587
2023	203,053
2024	145,212
2025	122,144
2026	110,392
Thereafter	 71,947
	1,114,335
Less: Discount on contributions receivable	11,886
Less: Allowance for uncollectible contributions receivable	 8,000
	\$ 1,094,449

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 9 - DEPOSITS HELD WITH TRUSTEE

The University's bond payable indentures require the maintenance of restricted construction and debt service reserve funds on deposit with a bank trustee. Deposits with bank trustee are held in various trust accounts and are available for future debt service of \$249,214 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020.

## 10 - LOANS RECEIVABLE

The University participates in the Federal Perkins Loan Program. This program is funded through a combination of Federal and institutional resources. The portion of this program that has been funded with Federal funds is ultimately refundable to the U.S. government upon the termination of the University's participation in the program. The loans receivable balance of \$341,941 and \$406,623 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively, represents student loans issued through the Perkins Loans program and consists of the following as of June 30, 2021 and 2020:

	 2021	 2020
Enrolled students	\$ 24,924	\$ 41,941
Repayment on schedule	29,332	67,982
In default	 287,685	 296,700
	\$ 341,941	\$ 406,623

### 11 - CAPITAL ASSETS

Capital assets activity for the year ended June 30, 2021 was as follows:

	Beginning Balance Increases		Decreases	Ending Balance	
Capital assets, not being depreciated					
Land	\$ 188,650	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 188,650	
Construction in process	29,500	554,620	29,500	554,620	
Capital assets, being depreciated					
Land improvements	9,965,277	-	-	9,965,277	
Buildings, including improvements	155,173,706	-	-	155,173,706	
Furnishings and equipment	15,217,461	508,383		15,725,844	
Total capital assets	180,574,594	1,063,003	29,500	181,608,097	
Less accumulated depreciation for					
Land improvements	4,756,857	591,912	-	5,348,769	
Buildings, including improvements	65,324,757	4,225,203	-	69,549,960	
Furnishings and equipment	12,795,455	783,247		13,578,702	
Total accumulated depreciation	82,877,069	5,600,362		88,477,431	
Capital assets, net	\$ 97,697,525	\$ (4,537,359)	\$ 29,500	\$ 93,130,666	

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# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

## 11 - CAPITAL ASSETS (Continued)

Capital assets activity for the year ended June 30, 2020 was as follows:

	Beginning Balance Increases		Decreases	Ending Balance
Capital assets, not being depreciated				
Land	\$ 188,650	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 188,650
Construction in process	2,940,085	29,500	2,940,085	29,500
Capital assets, being depreciated				
Land improvements	5,273,909	4,691,368	-	9,965,277
Buildings, including improvements	155,173,706	-	-	155,173,706
Furnishings and equipment	14,524,250	693,211		15,217,461
Total capital assets	178,100,600	5,414,079	2,940,085	180,574,594
Less accumulated depreciation for				
Land improvements	4,319,689	437,168	-	4,756,857
Buildings, including improvements	61,023,843	4,300,914	-	65,324,757
Furnishings and equipment	12,060,847	734,608		12,795,455
Total accumulated depreciation	77,404,379	5,472,690		82,877,069
Capital assets, net	\$100,696,221	\$ (58,611)	\$ 2,940,085	\$ 97,697,525

## 12 - MASSACHUSETTS STATE COLLEGE BUILDING AUTHORITY

The land on which the dormitory residence halls are located is leased by the Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA) from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at a yearly cost of one dollar. The residence halls have various lease terms which extend to the year and 2022 and 2026. The leases can be extended at the end of these terms for additional ten year periods.

The University, under the terms of a management and service agreement between MSCBA and the Commonwealth, is charged a semi-annual revenue assessment which is based on the certified occupancy report, the current rent schedule, and the design capacity for each of the residence halls. This revenue assessment is used by MSCBA to pay principal and interest due on its long-term debt obligations. These obligations are guaranteed by the Commonwealth. The assessments charged for the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020, in the amounts of \$3,827,499 and \$9,051,234, respectively, and have been recorded as auxiliary enterprise expenditures.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts also executed a lease with MSCBA for land on which a parking garage is located. MSCBA owns the parking garage and has entered into a long-term lease agreement with the University to occupy and operate the facility.

All facilities and obligations of the MSCBA are included in the financial statements of MSCBA. The specific asset cost or liability attributable to the University cannot be reasonably determined. The leases, therefore, have been accounted for under the operating method for financial statement purposes.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 13 - DEFERRED SERVICE CONCESSION ARRANGEMENTS

Deferred service concession arrangements as of June 30, 2021 and 2020 in the amounts of \$4,034,381 and \$4,458,311, respectively, consist of the unamortized balances of multiple food service agreements with an outside party. This outside party contributed multiple payments since 2004 totaling \$8,788,017, to upgrade the food service facilities. The contributions are being amortized over various periods ranging from 12 to 18 years. Amortization of these contributions was \$423,930 and \$420,812 for the years ended June 2021 and 2020, respectively.

## 14 - LONG-TERM LIABILITIES

Long-term liabilities of the university as of June 30, 2021 were as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Current Portion
Bonds payable	\$ 21,956,080	\$ 12,926,359	\$ 12,957,938	\$ 21,924,501	\$ 547,983
Capital lease obligations	734,405	508,383	594,240	648,548	389,944
Accrued workers' compensation	978,470	543,984	-	1,522,454	153,665
Accrued compensated absences	5,620,335	213,128	-	5,833,463	3,494,337
Accrued pension and OPEB obligations	55,778,445	-	3,105,458	52,672,987	-
Refundable grant	538,452		115,005	423,447	
	\$ 85,606,187	\$ 14,191,854	\$ 16,772,641	\$ 83,025,400	\$ 4,585,929

Long-term liabilities of the university as of June 30, 2020 were as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Current Portion
Bonds payable	\$ 22,697,441	\$ -	\$ 741,361	\$ 21,956,080	\$ 730,667
Capital lease obligations	572,209	612,053	449,857	734,405	412,712
Accrued workers' compensation	944,929	33,541	-	978,470	216,588
Accrued compensated absences	5,720,920	-	100,585	5,620,335	3,344,838
Accrued pension and OPEB obligations	65,563,443	-	9,784,998	55,778,445	-
Refundable grant	780,610		242,158	538,452	
	\$ 96,279,552	\$ 645,594	\$ 11,318,959	\$ 85,606,187	\$ 4,704,805

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 15 - BONDS PAYABLE

- (A) On November 9, 2007, the University signed a financing agreement to receive \$310,000 from a Massachusetts Development Financing Agency (MDFA) clean renewable energy bond. These funds have been received and were used for the installation of a 100 KW photovoltaic panel, mounting system and inverter on the roof of the Learning Resource Center. The bond is non-interest bearing with annual principal installments of \$20,667 due through 2022.
- (B) On December 4, 2002, the University signed a financing agreement used for the renovation of the Sullivan and Administration Buildings, which was completed in 2009. A call provision became available on this bond issue and the issue was refunded on December 18, 2012, with \$10,585,000 of Massachusetts Development Financing Agency (MDFA) Revenue Bonds. The obligation is being repaid solely by the University through revenues. Interest on the MDFA bonds is due in semi-annual installments at varying rates ranging from 2.00% to 4.00%. Annual principal installments ranging from \$255,000 to \$875,000 are due through November 2032. The refunding of the MHEFA bonds resulted in a loss, which is included in deferred outflows of resources and will be amortized over the term of the bond. Amortization of this loss for the year ended June 30, 2021, was \$5,847. The remaining loss to be amortized as June 30, 2021 is \$70,168.
- (C) On December 20, 2012, the University signed a financing agreement to receive \$15,000,000 from a Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA) revenue bond. These funds were used for the construction of a new Wellness Center. A call provision became available on this bond issue and the issue was refunded on July 1, 2020 with the MSCBA 2020 Series revenue bond.
- (D) On July 1, 2020, the University signed a financing agreement to receive \$12,638,368 from the MSCBA 2020 Series revenue bond in a refunding of the 2012 Series revenue bond. Interest on the bonds is due in semi-annual installments at varying rates ranging from 1.044% to 3.072%. Annual principal installments of \$212,316 to \$777,000 are due through May 2042. The refunding of the MSCBA 2012 Series bonds resulted in a loss, which is included in deferred outflows of resources and will be amortized over the term of the bond. Amortization of this loss for the year ended June 30, 2021, was \$19,520. The remaining loss to be amortized as June 30, 2021 is \$331,839.

