Leeward Community College Comprehensive Review and Evaluation - 2021

Program or Unit Name:
Student Services

Assessment Period
1. Fall 2016-Spring 2021

College Mission
At Leeward Community College, we work together to nurture and inspire all students. We help them attain their goals through high-quality liberal arts and career and technical education. We foster students to become responsible global citizens locally, nationally, and internationally. We advance the educational goals of all students with a special commitment to Native Hawaiians.

Program or Unit Mission
The Student Services Division is committed to our students and their success. We empower students to reach their academic, career, and life goals through impactful service and relationships. We build campus-wide, collaborative partnerships to meet the needs of our students and community. We evaluate our practices to continuously improve and innovate.

The following Core Values inform our work:

- **Integrity.** We align our practice with our core values and ethical principles, and do the right thing in a reliable way.
- **Respect.** We foster an environment where all feel welcomed, accepted, and valued.
- **Service.** We anticipate and respond to meet the ever-changing needs of those we serve.
- **Collaboration.** We actively share our talents, resources, and time to positively impact the student experience.

Part I. Executive Summary of Program or Unit Status
Leeward Community College’s Student Services Area helps to facilitate students’ enrollment, engagement, continuation and then completion of their student journey. It is comprised of 10
different units that work in concert to meet the various co-curricular needs of students in order to promote their success. The units involved are: Admissions & Records, Counseling, Early College, Financial Aid, HINET, Job Prep Services, Recruitment, the Student Health Center, Student Life and the Veterans Resource Center. There are also 2 new areas that have been burgeoning over the last year and are not established enough to fully include in this review—the Student Services Welcome Center and Mental Health Services.

Although all units have historically operated independently and somewhat siloed, over the last 5 years there has been a greater effort to combine and leverage the efforts of all units in support of the College’s Wildly Important Goal (WIG) of keeping the students that we have. As such, Student Services leaders have been working together to identify and establish area or “program level” goals and target outcomes. Via this effort, units are better delineating and defining their unique contributions to the Student Success agenda and are better understanding how to then prioritize and focus their work as well as their resources.

In the last 2 years, the efforts, operations and resources of Student Services has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Position sweeps, hiring freezes, spending freezes, budget reductions and endeavors to reduce costs by centralizing offices have been instigated throughout the University of Hawaii and/or the University of Hawaii Community College system(s) in response to the pandemic-induced economic crisis. These actions have severely disrupted the planning, operations, resources and even focus of Student Services; however, the pressure to deliver on the work remains. Having to deliver in an under-resourced and ever-changing environment has been uniquely challenging for all of the units within Student Services.

Still, when we evaluate what has occurred over the last 5 years, Student Services has seen many gains. Up until the COVID pandemic, we had successfully increased the number of admissions applications submitted to the College. In the last year, we have also drastically improved the efficiency in processing those applications, completely eliminating the 4 to 6-week lag time between application and admission that had become the tradition. We have improved our yield rate (i.e., the percentage of admitted students who enroll), especially in our direct from high school population, moving the needle on another outcome that traditionally could not be budged. Our Early College enrollment rates continue to soar and the students continue to successfully complete their courses. We have exponentially increased our graduation rates; we have opened a new Welcome Center, which helps to improve students’ experiences and allows greater efficiencies for our offices; and we have adopted new software that improve students’ access to information and just-in-time messaging.

However, we are also still experiencing challenges. Enrollment continues to decline. FAFSA submission and financial aid participation has been dropping even though the number of students enrolling from underserved areas continues to climb. We still lose continuing students each semester and we continue to struggle to support the entry and continuation of students with prior college credits. Additionally, since COVID, we have been experiencing a drop in admission applications, which results in a lower number of new students enrolling. The units in our area are already trying to impact these outcomes and have deployed a number of strategies to try and address them.

