

### **1.1A1 Strategically recruit prospective high-potential undergraduate students**

To maintain our level of excellence in the 21st century, we must effectively respond to changing demographics and educational trends, while recruiting, enrolling and supporting a diverse and high-potential student body. To do this, we will increase investments in Enrollment Management staff, operations, and marketing dollars to assist in addressing pipeline issues and to attract the best and brightest students in Arizona and from around the world. We will employ targeted recruitment strategies that increase overall academic quality, number of applicants, and yield rates, while retaining our commitment to access.

Enrollment successes for summer/fall 2019 and 2020 were impacted by SIF investment and all goals have been achieved or are on track. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions welcomed the most diverse entering class in its history, despite the pandemic, budget cuts, and massive reductions in force (due to SIF cuts). These successes are a testament to the amazing talent and dedication of our recruitment professionals, but continued success will require increased institutional investment. Although the team was able to meet goals, the level of work required is not sustainable without investment.

### **1.1A2 Aid Without Anchor**

The Aid Without Anchor initiative strategically utilizes new staff members in the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid (OSFA) to address student financial aid questions and needs, and also educate them about financial aid and potential implications. This strategy supports student success from initial enrollment to graduation and supports the university's enrollment strategy with a particular emphasis on the first-time, full-time cohort, academic quality, and diversity metrics. The initiative also prepares University of Arizona students for long-term financial success through financial literacy outreach and education programs.

Specific positions funded through this initiative include the following:

- Native Outreach Project Coordinator
- Financial Aid Communications Coordinator
- Earn to Learn Coordinator
- Top Scholar/Scholarship Universe Coordinator
- Financial Aid Withdrawal Counselor
- Federal Compliance Coordinator

Each position is designed to provide additional administrative and/or customer service support for specific student populations and to better manage the high volume of student inquiries our office receives, particularly during peak times. We are pleased to report that we have hired and trained staff for each of the above positions, and that they are now fully functioning and actively contributing to student success.

### **1.1A4 Financial Aid for Retention**

The Financial Aid for Retention initiative strategically utilizes financial aid by taking a holistic approach to ensure student success from initial enrollment to graduation. It supports the enrollment strategy for the university with particular emphasis on the first-time, full-time cohort and the expansion of the Arizona Assurance (AZA) program. AZA is the embodiment of the University of Arizona's land grant mission, ensuring educational equity for low-income residents of Arizona.

The initiative also provides funding for financial aid staff and financial wellness counselors to educate and work with students to address their financial questions and needs and prepare them for long-term financial success. One additional component of the initiative included the creation of Balance Forgiveness and Last Mile financial awards to support re-enrollment and degree completion.

During FY21, in spite of budget cuts and pandemic challenges, we have continued to maximize available resources in these areas. Within the current constraints, we continue to see progress toward many goals.

## 1.2A1 Design a New General Education Curriculum

The overarching goal of this initiative is to create a newly envisioned general education curriculum for the University of Arizona. This new general education curriculum, as proposed, will focus on perspective-taking, interdisciplinarity, and sustained exposure across the curriculum to several critical skills and contexts: diversity and equity, quantitative reasoning, world cultures and societies, and writing. Pending approval from the Undergraduate Council, the College Academic Administrators Council, the UArizona Faculty Senate, and ABOR, the new general education curriculum will be introduced in Spring 2022 for new matriculants.

In FY21, the Provost's Office created the Office of General Education to develop a revised university-wide, coordinated general education program. This coordinated effort allows for a focus on growing the infrastructure and support needed to draft policy and implementation plans for the successful launch of the new curriculum. With a new team of faculty, staff, and administrators from across the university with expertise in teaching, learning, and assessment, progress toward goals has focused primarily on finalizing the program curriculum, drafting policy, incorporating feedback from stakeholders, working with ABOR staff and colleagues from NAU and ASU to develop coordinated assessments of general education, and engaging in the shared governance process in order to fully realize the goals set forth for the new general education program.

In addition, our team has developed resources for faculty teaching in general education, including a fully online D2L Quick Start course so that faculty can familiarize themselves with the new curriculum and be prepared to submit their course proposals pending program approval. As we work toward the planning, implementation, and curriculum goals outlined in the strategic plan, we remain committed to incorporating feedback from faculty, staff, and students while remaining focused on the guiding principles and sustainability of the new general education program.