The composition of the University's Bonds payable for the year ended June 30, 2021 is as follows:

	2021	2020
<ul> <li>(A) Bond payable, MDFA 2007 Series</li> <li>(B) Bond payable, MDFA 2012 Series</li> <li>(C) Bond payable, MSCBA 2012 Series</li> <li>(D) Bond payable, MSCBA 2020 Gain</li> </ul>	\$ 20,667 8,557,474	\$ 41,334 8,878,097 13,036,649
(D) Bond payable, MSCBA 2020 Series	13,346,360	
Less: Current maturities	21,924,501 547,983	21,956,080 730,667
	\$ 21,376,518	\$ 21,225,413

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

# 15 - BONDS PAYABLE (Continued)

Debt service requirements as of June 30, 2021 are as follows:

Year Ended June 30	Principal	Interest
2022	\$ 547,983	\$ 631,793
2023	770,000	610,500
2024	1,120,000	577,350
2025	1,165,000	536,500
2026	1,200,000	501,762
2027 - 2031	6,525,000	1,973,742
2032 - 2036	5,150,000	1,033,355
2037 - 2041	3,786,052	451,793
2042 - 2046	765,000	22,950
	21,029,035	6,339,745
Unamortized premium	895,467	
	\$ 21,924,502	\$ 6,339,745

## 16 - <u>LEASE COMMITMENTS</u>

The University leases property, a motor vehicle, modular building, and furniture and equipment under various lease agreements. These leases are classified as either capital or operating in the financial statements. Operating lease expenditures were \$3,210 and \$6,904 for 2021 and 2020, respectively.

Property and equipment includes the following acquired under capital lease agreements:

	2021	2020
Furnishings and equipment	\$ 1,636,111	\$ 1,464,836
Less: Accumulated depreciation	538,431	359,061
	\$ 1,097,680	\$ 1,105,775

Future minimum lease payments under leases, together with the present value of future minimum lease payments as of June 30, 2021 are as follows:

Year Ending	Capital Lease	0	Derating Lease
2022	\$ 439,772	\$	15,386
2023	168,625		-
2024	27,051		-
2025	22,515		-
2026	9,061		-
Total minimum lease payments	667,024	\$	15,386
Less: Amount representing interest	18,476		
Present value of minimum lease payments	\$ 648,548		

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 17 - NET POSITION

Unrestricted net position from operations is not subject to externally imposed stipulations; however, it may be subject to internal restrictions. For example, unrestricted net position from operations may be designated for specific purposes by action of management or the Board of Trustees or may otherwise be limited by contractual agreements with outside parties. As of June 30, 2021 and 2020, unrestricted net position from operations of \$28,070,033 and \$25,628,678, respectively, has been internally designated by the University for future capital investments. The remaining undesignated unrestricted net position from operations was \$19,796,375 and \$13,569,170 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

The University is the recipient of funds that are subject to various external constraints upon their use, either as to purpose or time. These funds are comprised of the following as of June 30:

		2021	 2020
Restricted - expendable			
Capital projects	\$	144,330	\$ 139,434
Scholarships and other grants		902,011	 653,958
	<u>\$</u>	1,046,341	\$ 793,392

The component unit's restricted - expendable net position consists of funds whose income is mainly used for scholarships and grants. The component units' restricted-nonexpendable net position consists of investments to be held in perpetuity and the income is restricted for the purpose of providing scholarships and other activities that benefit the University.

### 18 - FACULTY COMPENSATION

Contracts for full-time faculty begin on September 1, and end May 31 of any given academic year. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the University pay all faculty members over the twelve-month period of September 1 through August 31. Consequently, on June 30 of each year there is a balance due on each faculty contract which is to be paid from the subsequent year's appropriation. The balance due as of June 30, 2021 and 2020 of \$2,296,128 and \$2,574,373 respectively, has been included in accrued payroll and fringe benefits in the statement of net position.

### 19 - ACCRUED WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Independent actuarial reviews of the outstanding loss reserve requirements for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' self-insured Workers' Compensation program were conducted as of June 30, 2021 and 2020. Based upon the Commonwealth's analyses, accrued workers' compensation in the amount of \$1,522,454 and \$978,470 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively have been recorded in the unrestricted current fund. Workers' compensation expense charged to operations was \$1,121,301 and \$386,920 in 2021 and 2020, respectively. The actual workers' compensation paid by the University was \$577,317 and \$353,379 in 2021 and 2020, respectively.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

#### 20 - ACCRUED COMPENSATED ABSENCES

Included in accrued compensated absences are \$3,163,110 for accrued vacation time and \$2,670,353 for accrued sick time as of June 30, 2021 and \$2,795,616 for accrued vacation time and \$2,824,719 for accrued sick time as of June 30, 2020. Of these balances, \$560,452 and \$454,949 for June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively, represent obligations due to employees funded through sources other than State appropriations, and \$5,273,011 and \$5,165,386 as of June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively, represent obligations to employees funded through State appropriations. The University anticipates that the obligations due to employees funded by State appropriations will be discharged through future State appropriations.

#### 21 - FRINGE BENEFIT CHARGES

Certain fringe benefit costs associated with University staff, compensated through State appropriations, are paid out of non-University State budget line items. The University is required to reimburse the State for such costs for employees funded from other than State appropriations, based on a percentage of payroll. For 2021, the University reimbursed the State a total of \$4,694,473 (\$2,029,890 for pensions and \$2,664,583 for health care premiums). For 2020, the University reimbursed the State a total of \$5,050,500 (\$2,179,291 for pensions and \$2,871,209 for health care premiums).

## 22 - <u>RETIREMENT PLAN</u>

The University reports a liability, deferred outflows and inflows of resources, and expense as a result of its statutory requirement to contribute to the Massachusetts State Employee's Retirement System (MSERS). The following information is about MERS:

#### Plan Description

The Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System (MSERS) is a public employee retirement system (PERS), covering substantially all of the University's non-student full-time employees. It is a cost-sharing multipleemployer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Massachusetts State Retirement Board. Under the costsharing plan, pension obligations for employees of all employers are pooled and plan assets are available to pay the benefits through the plan, regardless of the status of the employers' payment of its pension obligations to the plan.

#### Benefit Provisions

MSERS provides retirement, disability, survivor and death benefits to plan members and their beneficiaries. Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) establishes uniform benefit and contribution requirements for all contributory PERS. These requirements provide for superannuation retirement allowance benefits up to a maximum of 80% of a member's highest three-year average annual rate of regular compensation. For employees hired after April 1, 2012, retirement allowances are calculated on the basis of the last five years or any five consecutive years, whichever is greater in terms of compensation. Benefit payments are based upon a member's age, length of creditable service, group creditable service and group classification. The authority for establishing and amending these provisions rests with the Massachusetts Legislature, Chapter 32A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Members become vested after ten years of creditable service. A superannuation retirement allowance may be received upon the completion of twenty years of credible service or upon reaching the age of 55 with ten years of service. Normal retirement for most employees occurs at age 65; for certain hazardous duty and public safety positions, normal retirement is at age 55. Most employees who joined the system after April 1, 2012 are not eligible for retirement prior to age 60.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

## 22 - <u>RETIREMENT PLAN</u> (Continued)

#### **Contributions**

The MSERS's funding policies have been established by Chapter 32 of the MGL. The Legislature has the authority to amend these policies. The annuity portion of the MSERS retirement allowance is funded by employees, who contribute a percentage of their regular compensation. Costs of administering the plan are funded out of plan assets.

Member contributions for MSERS vary depending on the most recent date of membership:

Hire Date	Percentage of Compensation
Prior to 1975	5% of regular compensation
1975 to 1983	7% of regular compensation
1984 to June 30, 1996	8% of regular compensation
July 1, 1996 to present	9% of regular compensation
1979 to present	An additional 2% of regular compensation in excess of \$30,000

In addition, members of Group 1 who join the system after April 2, 2021 will have their withholding rate reduced to 6% after achieving 30 years of creditable service.