Over the next 5 years, Student Services will continue its efforts to improve our outcomes—especially in the areas where we are experiencing the most challenges. One of the biggest priorities will be to officially identify and adopt shared goals and target outcomes. Historically, Student Services units have worked alongside each other, but have not necessarily collectively leveraged their efforts to create more significant outcomes. Over the last year, the leaders of
Student Services have come together to better understand the outcomes we are trying to produce and how each office can contribute to achieving those goals. This work will continue into the next year, where we will pull and contemplate data; finalize decisions about our measurable goals and target outcomes; evaluate areas of strength as well as areas that need attention; and design our shared strategies to support improved outcomes. Once this work has been done, units will be able to align their own efforts with the larger ones, increasing the ability for the area to make more significant gains. Over the next 5 years, we will also develop a structure to engage all of Student Services in efforts to review, evaluate and improve our collective work.

Over the next 5 years, we will also work to build our capacity by 1) acquiring personnel in areas that lack sufficient resources to produce priority outcomes and/or facilitate work efficiency; 2) acquiring additional tools and software that will increase unit efficiencies and/or increase unit flexibility/adaptability to accommodate a greater variety in strategies and tactics; 3) acquiring regular and easy access to timely, relevant and accurate data that will enable units to perform their work efficiently and effectively; and 4) establish a culture of professional development across all Student Services Units.

Part II. Program or Unit Description

Leeward CC’s Student Services Area is comprised of 10 different units and programs that work in concert to support students’ entry, progression and completion of their academic journeys. They are responsible for supporting and assisting with students’ co-curricular needs—needs that are non-academic in nature, but that directly impact students’ ability to be successful in their classes and in earning their credentials.

Leeward CC’s Student Services Division embodies the following Units and Programs. Each play a unique role in students’ academic life; but all are focused on 1) helping students start, continue and complete their education; 2) providing support and resources to address challenges that jeopardize students’ progress; and 3) alleviating institutional, administrative and/or other barriers that prevent students’ forward movement.

Admissions and Records (A&R)
The Admissions & Records Office is often the first point of contact people have with the College. It oversees students’ admission; maintains their academic records as they progress through their academic programs (i.e., their grades and transcripts); and helps to confer all of their degrees and certificates once earned. It also serves as both an access and acceleration point for transfer students who wish to utilize previously earned credits to earn a degree; to students utilizing their veterans benefits to support their education; and any other student who needs their enrollment and/or course-taking verified in order to secure employment, scholarship funding, admission to the next level of education, etc. The Admissions & Records Office plays an important role in students’ entry into the College, their progression through their coursework, and their completion of this leg of their academic journey.

Counseling
Once a student’s journey begins, the Counseling Unit is the main provider of academic guidance and non-academic support. Counselors start students on the right path by providing initial advising for all first-year students. They then help to keep students on that path by providing continued academic advising (including transfer advising) and by intervening when students perform poorly. Counselors help students traverse the many facets of a student’s
educational journey. This includes navigating the College’s processes and procedures; establishing educational and/or career goals; managing their financial supports; successfully negotiating work-school-life balance; practicing self-advocacy; and overcoming academic and personal challenges, to name a few. Counselors also are the arbiters of graduation, performing all degree audits to confirm eligibility for credential conferral. Each of the Unit’s 20 Counselors are asked to monitor and steward the educational journeys of a specific caseload of students—so every student has a counselor.

**Dean of Student Services Office**

The Dean of Student Services Office coordinates and oversees the efforts of all of the units within Student Services. It provides leadership and guidance; provides advocacy and resource development; oversees and manages various student success initiatives; acts as an ombudsman for students when they encounter difficulty with the College’s processes; and ensures the health and safety of the campus by administering and enforcing the Student Conduct Code as well as the University’s Title IX policy. The Dean’s Office also oversees the Student Services Welcome Center.

**Early College**

In order to increase the State’s college-going and college success rates, Leeward CC’s Early College Program provides high school students with the opportunity to take college courses while still in high school. The program targets those who do not traditionally aspire to college (e.g., low-income and first-generation students), and the credits students earn can be applied to both high school graduation and college degree requirements. The program strives to prepare students for college success on all levels, and to meet the College’s student success goals. Leeward CC’s Early College Program depends heavily upon its partnerships with students’ high schools.

