

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT SERVICES



Mission:

Welcome students into community, support their well-being and success, and engage them in healthy development of the whole self.

MAKE WAVES.

ANNUAL REFLECTIONS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ESS programs have contributed to increasing the overall first-year retention rate (77.1% to 79.0%) and transfer retention rate (80.1% to 83.3%) from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023.
- The Access, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion unit expanded staffing and led the development of the ESS ADEI Action Plan to incorporate shared equity leadership across the division.
- Counseling and Wellness Services served over 10% of the student population, providing nearly 5,800 clinical appointments, and reaching over 8,000 students through health promotion efforts.
- Financial Aid has expanded workshops to help students complete the FAFSA and has prepared extensively for the implementation of the newly updated FAFSA in December 2023.
- A new Office of Community Engagement has been established within the Viking Union to support student volunteerism, in a model consistent with Carnegie Foundation Classification for Community Engagement.
- The Office of Student Life has received state funding and an additional grant award to expand services related to housing and student basic needs.
- The Academic Advising Center and Student Outreach Services have merged into the Academic Advising and Student Achievement Center to provide holistic outreach and advising support.
- University Residences staff oversaw the process of selecting and transitioning to our new dining services provider, Chartwells.
- Predesign work continues for the new Student Development & Success Center which was funded for \$47.9 million in the state 2023-2025 capital budget.

CHALLENGES

- A reduction to our FY24 Division Budget, in addition to required wage increases, has significantly limited our ability to fill key staff roles, support employees in professional development, and to expand services to keep pace with increasing student demand.
- Students continue to struggle with mental health at unprecedented rates, which is the top reason reported for students not continuing at Western (as per the Non-Returning Student Survey).
- The Disability Access Center has encountered unexpected challenges in providing disability accommodations to qualified students.
- Capacity challenges in Human Resources and the resulting impacts to critical processes have constrained ESS significantly during a time of increased leave, separation, and restaffing.

ANNUAL OUTCOMES

Division Goals:		Goal Assessment Measures:	Annual Assessment Outcomes:
1	Increase access and persistence to graduation for all students	Overall enrollments annually	14,651 [Fall 2023]
		Annual degrees awarded	3,620 [2022-2023]
		First-to-second year retention rate	79.0% [2022 Cohort]
		Six-year graduation rate	65.2% [2017 Cohort]
2	Actively pursue justice and equity in policies, practices, services, and impacts	Enrollment of students of color	4,108 (28.0% overall) [Fall 2023]
		Retention rate of students of color	74.5% [2022 Cohort]
		Graduation rate of students of color	61.2% [2017 Cohort]
3	Provide broad co-curricular programs and services to support student development	Co-curricular exposure rate	97.6% [2023 Graduates]
		Graduate employment rate	86% [2021 Graduates]
4	Cultivate partnerships to foster strong community and promote holistic wellness	Access to support and wellness services	8,148 students reached through wellness programs [2022-2023]
		University housing occupancy rate	95.2% [Fall 2023]

STRATEGIC ADVANCEMENTS

Key Collaborations:

- The Strategic Enrollment Management and Oversight Committee was established to support planning across divisions and campuses to respond to emerging challenges and meet institutional enrollment goals.
- The Wellbeing Collaborative was established to bring faculty and staff from across the university together to advance implementation of the Okanagan Charter and embed wellbeing into all aspects of campus life.
- Several ESS staff have served as key members of the Community Consortium for Cultural Recognition which collaborates with K-12, higher ed, city, and tribal partners to promote ADEI on campus and in the community.
- Several ESS staff have worked closely with staff from the Washington Student Achievement Council to assess and support basic needs security for students enrolled in higher education institutions across the state.

Access/Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Initiatives:

- An ESS ADEI Action Plan has been developed and approved for division-wide implementation in 2023-24, which will include developing ADEI goals for each department and unit and identifying shared equity leadership principles to apply in providing programs and services to students.
- ESS leadership began building strong and collaborative relationships with our new Chief Diversity Officer, Jacqueline Hughes and will continue to align our programs with her leadership.
- Our ADEI unit has had some key staff positions added in 2023, including an Assistant Director of Multicultural Student Services and an Ethnic Student Center Program Manager.
- Our Counseling and Wellness Center staff has expanded to include dedicated support specialists for Black, LGBTQ+, and Native American and Indigenous students.

LOOKING FORWARD

Division Core Initiatives for 2024:

1. Supporting Mental Health and Resilience
2. Expanding Basic Needs Support, Financial Aid, and Scholarships
3. Increasing Connection and Belonging
4. Improving Academic Advising, Planning, and Support
5. Reducing Barriers and Refining Processes
6. Recruiting an Excellent, Diverse Class of New Students

VISION FOR 2024 AND BEYOND

The work of ESS in 2024 will be guided by an updated division strategic plan (to be announced in January) to support the realization of our recently refreshed vision statement:

Every WWU student flourishes from admission to graduation - and beyond

To this end, ESS leadership will:

- Advance the core initiatives identified above to better meet the needs of students
- Advocate for the financial, infrastructure, and personnel needs of the division to support students and achieve our strategic goals, while maintaining budget cuts
- Stabilize personnel and re-align departments and units to serve students effectively using existing resources
- Lead a multi-disciplinary team to conduct a comprehensive review of student fees and to make recommendations for any necessary changes
- Continue to advance our work with students to support overall student retention and graduation, and to support equitable outcomes for all student populations
- Support the implementation of the ESS ADEI Action Plan and the Okanagan Charter Action Plan to advance institutional equity and inclusion, increase student sense of belonging, and embed wellbeing into campus life

ESS programs and services are more critical than ever to the success of students at WWU, and our staff will continue to meet students where they are to advance equity, support student achievement, and improve overall outcomes.

- Melynda Huskey, Vice President of Enrollment and Student Services

ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT SERVICES – OLD MAIN 445 – 360-650-3839 – VPSA.OFFICE@WWU.EDU

AA/EO. To request this document in an alternate format, please contact vpsa.office@wwu.edu