The University is not required to contribute from its appropriation allocation or other University funds to MSERS for employees compensated from State appropriations. For University employees covered by MSERS but compensated from a trust fund or other source, the University is required to contribute an amount determined as a percentage of compensation in accordance with a fringe benefit rate determined by the State. The rate was 14.66% and 14.08% of annual covered payroll for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020, respectively. The University contributed \$1,290,288 and \$1,450,748 for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2020, equal to 100% of the required contributions for the year.

### Pension Liabilities, Pension Expense, and Deferred Outflows and Inflows of Resources

As of June 30, 2021 and 2020, the University reported a net pension liability of \$23,033,837 and \$19,332,813, respectively, for its proportionate share of the net pension liability related to its participation in MSERS. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2020, the measurement date, as determined by an actuarial valuation. The University's proportion of the net pension liability was based on its share of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' collective pension amounts allocated on the basis of actual fringe benefit charges assessed the University for the fiscal years 2020 and 2019. The Commonwealth's proportionate share was based on actual employer contributions to the MSERS for fiscal years 2020 and 2019 relative to total contributions of all participating employers for each respective fiscal year. As of June 30, 2020 and 2019, the University's proportion was 0.15% and 0.14% respectively. For the years end June 30, 2021 and 2020, the University recognized pension expense of \$2,975,864 and \$2,972,160, respectively.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

#### 22 - <u>RETIREMENT PLAN</u> (Continued)

#### Pension Liabilities, Pension Expense, and Deferred Outflows and Inflows of Resources (continued)

As of June 30, 2021 and 2020, the University reported in the statement of net position deferred outflows and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

	2021	2020
Deferred outflows of resources:		
Change in plan actuarial assumptions	\$ 1,305,985	\$ 1,433,032
Differences between expected and actual experience	732,903	642,047
Differences between projected and actual earnings on plan investments	1,266,180	-
Changes in proportion from Commonwealth due to internal allocation	1,177,694	1,645,536
Contributions subsequent to the measurement date	1,290,289	1,450,748
	\$ 5,773,051	\$ 5,171,363
Deferred inflows of resources:		
Differences between expected and actual experience	\$ 149,046	\$ 251,433
Differences between projected and actual earnings on plan investments	_	288,375
Changes in proportion from Commonwealth due to internal allocation	2,025,219	3,066,220
	\$ 2,174,265	\$ 3,606,028

Contributions of \$1,290,289 and \$1,450,748, respectively, are reported as deferred outflows of resources related to pensions resulting from the University contributions in fiscal years 2021 and 2020 subsequent to the measurement date, which will be recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability for the years ended June 30, 2022 and 2021. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized as a reduction in pension expense as follows:

2022	\$ 528,168
2023	744,484
2024	392,816
2025	608,037
2026	34,992
	<u>\$</u> 2,308,497

## Actuarial Assumptions

The total pension liability at the measurement dates was determined using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement:

	2020	2019
Cost of living increases (on the first \$13,000 per year for 2020 and 2019)	3.00%	3.00%
Salary increases	4.00 to 9.00%	4.00 to 9.00%
Investment rate of return	7.15%	7.25%
Interest rate credit to the annuity savings fund	3.50%	3.50%

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

#### 22 - <u>RETIREMENT PLAN</u> (Continued)

Pre-retirement mortality rates reflect the RP-2014 Blue Collar Employees Table, projected generationally with Scale MP-2016 and set forward one year for females. Post-retirement mortality rates reflect the RP-2014 Blue Collar Healthy Annuitant Table projected generationally with Scale MP-2016 and set forward one year for females. Mortality rates for disability reflect the RP-2014 Blue Collar Healthy Annuitant Table projected generationally with Scale MP-2016 and set forward one year.

Experience studies were performed as of February 27, 2014, encompassing the period January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2011, updated to reflect actual experience from 2012 through 2016 for post-retirement mortality.

Investment assets of MSERS are with the Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT) Fund. The long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future rates of return are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage. Best estimates of geometric rates of return for each major asset class included in the PRIT Fund's target assets allocation as of June 30, 2020 and 2019 are summarized in the following table:

		Long-term expected real Rate of return	
Asset Class	Target allocation	2020	2019
Global equity	39%	4.80%	4.90%
Core fixed income	15%	0.70%	1.30%
Private equity	13%	8.20%	8.20%
Real estate	10%	3.50%	3.60%
Value added fixed income	8%	4.20%	4.70%
Portfolio completion strategies	11%	3.20%	3.90%
Timber/natural resources	4%	4.10%	4.10%
Total	100%		

#### Discount Rate

The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.15% and 7.25% for 2020 and 2019, respectively. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that plan member contributions will be made at the current contribution rates and the Commonwealth's contributions will be made at rates equal to the difference between actuarially determined contribution rates and the member rates. Based on those assumptions, the net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 22 - RETIREMENT PLAN (Continued)

#### Sensitivity Analysis

The following illustrates the sensitivity of the net pension liability to changes in the discount rate as of June 30, 2020 and 2019. In particular, the table presents the MSERS collective net pension liability assuming it was calculated using a single discount rate that is one-percentage-point lower or one percentage-point higher than the current discount rate:

	2020	2019
1% decrease to 6.15% for 2020 and 6.25% for 2019	\$ 30,348,505	\$ 25,732,601
Current discount rate 7.15% for 2020 and 7.25% for 2019	23,033,837	19,332,813
1% increase to 8.15% for 2020 and 8.25% for 2019	17,021,751	13,864,501

#### 23 - POSTEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS

The University reports a liability, deferred outflows and inflows of resources, and expense as a result of its statutory requirement to contribute to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions (OPEB) Plan. The following information is about the OPEB Plan:

### Plan Description

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions (OPEB) Plan covers substantially all of the University's non-student full-time employees. It's a single-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Under the cost-sharing plan, certain benefits for retired employees of all employers are pooled and plan assets are available to pay the benefits through the plan, regardless of the status of the employers' payment of its obligations to the plan. The plan provides health care and life insurance to plan members and beneficiaries.

### **Benefit Provisions**

Chapter 32A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth (MGL), requires the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to provide certain health care and life insurance benefits for retired employees. Substantially all of the Commonwealth's employees may become eligible for these benefits if they reach retirement age while working for the Commonwealth. Eligible retirees are required to contribute a specified percentage of the health care/benefit costs, which are compatible to contributions required from employees.

#### **Contributions**

Employer and employee contribution rates are set in MGL. The Commonwealth recognizes its share of the costs on an actuarial basis. As of June 30, 2020 and 2019 and as of the valuation date (January 1, 2020), Commonwealth participants contributed 10% to 20% of premium costs, depending on the date of hire and whether the participant is active, retiree, or survivor status.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 23 - POSTEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS (Continued)

## OPEB Liabilities, OPEB Expense, and Deferred Outflows and Inflows of Resources

As of June 30, 2021 and 2020, the University reported a net OPEB liability of \$29,639,150 and \$36,445,632, respectively, for its proportionate share of the net OPEB liability related to its participation in the OPEB Plan. The net OPEB liability was measured as of June 30, 2020, the measurement date, as determined by an actuarial valuation. The University's proportion of the net OPEB liability was based on its share of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' collective OPEB amounts allocated on the basis of actual fringe benefit charges assessed the University for the fiscal years 2020 and 2019. The Commonwealth's proportionate share was based on actual employer contributions to the OPEB Plan for fiscal year 2020 relative to total contributions of all participating employers for each respective fiscal year. As of June 30, 2020 and 2019, the University's proportion was 0.15% and 0.21% respectively. For the years end June 30, 2020 and 2019, the University recognized OPEB expense of \$303,690 and \$2,577,708, respectively.