**Financial Aid**

The Financial Aid Office serves as the arbiter for federal, UH system and institutional aid that is given to students in support of their education. Although this office awards some merit-based funding, the majority of their resources support those who are both underrepresented in higher education and who stand to benefit most from it—i.e., low-income students. Because much of the funding given out by this office allows for continued financial support, the Financial Aid Office is key in helping students start, continue and then complete their education. The Financial Aid Office also plays an essential role in helping to provide equitable access to education for those who are underrepresented.

**Hawaii Nutrition Employment & Training (HINET) Program**

Through a partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS), the HINET Program helps eligible students receive food stamps and other supports for their basic needs so that they can successfully engage in their education. Participating students must meet the DHS income standards and must be pursuing a short-term, workforce credential. The HINET Program is extremely important as it helps to fill the gaps for students who are ineligible for federal aid, who qualify for insufficient levels of aid, and/or who are pursuing non-credit credentials. The HINET Program also serves as a conduit that connects qualifying students to other State resources (e.g., childcare, TANF, housing, emergency assistance, etc.).

**Job Prep Services**

The Job Prep Services Office helps students prepare for employment. It provides them with career assessment and exploration tools; it helps them develop the skills to actually apply for jobs (e.g., resume building, interviewing, effective job searching, effective application
it helps to expose students to different job opportunities within intended fields; and it connects students with potential employers.

**Recruitment**
The Recruitment Office focuses on increasing Leeward CC’s enrollment. It helps to raise public awareness about the College, and it supports and promotes the (re)enrollment of a wide variety of constituents. The Recruitment Office coordinates and runs all campus tours; provides representation at Career & College Fairs and other events; performs various college-going workshops at the high schools; and provides application assistance to people who are interested in attending the College. The Recruitment Office also serves as the College’s primary liaison with its service area high schools, adult community schools, military educational centers and alternative educational sites.

**Student Health Center (SHC)**
The Student Health Center is an extension of University Health Services at Manoa. It provides health care services that include but are not limited to health education, disease prevention, and treatment for acute episodic illness and family planning services to Leeward CC students, faculty, and staff. The SHC also works with Admissions & Records to ensure that the State of Hawaii mandated health requirements for entrance to post-secondary school are met. The mission of the SHC is to achieve and maintain a healthy student body and college community.

**Student Life**
The Student Life Office helps to keep students engaged in their education by 1) offering them a conduit through which they can build connections; 2) offering them an opportunity to develop leadership skills; and 3) fostering a sense of community within the student body. Student Life does this through organizing and executing campus-wide events; facilitating the establishment and continuation of student organizations; overseeing the campus’s Student Government programs; and by coordinating and running its multi-campus intramural sports program. Nurturing involvement is important to students’ retention. Not only do students want to remain a part of our community because of these activities, but those involved in these Student Life programs must 1) perform at a certain level academically; and 2) stay enrolled at the campus in order to participate.

**Veterans Resource Center (VRC)**
The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) provides specialized services for military veterans, active duty servicemembers, reservists, guardsmen, and their dependents. It supports these students through all phases of their educational journey—particularly in their entry to the College and in their continuation from semester to semester. The VRC is key in helping students understand how to access and retain the military benefits that finance their education. It is also poised to support and provide resources to students who experience difficulty. The VRC houses a Leeward CC Counselor as well as a partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), who provides both an onsite Psychologist and a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Collectively, the offices mentioned above contribute to the College’s efforts to enroll, retain and then transfer and/or graduate (i.e., completion) students—a process otherwise known as the Student Success continuum. All offices offer their services via multiple modalities, including in-person, online via Zoom, by phone and by email. Although services had always been offered in this fashion, the COVID-19 pandemic pushed all of Student Services to expand their online offerings for students. Zoom interactions became a regular option across all offices; electronically submittable and routable forms were created and introduced; and technologies like Signal Vine (a 2-way texting platform) and an online chatbot/live chat service were acquired
to ensure that students could access the information they needed. In the initial months of the pandemic, Leeward CC’s Counseling Unit held the highest number of online appointments across the University of Hawaii Community College system.