### 1.3B2 Old Chem Building Renovation

Active and collaborative learning strategies result in increased student learning, engagement, and development of workplace-relevant skills. Although many evidence-based teaching strategies can be implemented in any physical setting, there is no doubt that the physical layout of the classroom can impact student engagement and the use of instructional strategies. To build on UArizona's commitment to provide deep and meaningful learning experiences, this initiative involves providing physical space to help achieve that goal with a high-visibility renovation of the centrally located, historic Chemistry Building, which will be repurposed into an innovative-teaching hub. In addition, this initiative provides support to continue the important work of renovating existing centrally scheduled, informal, and departmentally owned learning spaces to expand the options for using evidence-based instructional strategies.

The initiative's resulting renovation project will also incorporate much needed and overdue life-cycle renovations of the Chemistry Building, including deferred maintenance, life safety and building code upgrades, providing universal accessibility, and incorporating sustainability measures. The aging facility was constructed in 1936 (first phase) and 1948 (second phase), with another addition in 1962.

The preparations for renovating and repurposing the Chemistry Building began in Summer 2019 with the process for selecting and hiring a Design-Build team to help deliver the project. The past year has seen the Design Phase of the project continue to the point where it is now substantially complete. At this time, bidding and contracting are underway, along with continuing relocation of current building occupants and functions to elsewhere, to prepare for the start of renovations. Construction is currently scheduled to start in May 2021 with anticipated completion in Spring of 2023.

### 1.4A1/2 Analytics Engine/Retention Playbook

The Student Success initiative serves all undergraduate students with a focus on first-generation, low-income, transfer, and minoritized students. The programs and services include tutoring, learning skills development, math-readiness, writing skill coaching, mentoring, cultural learning communities, and more for navigating, excelling, and graduating college. Additionally, we identify early warning signs of academic distress, create predictive models for strategic intervention, and advance growth mindset and sense of belonging using carefully well-defined networks of campus partners.

COVID-19 and budget cuts have resulted in historically unprecedented challenges to student success; however, our retention goals remain the same as pre-COVID-19. During the pandemic, the Student Success and Retention Innovation (SSRI) team moved swiftly to a 100% virtual format to replace, assist, and augment all of the activity previously performed face-to-face. We received national recognition for excellence in this area and were awarded a [NASPA Virtual Innovation Award](#). This award, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, recognizes excellence in delivering virtual student services. Furthermore, our overall goal for our four sub-initiatives was to increase first-to-second year retention, which we successfully achieved for FY21.

### 1.4A3 One Team, One Dream

There are four elements of the **One Team** initiative all focused on improving persistence and degree completion metrics by leveraging academic advising services. These elements have an intertwined relationship and include:

**Retention Specialists** Provide each college with a student data analyst who produces timely and accurate analysis designed to inform advising and college leadership programming and investment of limited resources. Five of the fourteen colleges currently have a retention specialist and have demonstrated to be valuable members to their colleges. Equally important is the formal working partnership of the retention specialists called the Retention and Completion Group (RCG) which includes representatives from UAIR and the Office of Research and Assessment. Common data questions and solutions are the focus of the RCG.

**Wayfinders** Some of UArizona's most talented advisors spend additional time each week meeting new students where they are. Whether students have declared a major, or not, Wayfinders shines light on the plethora of academic program options and how to navigate to the right advisor to learn more. The program shows evidence they are attracting the new student targeted population to their activities which have grown in attendance once programming shifted exclusively to the virtual environment.

**Advisor Onboarding Program (AOP)** The goal of the 15-hour training program for new advisors is to provide a more consistent onboarding experience. While the bulk of training occurs within the department and/or colleges, AOP offers an institutional perspective to advising practices with a goal of 100% participation of all colleges' new advisors.

**Advisor Caseload** Recognizing a caseload of 400 students in a highly prescriptive curriculum does not represent the same workload the same caseload of students without a declared major or in transition from one program to another. Of the four initiatives, this one experienced the slowest rollout for several reasons (e.g. no interest in a level I advising position, space limitations, etc.) Where there were new advisors positioned in highly subscribed areas (PSIO and Theatre Arts), there is evidence of improved student persistence, particularly of First Gen students. Reducing advisor caseload is not as straight forward of solution towards persistence and degree completion as it might appear.