As of June 30, 2021 and 2020, the University reported in the statement of net position deferred outflows and deferred inflows of resources related to postemployment benefits other than pensions from the following sources:

	2021	2020
Deferred outflows of resources:		
Changes in proportion from Commonwealth due to internal allocation	\$ 5,390,748	\$ 7,639,954
Changes in plan actuarial assumption	2,440,834	28,043
Differences between expected and actual experience	817,983	1,461,640
Differences between projected and actual earnings on plan investments	85,698	-
Contributions subsequent to the measurement date	677,546	751,524
	\$ 9,412,809	\$ 9,881,161
Deferred inflows of resources:		
Changes in proportion from Commonwealth due to internal allocation	\$ 14,987,430	\$ 7,109,964
Change in plan actuarial assumptions	2,864,522	5,480,487
Differences between expected and actual experience	731,595	16,762
Differences between projected and actual earnings on plan investments		46,671
	\$ 18,583,547	\$ 12,653,884

Contributions of \$677,546 and \$751,524, respectively are reported as deferred outflows of resources related to OPEB resulting from the University contributions in fiscal years 2021 and 2020 subsequent to the measurement date, which will be recognized as a reduction of the net OPEB liability for the years ended June 30, 2022 and 2021. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized as a reduction in OPEB expense as follows:

2022	\$ (1,927,459)
2023	(1,903,401)
2024	(2,152,986)
2025	(2,799,411)
2026	(1,065,027)
	\$ (9,848,284)

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 23 - POSTEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS (Continued)

#### Actuarial Assumptions

The total OPEB liability for the June 30, 2020 measurement date was determined by an actuarial valuation as of January 1, 2020 rolled forward to June 30, 2020. The total OPEB liability for the June 30, 2019 measurement date was determined by an actuarial valuation as of January 1, 2019 rolled forward to June 30, 2019. This valuation used the following assumptions:

- 1. For 2020, the annual healthcare cost trend rates were developed based on the Getzen trend rate model, version202\_b. The healthcare cost trend rate changed from 7.5% in 2019 to 4.9% for Medicare benefits and 6.7% for non-Medicare benefits, then decreasing 0.1% each year to a blended rate of 5.18% in 2030 and additional decrease in 2060, 2070, and 2075. The Getzen trend rate model also assumes inflation of 2.5%, real GDP growth of 1.5% and excess medical growth of 1.1%.
- For 2019, the following annual healthcare cost trend rates: (1) 7.5%, decreasing by 0.5% each year to 5.5% in 2023 and 2024 and then decreasing 0.5% each year to an ultimate rate of 4.5% in 2026 for medical and (2) 4.5% for administration costs. Healthcare costs are offset by reimbursements for Employer Group Waiver Plans (EGWP), which are assumed to increase 5.0% per year until 2025, then decrease to 4.5% in 2026.
- 3. For 2020 and 2019, the mortality rate was in accordance with RP 2014 Blue Collar Mortality Table projected with scale MP-2016 from the central year, with females set forward one year.
- 4. Participation rates, for 2020:
  - a. 100% of employees currently electing health care coverage are assumed to elect coverage at retirement.
  - b. 35% of employees currently opting out of active employee health coverage are assumed to elect to enroll in retiree coverage.
  - c. 85% of current and future vested terminated participants will elect health care benefits at age 55, or if later, the participant's current age.
  - d. Retirees who currently elect to waive their coverage are assumed to remain uncovered in the future.
  - e. 100% of spouses are assumed to elect to continue coverage after the retiree's death.
  - f. Current non-Medicare eligible retirees and spouses (if covered) under age 65 who are in a POS/PPO plan are assumed to move to an Indemnity plan if they are Medicare eligible at 65. All others are assumed to remain in their currently elected product type.
  - g. Future retirees are assumed to enroll in the existing plans in the same proportion as the current retiree mix, as shown in the table below. These proportions are established separately for non-Medicare and Medicare coverage for each product type.

	Retireme	Retirement Age				
	Under 65	Age 65+				
Indemnity	28%	96%				
POS/PPO	60%	0%				
HMO	12%	4%				

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 23 - POSTEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS (Continued)

#### Actuarial Assumptions (continued)

- 5. Participation rates, for 2019:
  - a. 100% of all retirees who currently have health care coverage will continue with the same coverage, except that retirees under age 65 with POS/PPO coverage switch to Indemnity at age 65 and those over age 65 with POS/PPO coverage switch to HMO.
  - b. All current retirees, other than those indicated on the census data as not being eligible by Medicare, have Medicare coverage upon attainment of age 65, as do their spouses. All future retirees are assumed to have Medicare coverage upon attainment of age 65.
  - c. 85% of current and future contingent eligible participants will elect health care benefits at age 65, or current age if later.
  - d. Actives, upon retirement, take coverage, and are assumed to have the following coverage:

	Retirement Age				
	Under 65	Age 65+			
Indemnity	25%	85%			
POS/PPO	60%	0%			
НМО	15%	15%			

Investment assets of the Plan are with the Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT) Fund. The long-term expected rate of return on OPEB plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future rates of return are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage. Best estimates of geometric rates of return for each major asset class included in the PRIT Fund's target asset allocation as of June 30, 2020 and 2019 are summarized in the following table:

		Long-term expected real Rate of return			
Asset Class	Target Allocation	2020	2019		
Global equity	39%	4.80%	4.90%		
Portfolio completion strategies	11%	3.20%	3.90%		
Core fixed income	15%	0.70%	1.30%		
Private equity	13%	8.20%	8.20%		
Value added fixed income	8%	4.20%	4.70%		
Real Estate	10%	3.50%	3.60%		
Timber/natural resources	4%	4.10%	4.10%		
Total	100%				

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 23 - POSTEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS (Continued)

#### Discount Rate

The discount rates used to measure the OPEB liability as of June 30, 2020 and 2019 was 2.28% and 3.63%, respectively. This rate was based on a blend of the Bond Buyer Index rates of 2.21% and 3.51% as of the measurement date of June 30, 2020 and 2019, respectively and the expected rates of return. The plan's fiduciary net position was not projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments for current plan members. The projected "depletion date" when projected benefits are not covered by projected assets is 2028 and 2025 as of the measurement date of June 30, 2020 and 2019, respectively. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on plan investments of 7.15% and 7.25% per annum was not applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total OPEB liability as of June 30, 2020 and 2019, respectively.

## Sensitivity Analysis

The following presents the net OPEB liability of the University calculated the discount rate we as what the net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one-percentage-point lower or one percentage-point higher than the current discount rate:

	2020	2019
1% decrease to 1.28% for 2020 and 2.63% for 2019	\$ 35,617,977	\$ 43,504,306
Current discount rate 2.28% for 2020 and 3.63% for 2019	29,639,150	36,445,632
1% increase to 3.28% for 2020 and 4.63% for 2019	24,915,150	31,761,203

The following presents the net OPEB liability of the University, as well as what the net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a healthcare cost trend rate that is one-percentage-point lower or one-percentage-point higher than the current healthcare cost trend rate:

	2020	2019
1% decrease for Medical and EGWP and Administrative costs	\$ 24,073,853	\$ 30,035,805
Current discount as described on page 40 for 2020, 7.5% for Medical and 5% for EGWP and administrative costs for 2019	29,639,150	36,445,632
1% increase for Medical and EGWP and Administrative costs	37,033,135	44,902,713

## 24 - STATE CONTROLLED ACCOUNTS

Certain significant costs and benefits associated with the operations of the University are appropriated, expended, controlled and reported by the State through non-University line items in the State's budget. Under accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America such transactions must be recorded in the financial statements of the University. These transactions include payments by the State for the employer's share of funding the Massachusetts State Employee's Retirement System and for the employer's share of health care premiums. The estimated amounts of funding attributable for the State retirement system contribution and the employer's share of health care premiums for 2021 were \$5,003,321 and \$6,567,727, respectively. The estimated amounts of funding attributable for the State retirement system of health care premiums for 2020 were \$4,777,043 and \$6,293,741, respectively.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

## 25 - MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING SYSTEM - (UNAUDITED)

Section 15C of Chapter 15A of the Massachusetts General Law requires Commonwealth colleges and universities report activity of campus based funds to the Comptroller of the Commonwealth's Statewide Accounting System, Massachusetts Management Accounting and Reporting System (MMARS) using the statutory basis of accounting. The statutory basis of accounting is a modified accrual basis of accounting and differs from the information included in these financial statements. The amounts reported on MMARS meet the guidelines of the Comptroller's Guide for Higher Education Audited Financial Statements.