In the Spring of 2021, Student Services also opened its Welcome Center. The Welcome Center is a one-stop shop where students can receive comprehensive support from all of the Student Services Offices. This method of offering student-friendly, integrated and complete support is unique among the UHCC campuses.

Faculty and Staff
Over the last 5 years, Student Services has seen a reduction in the number of permanently funded faculty and staff available to support its work. The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020, had a severe impact on the resources available to Student Services. In preparation for a statewide financial crisis that would result from the COVID-19 community shutdown at the onset of the pandemic, the Hawaii State Legislature abolished the majority of the vacant positions within the University of Hawaii. Student Services lost several permanent positions through this process. This position “sweep” was immediately followed by a University of Hawaii-wide hiring freeze, which prevented Student Services from filling any remaining and/or new vacancies. This has had, and continues to have, a severe impact on Student Services and its ability to resource areas that need additional capacity to produce the desired outcomes. Our current staffing is outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Permanently Funded</th>
<th>Temporarily Funded</th>
<th>Vacant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions &amp; Records</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling &amp; Advising</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean's Office</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Center</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HINET</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Prep Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Life</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterans Resource Center</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

*Personnel are provided by the University of Hawaii at Manoa or by the Veterans Administration via Memoranda of Agreement. They are not Leeward CC employees.*
The Student Services Division provides the resources to support all of Leeward’s students—including those who attend the Pearl City campus as well as the Wai‘anae Moku Education Center. It also provides special staffing to the Native Hawaiian Center at Pu‘uloa.

Part III. Analysis of Program or Unit Data

A review of the data over the last 5 years shows that the demand, effectiveness and efficiency of Student Services have remained relatively constant. Although there has been some temporary trending up and down in some areas, for the most part, outcomes have remained fairly steady. This means that Student Services has, by-and-large, performed well and has been able to meet the demands presented by students as well as contribute to student success outcomes.

Demand Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications Submitted to the College</td>
<td>8878</td>
<td>8909</td>
<td>9414</td>
<td>11029</td>
<td>9652</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early College Applications Submitted</td>
<td>1639</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>2365</td>
<td>2109</td>
<td>1712</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAFSAs Submitted</td>
<td>6942</td>
<td>7473</td>
<td>6940</td>
<td>6493</td>
<td>6698</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Headcount ALL Students</td>
<td>9,306</td>
<td>8,995</td>
<td>8,878</td>
<td>8,722</td>
<td>8,708</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Headcount NH Students</td>
<td>2,403</td>
<td>2,333</td>
<td>2,332</td>
<td>2,304</td>
<td>2,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Percent Change from Prior Year ALL</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Percent Change from Prior Year NH</td>
<td>-7%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Headcount of Recent Hawaii High School Graduates</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Service Area’s Recent High School Graduates</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Headcount of Students 25-49 Years Old</td>
<td>1,896</td>
<td>2,726</td>
<td>2,605</td>
<td>2,677</td>
<td>2,867</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Headcount from Underserved Regions</td>
<td>3,994</td>
<td>6,052</td>
<td>5,468</td>
<td>5,348</td>
<td>5,105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early College Enrollment</td>
<td>1,119</td>
<td>1,368</td>
<td>1,738</td>
<td>1,667</td>
<td>1,521</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Semester Registration Status</td>
<td>5,895</td>
<td>5,622</td>
<td>5,482</td>
<td>5,345</td>
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<tr>
<td>• New Students</td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>1,530</td>
<td>1,721</td>
<td>1,711</td>
<td>1,453</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Transfers Students</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>643</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Continuing Students</td>
<td>3,252</td>
<td>3,082</td>
<td>2,786</td>
<td>2,596</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Returning Students</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>365</td>
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<td>Spring Semester Registration Status</td>
<td>5277</td>
<td>5217</td>
<td>5043</td>
<td>4989</td>
<td>4781</td>
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<td>• New Students</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,039</td>
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### Effectiveness Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfers Students</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>325</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuing Students</td>
<td>3,876</td>
<td>3,622</td>
<td>3,411</td>
<td>3,324</td>
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<tr>
<td>Returning Students</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>255</td>
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### Efficiency Indicators