## 1.7 Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness Initiatives provides systemic health and wellness support as part of a comprehensive approach to improve student retention and graduation outcomes. Specifically, Health and Wellness Initiatives provides a leadership structure to offer strategic health and wellness vision, evolve interventions using a continuum of care model, and leverage research, professional training opportunities, and development to build sustainable models of care.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we reallocated and expanded resources to meet the large-scale needs. Our progress includes the following:

Arizona's Health and Wellness Initiatives launched Wildcats R.I.S.E. (Resilience in Stressful Events) to advance mental health and wellness support of students during the COVID pandemic. Wildcats R.I.S.E. is a peer support program that offers Psychological First Aid (PFA) to students in a confidential and safe environment. Wildcats R.I.S.E. was developed in consultation with Dr. George Everly, international expert in crisis intervention and faculty at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and Public Health. Over 90 students applied to become a R.I.S.E. Leader and 22 were selected and trained. R.I.S.E. has iterated throughout the initial fall launch; it is now offered on-demand virtually and has served over 60 students.

Trained additional professionals in the virtual adaptation of the nationally recognized program Mental Health First Aid™ after it transitioned to an online teaching format due to the pandemic; launched virtual Mental Health First Aid™ to faculty and staff.

Continued Life Management Counseling and Consultation services in four main areas (The A Center, Thrive Center, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and the Eller College of Management) and served a large number of faculty, staff, and students with direct counseling service and consultations. For the Fall 2020 semester, the Life Management Counseling and Consulting Service has provided over 145 outreach and psychoeducational training programs to faculty, staff, and students. Over 225 students received individual appointments from LMCs. And the individual intervention has been demonstrated as effective: students report over 10% decrease in their self-reported stress rating after attending one session.

We have provided leadership for ongoing mental health working group to address return to campus planning, evolve service delivery models given modified operations, and development solutions.



## **UAHS 1.1B Train Students for Arizona Communities (Physician Assistant Program)**

The University of Arizona Health Sciences leads the way in interprofessional, community-based healthcare workforce training to meet the needs of Arizonans. There are robust education programs in our two colleges of medicine and our colleges of pharmacy, nursing, and public health. However, primary care shortages continue to exist throughout Arizona. The launch of the new physician assistant (PA) program will help address unmet need while also providing new and unique opportunities for students wishing to advance their healthcare career and remain in the state to practice after graduation.

UArizona Health Sciences will continue our mission to foster interprofessional training and provide unique educational offerings such as a dual degree PharmD/PA program. Graduates of this program are trained to serve as a pharmacist and provide primary care in their communities - especially valuable in rural and underserved areas where they can meet multiple needs.

In the last year we launched a nationwide search for a director of the new PA program and are finalizing the recruitment process. The goal is to move as expeditiously as possible to accreditation. The director will design, develop and implement an innovative PA program to expand the primary care workforce in Arizona. As the search progresses, we began working toward accreditation of the new program. The PA program will be an integral part of the comprehensive interprofessional health professions training programs offered by the UArizona Health Sciences.



### **UAHS 1.3 Interprofessional Education (ASTECC)**

We seek to further interprofessional healthcare education (IPE) by leveraging the University of Arizona Health Sciences' state-of-the-art, 35,000 sq. ft. healthcare simulation facility. The facility, the Arizona Simulation Technology & Education Center (ASTECC), has been a leader in healthcare simulation for more than 17 years. As a center within UArizona Health Sciences, ASTECC is uniquely positioned to service all Health Sciences colleges by providing a centralized location for students to engage in high-fidelity simulations, both in content and setting.

ASTECC's history of providing simulation excellence enables them to create a unique learning environment that will place students in realistic scenarios that include students from other colleges as well as a range of interprofessional healthcare professionals. Additionally, this loci of IPE will provide an invaluable resource to the undergraduate UArizona population and Arizona communities at large.

Though the pandemic has caused unforeseen challenges to accomplishing the goal of bringing impactful IPE to the UAHS colleges, it has not stopped ASTECC's progress. ASTECC has continued to provide and engage in numerous IPE activities, with particular focus on IPE-related curriculum. ASTECC has already exceeded its 2022 goal for number of IPE-related modules. Additionally, despite the pandemic, ASTECC has seen unexpected learner contact hour growth across certain UAHS colleges and the K-12 community. Such growth is helping guide adjustments to ASTECC's goal setting for future years. ASTECC's ability to persevere in the mission of accomplishing Strategic Initiative 1.3 in the face of the pandemic speaks to the strength of its foundations, as well as the desire of UAHS students and colleges to engage in meaningful IPE. It further testifies to the University of Arizona's ability to easily become a world class leader and powerhouse in the field of interprofessional healthcare education.