The University's State appropriations are composed of the following for the years ended June 30:

	2021	2020
Direct unrestricted appropriations Fringe benefits for benefitted employees on state payroll Tuition remitted	\$ 31,123,377 11,571,048 (502,229)	\$ 30,320,955 11,070,784 (304,826)
Total appropriations	\$ 42,192,196	\$ 41,086,913

A reconciliation between the University and MMARS fund 901 activity as of June 30, 2021 is as follows:

Revenue per MMARS Revenue per University	3,675,025 3,471,457
Net reporting classification and differences	\$ 203,568

#### 26 - RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The University provided, at no cost, office space and certain personnel services to the Worcester State Foundation, Inc. (the "Foundation").

Worcester State Foundation, Inc. acts as an agent for the University by periodically accepting grants on its behalf. The proceeds of the grants are recorded as an asset of the Foundation until remitted to the University.

The University and the Foundation have entered into an affiliation agreement with the Worcester Center for Crafts, Inc. to collaboratively offer venues for teaching and learning in the arts, exhibition space, safe, well-equipped studios for community-based programs as well as undergraduate visual and performing art classes. As part of the agreement, the University provides various forms of support to the Crafts Center including annual service fees for allowing the University to use the facilities. Service agreement fees were \$250,000 for the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020. In addition, the University provided support including personnel, equipment, repairs and maintenance and other operating expenses. The value of this support is estimated to be \$322,608 and \$350,084 for the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020 respectively.

The University provides certain operating costs for WSF Real Estate, Inc. in exchange of the use property adjacent to the University campus for various purposes. WSF Real Estate, Inc. is under the control and holds property on behalf of the Foundation. Operating costs provided by the University were \$115,468 and \$110,026 during the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

### 27 - AUXILIARY ENTERPRISES

The University's auxiliary enterprises consist of residence life and housing and health services. The related revenues and expenses for the years ended June 30, 2021 and 2020 are as follows:

	2021					20	20	20		
	Residence Life and Housing		Health Services		Residence Life and Housing			Health Services		
Total revenue Total expenses	\$	6,811,852 7,438,979	\$	412,123 500,373	\$	10,526,553 12,261,180	\$	439,597 512,646		
Decrease in net position before transfers	\$	(627,127)	\$	(88,250)	\$	(1,734,627)	\$	(73,049)		

## 28 - COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

#### **Litigation**

Pending or threatened lawsuits against governmental agencies arise in the ordinary course of operations. In the opinion of the University's administration, the ultimate resolution of any pending legal actions involving the University will not have a material adverse effect on the financial position of the University.

## Grants and entitlements

The University receives financial assistance from federal and state agencies in the form of grants and entitlements. Expenditures of funds under these programs require compliance with the grant agreements and are subject to audit by the granting agency. Any disallowed expenditures resulting from such audits become a liability of the University. In the opinion of the University's administration, the outcome of any findings with respect to disallowed expenditures effect on the financial position of the University.

## 29 - <u>RECLASSIFICATIONS</u>

Certain reclassifications have been made to the 2020 financial statements, with no effect on change in net position, to conform to the 2021 presentation.

# SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

# SCHEDULE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET PENSION LIABILITY Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement Plan

# YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 (With Comparative Totals for 2014 through 2020)

		2021		2020		2019		2018
University's proportion of the net pension liability		0.15%		0.14%		0.17%		0.15%
University's proportion of the net pension liability	\$	23,033,837	\$	19,332,813	\$	20,564,468	\$	18,014,320
University's covered-employee payroll	\$	10,458,847	\$	12,561,991	\$	12,922,066	\$	11,336,488
University's proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of its covered employee payroll		220.23%		153.90%		159.14%		158.91%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability		62.48%		66.28%		67.91%		67.21%
		2017		2016		2015		2014
University's proportion of the net pension liability		0.15%		0.18%		0 1 40/		0.14%
		0.1070		0.10/0		0.14%		0.1470
University's proportion of the net pension liability	\$	18,674,184	\$	18,901,770	\$	9,357,928	\$	11,308,376
University's proportion of the net pension liability University's covered-employee payroll	\$ \$		\$ \$		\$ \$		\$ \$	
		18,674,184		18,901,770		9,357,928		11,308,376

See accompanying independent auditor's report.

Schedule 1

# SCHEDULE OF UNIVERSITY PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement Plan

# YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 (With Comparative Totals for 2014 through 2020)

	 2021	 2020	2019	 2018
Statutorily required contribution*	\$ 1,450,748	\$ 1,315,547	\$ 1,421,424	\$ 1,098,173
Contributions in relation to the statutorily required contribution*	 1,450,748	 1,315,547	 1,421,424	 1,098,173
Annual contribution deficiency (excess)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
University's covered-employee payroll	\$ 10,458,847	\$ 12,561,991	\$ 12,922,066	\$ 11,336,488
Contributions as a percentage of covered-employee payroll	13.87%	10.47%	11.00%	9.69%
*Annual contribution are reported one year in arrears as required by GASB 68				
	 2017	 2016	 2015	 2014
Statutorily required contribution*	\$ 972,477	\$ 1,039,592	\$ 741,444	\$ 700,426
Contributions in relation to the statutorily required contribution*	 972,477	 1,039,592	741,444	 700,426
Annual contribution deficiency (excess)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
University's covered-employee payroll	\$ 11,331,835	\$ 11,013,323	\$ 10,245,240	\$ 11,163,731
Contributions as a percentage of covered-employee payroll	8.58%	9.44%	7.24%	6.27%

\*Annual contribution are reported one year in arrears as required by GASB 68

Schedule 2

# NOTES TO SCHEDULE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET PENSION LIABILITY AND SCHEDULE OF UNIVERSITY CONTRIBUTIONS

## JUNE 30, 2015 THROUGH 2021

### 1 - CHANGES IN ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2020 measurement date included a change in the investment rate of return from 7.25% in 2019 to 7.15% for 2020.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2019 measurement date included a change in the investment rate of return from 7.35% in 2018 to 7.25% for 2019.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2018 measurement date included a change in mortality rates for disability. As of this date, mortality rates for disability reflect the RP-2014 Blue Collar Healthy Annuitant Table projected generationally with Scale MP-2016 and set forward one year.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2017 measurement date included a change cost of living increases whereby such increases are on only the first \$13,000 per year.

The Actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2017 measurement date included a change in mortality rates. As of this date, pre-retirement mortality rates reflect the RP-2014 Blue Collar Employees Table, projected generationally with Scale MP-2016 and set forward one year for females. Post-retirement mortality rates reflect the RP-2014 Blue Collar Healthy Annuitant Table projected generationally with Scale MP-2016 and set forward one year for females. Mortality rates for disability were assumed to be in accordance with the RP-2000 Healthy Annuitant Table projected BB and a base year of 2015 (gender distinct).

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2016 measurement date included a change in the range of assumed salary increases from 3.5% to 9.0% in 2015 to 4.0% to 9.0%.

Chapter 176 of the Acts of 2011 created a one-time election for eligible members of the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) to transfer to the State Employees' Retirement System (SERB) and purchase service for the period while members of the ORP. As a result, the total pension liability of SERB has increased by approximately \$400 million as of June 30, 2016.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2015 measurement date included a change in the investment rate of return and discount rate from 8.0% to 7.5%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the investment rate of return and discount rate assumed that plan member contributions will be made at the current contributions rates and the members rates.

In May 2015, an early retirement incentive (ERI) was created for certain members MSERS who upon election of the ERI retired effective June 30, 2015. As a result, the total pension liability of MSERS has increased by approximately \$230 million as of the June 30, 2015 measurement date.

The Actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2015 measurement date included a change in mortality rates. As of this date, pre-retirement mortality rates reflect the RP-2000 Employees table projected generationally with Scale BB and a base year of 2009 (gender district). Post-retirement mortality rates reflect the RP-2000 Healthy Annuitant table projected generationally with Scan BB (gender distinct). Disability rates were assumed to be in accordance with the RP- 2000 Healthy Annuitant table projected generationally with Scale BB and a base year of 2015 (gender distinct).

Mortality rates included as of the June 30, 2014 included pre-retirement mortality rates reflecting the RP-2000 Employees table projected 20 years with Scale AA (gender district). Post-retirement mortality rates reflect the RP-2000 Healthy Annuitant table projected 15 years with Scan AA (gender distinct). Disability rates were assumed to be in accordance with the RP-2000 table projected 5 years with Scale AA (gender distinct) set forward 3 years for males.

# SCHEDULE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET OPEB LIABILITY Commonwealth of Massachusetts Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions (OPEB) Plan

# YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 (With Comparative Totals for 2017 through 2020)

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
University's proportion of the net OPEB liability	0.15%	0.21%	0.25%	0.21%	0.18%
University's proportion of the net OPEB liability	\$ 29,639,150	\$ 36,445,632	\$ 44,998,975	\$ 35,037,942	\$ 33,225,679
University's covered-employee payroll	\$ 10,458,847	\$ 12,561,991	\$ 12,922,066	\$ 11,336,488	\$ 11,331,835
University's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability as a percentage of its covered employee payroll	283.39%	290.13%	348.23%	309.07%	293.21%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total OPEB liability	6.40%	6.96%	7.38%	5.39%	4.37%

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# SCHEDULE OF UNIVERSITY OPEB CONTRIBUTIONS Commonwealth of Massachusetts Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions (OPEB) Plan

# YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 (With Comparative Totals for 2017 through 2020)

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	
Statutorily required contribution*	\$ 751,524	\$ 959,290	\$ 1,076,188	\$ 882,031	\$ 745,202	
Contributions in relation to the statutorily required contribution*	751,524	959,290	1,076,188	882,031	745,202	
Annual contribution deficiency (excess)	\$	\$	\$	<u>\$</u>	\$ -	
University's covered-employee payroll	\$ 10,458,847	\$ 12,561,991	\$ 12,922,066	\$ 11,336,488	\$ 11,331,835	
Contributions as a percentage of covered-employee payroll	7.19%	7.64%	8.33%	7.78%	6.58%	

\*Annual contribution are reported one year in arrears as required by GASB 75 Schedule 4

# NOTES TO SCHEDULE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET OPEB LIABILITY AND SCHEDULE OF UNIVERSITY OPEB CONTRIBUTIONS

## JUNE 30, 2018 THROUGH 2021

### 1 - CHANGES IN ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2020 measurement date included a change in the annual healthcare cost trend rates used to measure the OPEB liability, developing such rates based on the Getzen trend rate model, version202\_b. The healthcare cost trend rate changed from 7.5% in 2019 to 4.9% for Medicare benefits and 6.7% for non-Medicare benefits, then decreasing 0.1% each year to a blended rate of 5.18% in 2030 and additional decrease in 2060, 2070, and 2075. The Getzen trend rate model also assumes inflation of 2.5%, real GDP growth of 1.5% and excess medical growth of 1.1%.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2020 measurement date included a change in participant rates whereby 35% of employees currently opting out of active employee health coverage are assumed to enroll in retiree coverage. Also, 100% of spouses are assumed to elect to continue coverage after the retiree's death.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2020 measurement date included a change in participant rates whereby in 2019 actives under age 65 taking coverage were assumed to have indemnity (25%), POS/PPO (60%) or HMO (15%) have been adjusted in 2020 to indemnity (28%), POS/PPO (60%) or HMO (12%).

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2020 measurement date included a change in participant rates whereby in 2019 actives over age 65 taking coverage were assumed to have indemnity (85%), POS/PPO (0%) or HMO (15%) have been adjusted in 2020 to indemnity (96%), POS/PPO (0%) or HMO (4%).

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2020 measurement date included a change in the long-term expected rate of return on plan investments from 7.35% to 7.15%.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2019 measurement date included a change in the annual healthcare cost trend rates used to measure the OPEB liability decreasing from 8.0% in 2018 to 7.5% in 2019, then decreasing 0.5% each year to an ultimate rate of 4.5% in 2026 for medical and (2) 4.5% for administration costs. Healthcare costs are offset by reimbursements for Employer Group Waiver Plans (EGWP), which are assumed to increase 5.0% per year until 2025, then decrease to 4.5% in 2026.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2019 measurement date included a change in participant rates whereby 80% of current and future contingent eligible participants will elect health care benefits at age 65, or current age if later was increased to 85% in 2019.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2019 measurement date included a change in participant rates whereby in 2018 actives under age 65 taking coverage were assumed to have indemnity (40%), POS/PPO (50%) or HMO (10%) have been adjusted in 2019 to indemnity (25%), POS/PPO (60%) or HMO (15%).

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2019 measurement date included a change in the long-term expected rate of return on plan investments from 7.35% to 7.25%.

# NOTES TO SCHEDULE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET OPEB LIABILITY AND SCHEDULE OF UNIVERSITY OPEB CONTRIBUTIONS

# JUNE 30, 2018 THROUGH 2021 (Continued)

#### 1 - CHANGES IN ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS (Continued)

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2019 measurement date included a change in the discount rates used to measure the OPEB liability from 3.92% to 3.63%. This rate was based on a blend of the Bond Buyer Index rates of 3.51% and 3.87% as of the measurement date of June 30, 2019 and 2018, respectively and the expected rates of return.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2018 measurement date included a change in the discount rates used to measure the OPEB liability from 3.65% to 3.92%. This rate was based on a blend of the Bond Buyer Index rates of 3.87% and 3.58% as of the measurement date of June 30, 2019 and 2018, respectively and the expected rates of return.

The actuarial assumptions used as of the June 30, 2018 measurement date included a change in the long-term expected rate of return on plan investments from 7.50% to 7.35%.

# UNIVERSITY NET POSITION ANALYSIS

# YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 (With Comparative Totals for 2017 through 2021)

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Invested in Capital Assets, Net	\$ 71,503,288	\$ 75,835,001	\$ 78,092,336	\$ 79,046,212	\$ 83,469,474
Restricted - Expendable for					
Other	902,011	653,958	467,961	90,205	178,233
Capital Projects	144,330	139,434	135,362	130,815	127,017
Total expendable	1,046,341	793,392	603,323	221,020	305,250
Unrestricted					
Unrestricted from operations	47,866,408	39,197,848	36,364,288	32,009,954	29,588,807
Accumulated Commonwealth pension obligations	(19,435,051)	(17,767,478)	(16,246,067)	(14,531,894)	(13,517,481)
Accumulated Commonwealth OPEB obligations	(38,809,888)	(39,218,355)	(37,648,861)	(34,136,535)	
Total unrestricted	(10,378,531)	(17,787,985)	(17,530,640)	(16,658,475)	16,071,326
Total Net Position	\$ 62,171,098	\$ 58,840,408	\$ 61,165,019	\$ 62,608,757	\$ 99,846,050

Schedule 5

## FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

# YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 (With Comparative Totals for 2020)

		Public	Academic	Student	Institutional	Operation and Maintenance	Totals				
	Instruction	Support	Support	Services	Support	of Plant	2021	2020			
Regular employee compensation	\$ 21,691,922	\$ 75,138	\$ 3,462,861	\$ 4,769,623	\$ 6,857,171	\$ 3,254,633	\$ 40,111,348	\$ 40,510,166			
Special employee contracted services	8,464,439	25,639	195,170	609,179	317,491	69,544	9,681,462	11,356,516			
Pension and insurance	8,493,735	1,152	1,154,741	2,194,393	2,641,227	3,047,474	17,532,722	18,736,749			
Total payroll and employee benefits	38,650,096	101,929	4,812,772	7,573,195	9,815,889	6,371,651	67,325,532	70,603,431			
Regular employee related expenses	155,342	-	25,442	39,122	85,531	50,633	356,070	602,902			
Administrative	2,000,542	54,533	683,607	546,285	1,514,384	631,864	5,431,215	5,259,032			
Facility operations support and related expenses	366,895	93,804	92,291	272,720	282,259	157,201	1,265,170	1,785,333			
Energy and space rental	84,189	-	11,324	620,092	25,268	1,853,284	2,594,157	3,239,902			
Professional services	581,721	-	79,014	444,392	625,300	821,753	2,552,180	1,594,670			
Operational services	404,972	351	63,254	1,616,364	489,768	314,373	2,889,082	1,311,671			
Equipment purchases	930,055	73,807	18,421	20,735	59,939	28,375	1,131,332	1,455,202			
Equipment lease and maintenance	109,949	26,229	35,625	75,423	92,393	312,823	652,442	998,144			
Construction and building improvements						5,028,774	5,028,774	3,405,390			
Total operating expenses	4,633,665	248,724	1,008,978	3,635,133	3,174,842	9,199,080	21,900,422	19,652,246			
Total educational and general expenses	\$ 43,283,761	\$ 350,653	\$ 5,821,750	\$ 11,208,328	\$ 12,990,731	\$ 15,570,731	\$ 89,225,954	\$ 90,255,677			

# Schedule 7

# WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY (An Agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts)

# RESIDENCE LIFE AND HOUSING

## STATEMENTS OF NET POSITION

## JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 1,879,490	\$ 2,535,923
Accounts receivable, net	97,089	109,817
Total assets	1,976,579	2,645,740
LIABILITIES		
Unearned rental income	162,007	211,057
Accrued and other liabilities	229,862	222,847
Total liabilities	391,869	433,904
NET POSITION		
Unrestricted	\$ 1,584,710	\$ 2,211,836

# RESIDENCE LIFE AND HOUSING

# STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGES IN NET POSITION

# YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020

	2021	2020
REVENUES		
Fees	\$ 6,746,243	\$ 9,897,508
Other income	65,609	629,045
Total revenues	6,811,852	10,526,553
EXPENSES		
Regular employee compensation	1,181,057	1,241,331
Special employees/contracted services	167,320	191,842
Pension and insurance	454,816	470,627
Regular employee related expenses	112	14,224
Administrative	131,657	140,580
Debt payment	3,693,913	8,043,399
Facility operations support and related expenses	121,413	211,473
Energy and space rental	643,187	588,679
Professional services	4,245	12,415
Operational services	-	4,250
Equipment purchases	-	7,402
Equipment lease and maintenance	114,614	125,171
Building improvements	540,089	684,471
Benefits programs	386,556	525,316
Total expenses	7,438,979	12,261,180
Change in net position	(627,127)	(1,734,627)
NET POSITION		
Beginning of year	2,211,836	3,946,463
End of year	\$ 1,584,709	\$ 2,211,836

# Schedule 9

# WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY (An Agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts)

# HEALTH SERVICES

# STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGES IN NET POSITION

# YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020

	2021	2020
REVENUES	<u> </u>	<b>• • • • • • • • • •</b>
Fees	\$ 412,107	\$ 438,934
Other income	16	663
Total revenues	412,123	439,597
EXPENSES		
Regular employee compensation	77,639	79,895
Special employees/contracted services	6,909	6,533
Pension and insurance	31,343	28,746
Administrative	4,789	7,495
Facility operations support and related expenses	4,727	12,528
Professional services	372,978	376,924
Operational services	1,663	-
Equipment maintenance	325	325
Benefits programs		200
Total expenses	500,373	512,646
Change in net position	\$ (88,250)	\$ (73,049)

# STATISTICAL INFORMATION (UNAUDITED)

# Worcester State University Schedule of Net Position by Component June 30, 2016 through 2021

	 2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt Restricted-expendable	\$ 87,321,688 \$ 3,365,187	83,469,474 \$ 305,250	79,046,212 \$ 221,020	78,092,336 \$ 603,323	75,835,001 \$ 793,392	71,503,288 1,046,341
Restricted-nonexpendable Unrestricted	 13,592,318	16,071,326	- (16,658,475)	(17,530,640)	(17,787,985)	- (10,378,531)
Total primary government net position	\$ 104,279,193 \$	99,846,050 \$	62,608,757 \$	61,165,019 \$	58,840,408 \$	62,171,098

# Worcester State University

**Tuition & Mandatory Fees** 

	 2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Resident Undergraduate										
Tuition	\$ 970	970	\$ 970							
Mandatory Fees	 6,683	7187	7,587	7,587	7,887	8,232	8,562	8,562	8,562	9,616
Total Annual	\$ 7,653	\$ 8,157	\$ 8,557	\$ 8,557	\$ 8,857	\$ 9,202	\$ 9,532	\$ 9,532	\$ 9,532	\$ 10,586
Non Resident Undergraduate										
Tuition	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050	\$ 7,050
Mandatory Fees	 6,683	7,187	7,587	7,587	7,887	8,232	8,562	8,562	8,562	9,616
Total Annual	\$ 13,733	\$ 14,237	\$ 14,637	\$ 14,637	\$ 14,937	\$ 15,282	\$ 15,612	\$ 15,612	\$ 15,612	\$ 16,666
Resident Graduate										
Tuition	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 169	\$ 169	\$ 169	\$ 169
Mandatory Fees	 115	115	117	117	138	148	153	153	153	153
Total per Credit Hours	\$ 265	\$ 265	\$ 267	\$ 267	\$ 288	\$ 298	\$ 322	\$ 322	\$ 322	\$ 322

Exhibit E-2

#### Worcester State University Schedule of Employment 2016-2020

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Faculty - Primary Instruction <sup>/1</sup>	419	441	466	455	415
Part-time	215	230	248	236	213
Full-time	204	211	218	219	202
Staff and Administrators	354	356	356	356	355
Part-time	12	12	12	12	9
Full-time	342	344	344	344	346
Total Faculty & Staff Employees	773	797	822	811	770
Part-time	227	242	260	248	222
Full-time	546	555	562	563	548
Non-Benefitted Employees <sup>/2</sup>	385	436	446	627	331
Contract Workers	174	214	191	230	104
Student Workers	211	222	255	397	227
Total All Employees	1,158	1,233	1,268	1,438	1,101

/1 Includes Instruction, Research & Public Service

*Notes: 1) This schedule reflects personnel as of November 1 and includes employees paid from both state appropriation and local trust funds.* 

2) Beginning 2009 all benefitted and non-benefitted personnel are reflected regardless of funding source.
## Worcester State University Admissions, Enrollment, and Degree Statistics Last Five Years

Admissions-Freshman /1	Fall Term								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020				
Applications	4,963	4,822	5,123	4,773	4,770				
Applications accepted	3,651	3,742	4,062	3,931	3,917				
Accepted as a percentage of applications	73.56%	77.60%	79.29%	82.36%	82.12%				
Students enrolled /2	1,366	1,494	1,461	1,420	1,201				
Enrolled as a percentage of accepted	37.41%	39.93%	35.97%	36.12%	30.66%				

/1 Includes all undergraduate admissions including transfer students.

/2 Includes only students who were accepted and enrolled. Enrolled alone would include students

who were not accepted but enrolled as non-degree seeking students.

	Annual								
<b>Enrollment</b> Full-time equivalent	<b>FY17</b> 5,409.8	<b>FY18</b> 5,449.0	<b>FY19</b> 5,465.3	<b>FY20</b> 5,273.7	<b>FY21</b> 4,946.0				
Unduplicated credit headcount	10,679	10,276	9,691	8,694	7,737				
Percent undergraduate /3 Percent graduate	83.16% 16.84%	85.41% 14.59%	86.54% 13.46%	85.94% 14.06%	86.62% 13.38%				

/3 Percent undergraduate/graduate based on Fall semester registration, unduplicated headcount.

Student Population Demographics /4	Fall Term							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020			
Percentage of men	37.09%	38.72%	38.06%	36.04%	35.92%			
Percentage of women	62.91%	61.28%	61.94%	63.96%	64.08%			
Percentage of African-American	7.08%	7.77%	8.09%	7.64%	7.83%			
Percentage of White	68.95%	66.86%	65.03%	64.94%	65.76%			
Percentage of Latino	9.21%	10.68%	11.60%	11.73%	12.77%			
Percentage of Other /5	6.75%	6.92%	7.32%	7.58%	7.98%			
< 20	23.74%	25.58%	27.19%	27.40%	29.05%			
20 to 30	56.35%	57.09%	57.23%	56.90%	58.91%			
31 to 40	8.54%	7.44%	6.89%	6.90%	6.27%			
41 & Over	11.36%	9.89%	8.69%	8.70%	6.06%			

/4 Percents within category are based on population of students who reported this information (gender, race/ethnicity, and age).

/5 Other includes American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Cape Verdean and Two or more races.

Degrees Granted	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Bachelor's	1,076	1,095	1,112	1,050	1,045
Master's	225	227	236	242	243

## Worcester State University Schedule of Capital Asset Information

	Academic Year			
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>		
Land (acreage)	57	57		
Buildings (square feet)				
100 Instruction/classroom	57,369	57,369		
200 Labs	55,893	55,893		
300 Administrative	117,172	117,172		
400 Study facilities	27,750	27,750		
52x Athletic	66,049	66,049		
5xx Other Special Use	6,470	6,470		
600 General Use	77,736	77,736		
700 Support facilities	173,502	173,502		
000 Unclassified	-	-		
Unassigned/unassignable	379,910	379,910		
Total Sq Ft	961,851	961,851		
Residence Halls	462,513	462,513		
Rental space	-	-		
Dormitories - # of residents	1,577	1,577		

Note: Classification of facilities space is consistent with Facilities Inventory & Classification Code guide.

Exhibit E-5

#### Worcester State University Sources and Uses of Funds

#### Exhibit E-6

					Fiscal Year
	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Source of Revenue					
Student charges (net of scholarships)	\$ 48,483,889	\$ 50,357,398	\$ 52,375,323	\$ 49,988,138	\$ 45,695,427
Grants & contracts	11,975,305	12,637,198	12,763,645	13,156,982	11,566,478
Auxiliary enterprises	440,172	796,446	854,299	629,708	68,139
Other operating revenue	1,032,424	1,265,178	1,468,693	1,129,543	910,590
Total operating revenue	61,931,790	65,056,220	67,461,960	64,904,371	58,240,634
State and Federal support	35,169,690	35,415,371	39,400,435	43,021,314	49,717,834
Other non-operating revenue	(188,427)	(39,057)	1,188,164	1,519,274	(250,810)
Total non-operating revenue	 34,981,263	35,376,314	40,588,599	44,540,588	49,467,024
Total revenue	\$ 96,913,053	\$ 100,432,534	\$ 108,050,559	\$ 109,444,959	\$ 107,707,658
Functional Expense					
Instruction	\$ 35,523,651	\$ 38,782,984	\$ 42,272,512	\$ 45,100,954	\$ 43,283,761
Academic support	7,072,401	7,376,332	6,349,745	6,152,467	5,821,750
Student services	11,153,602	11,098,900	11,685,388	11,188,502	11,208,328
Institutional support	14,397,858	13,736,523	13,662,913	12,592,784	12,990,731
Plant operations & maintenance	11,230,348	13,958,602	17,493,866	15,220,970	15,570,731
Research	-	-	-		-
Public service	1,270,991	-	-	-	350,653
Scholarships	2,763,487	2,634,749	2,089,119	4,429,390	4,801,269
Sub-total	83,412,338	87,588,090	93,553,543	94,685,067	94,027,223
Auxiliary enterprises	12,170,935	11,839,524	12,954,983	12,773,826	7,939,352
Independent operations	_	-	-	-	-
All other	 497,152	695,557	672,047	645,168	602,865
Total operating expense	\$ 96,080,425	\$ 100,123,171	\$ 107,180,573	\$ 108,104,061	\$ 102,569,440
Memo: Depreciation	\$ 5,328,423	\$ 5,655,439	\$ 5,448,274	\$ 5,472,690	\$ 5,600,362

Note: This schedule does not include component units, such as foundations. Total operating expense does not include depreciation.

OTHER REPORTS



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

To the Board of Trustees Worcester State University

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of Worcester State University, an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2021, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Worcester State University's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated October 21, 2021.

#### **Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered Worcester State University's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Worcester State University's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Worcester State University's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

#### **Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Worcester State University's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

BOLLUS LYNCH, LLP AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE BDO ALLIANCE USA 89 SHREWSBURY STREET • WORCESTER, MA 01604 P • 508.755.7107 • F • 508.755.3896 BOLLUSLYNCH.COM

# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

(Continued)

### **Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Ballus Lynch, LLP

Worcester, Massachusetts October 21, 2021

# APPENDIX V

# WORKROOM DOCUMENT LIST

Mission Statement, Vision and Core Values BOT formally adopted mission in 2014 and reaffirmed in 2020 2015-20 strategic plan School of Humanities and Social Sciences School of Science, Technology, and Health **Division of Student Affairs** Five Point Plan of Action, Towards a More Inclusive Campus Climate Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Advisory Committee Beyond 150: Lead, Succeed, Engage **Board of Trustees** BOT approved Strategic Plan trust funds University Advancement **Budget Analysis Enrollment Management** Information Technology (IT) 2015-2020 Vision 2020 **Program reviews** Program review process **Teacher Education Occupational Therapy** Nursing Enrollment Management Plan Strategic Plan Review Committee Self Study Survey data Strategic Planning Surveys Campus Climate Surveys **IPEDS** Supporting documentation for academic program reviews Financial Sustainability Task Force Marketing Positioning Study Supporting documentation for academic program reviews Documentation supporting AOPt Board of Trustees' bylaws **BOT Professional Development BOT Minutes** WSU President Evaluation Report

**Principle Administrators** Leadership Council membership Committees and Charges Membership in Standing committees Graduate Education Council Department chair responsibilities SGA minutes and Agenda 21-22 SGA minutes and agenda 20-21 SGA minutes and agenda 19-20 Undergraduate Graduate Online graduate programs Health Sciences Psychology Program-level student learning outcome Permission from the Commission MSCA CBA Governance Minutes and agendas Graduate Education Council (GEC) Division of Graduate and Continuing Education Five-year review process Program review guideline documents Sample report "Beyond 150: Lead, Succeed, Engage" Institutional correspondence with the Commission shows that Worcester State University Sagamore Road Studios May Street Building: signed a memorandum of understanding Minors typically Association of American Colleges and Universities' Liberal Education & America's Promise learning Outcomes Four credit courses in History Independent study and internship forms Course leveling Academic Honesty policy Institutional survey Program review process Market positioning study 2021 LASC faculty survey Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity Graduate Assistantships

Transfer Center Factbook 2017 Syllabi Faculty survey CTL reporting Undergraduate catalog Strategic plan New student orientation Student handbook Circles of Leadership **Request for Special Admission** Survey research Assessment of campus climate Faculty Hiring Procedures Fact Book Center for Teaching and Learning documentation Faculty/ institutional survey Call for Faculty fellow for Equity Student / institutional survey Internal Faculty and Student Grants **Research Policies** Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity Hiring process Diversity training for hiring process Racial Equity and Justice Institute (REJI) EEO data by school (Faculty Percentages) Teaching loads data List of faculty development funds and awards List of Center for Teaching and Learning programming **Government Grants** Copley Raff Employee Handbook Faculty Advising resources Library Annual Report Campus Map Chemical Hygiene Plan **CORE** America Maintainer Plan **Facilities Incentive Projects** Master Plan 2007 Master Plan Updates

Sightlines 2021 Report WSU Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan 2021 S & P Report Fringe Benefit Rates FSTF Phase One Report Fundraising Gift Acceptance Policy FY 2023 Comprehensive University Budget FY21 Budget Amendment FY22 Budget Amendment Moody's Annual Comment Audit Statements **Employee Handbook** Information Technology Policies ITS Continuity of Operations and Disaster Recovery New Classroom Technology Data Technology FY23 Replacement Cycle Documentation for ILO development ILO surveys ILO timeline 2017 NEASC Response Program Assessment Handbook Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) Class of 2018 Postgraduate Report Alumni survey Academic Program Review process Institutional assessment booklet University-wide Institutional Assessment Committee 2017-2018 market positioning study FYS curriculum FYS Data Fall 2021 2017 program review **AOP** Data Student Success AOP Data Online vs. In Person Road Map for Advancing Student Excellence Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct Collective bargaining agreements for faculty

Information about its financial status

Audited financial statement

Interviews carried out expressly in appraisal of the institution's performance relative to Standard Nine Faculty survey responses 2012 NECHE self-study



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