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2016 - 17</th>
<th>2017 - 18</th>
<th>2018 - 19</th>
<th>2019 - 20</th>
<th>2020 - 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees &amp; Certificates Awarded ALL</td>
<td>1019</td>
<td>1102</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>1087</td>
<td>1293</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degrees &amp; Certificates Awarded NH</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>359</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfers to UH 4-yr ALL</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>717</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfers to UH 4-yr NH</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>192</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A couple of noteworthy trends are outlined below.

**Application and Enrollment.** Over the last 5 years, we have successfully increased the number of admissions applications submitted to us. We have also increased the enrollment of new students. However, we had not improved our yield rate (i.e., percentage of those admitted who then enroll); in fact, that rate has worsened each Fall term and has seen only small improvements in the Spring. This reflects the fact that our recruitment strategies and activities focus heavily on raising awareness and interest in the College, and not on ensuring that interested students actually enroll. So, although we have made strides in improving our application rates, we had not leveraged that success as much as we could’ve to also impact enrollment. The downward trend in our yield rate has been historic and difficult to reverse.
Overall Enrollment. Over the last 5 years, we have seen a gradual but steady decline in our overall enrollment. We saw the largest enrollment decline in 2016 where we lost 5%. Our enrollment, however, continued this downward trend, albeit at a more modest rate of about 2%, over the next 3 years. The decline seemed to stabilize in this last year when our enrollment essentially matched that of the previous year. However, we are unsure if this apparent trend reversal is caused by the COVID-19 pandemic or a sign of things to come. The enrollment of our Native Hawaiian students seems to be following a similar trajectory.

Although our overall enrollment has been declining, a larger portion of our student body comes from traditionally under-served regions. In 5 years, we have seen a 27.8% increase of students coming from these areas. This holds a number of practice implications for both Student Services and for the College as a whole.

We have also been struggling to maintain the enrollment levels of our recent high school graduates. Over the course of 5 years, the enrollment level of this population has decreased by about 8%, even though our service area incorporates the largest number of high schools with some of the largest student bodies. Only about 7%-8% of the high school graduates in our service area enroll with us upon graduation.

Early College Enrollment. Over the last 5 years, our Early College Program has grown exponentially. Our school partnerships have risen by 62.5%; our class offerings have increased by 96.9%; and we now support 67.3% more Early College instructors than we did 5 years ago. Student participation in our Early College Program has also risen by approximately 35.9%.

Financial Aid Submission. Over the last 5 years, we have seen a decline in almost every major financial aid metric. Our FAFSA (the financial aid application) submission rate has been unstable—initially rising and then ultimately declining to a rate that is 3.5% lower than it was in 2016-17. We saw a steady decline in our overall Pell participation rates and fluctuation in our Native Hawaiian Pell participation rate. Although some of this may be related to our overall enrollment decline, the shortfalls in these financial aid metrics are slightly steeper than the decline in our overall enrollment. We have, however, seen steady improvement in the number of financial aid awardees who ultimately enroll.

Student Persistence. When we look at our registration patterns each semester, we can see that, in the last 5 years, there’s been a steady but persistent drop in the number of continuing students that persist each semester. We experience an average registration loss of 7% each Fall and 5% each Spring from this student group. This, by far, represents the largest area of loss; the next largest group is returning students where we see about a 0.1% loss in student registrations each semester.

Degree Conferral and Transfer. Conversely, we have been doing progressively well in conferring students’ credentials. Over the last 5 years, we have increased our degree awarding by 26.9% overall. Degree conferral to Native Hawaiian students have increased by 36%. So, more students are earning credentials than ever before. Much of this is due to initiatives such
as auto-conferral and reverse transfer, which began in 2014. Students are now awarded their certificates and degrees once all requirements have been satisfied; they no longer have to self-identify and then petition for their degree. Our transfer rates to 4-year UH campuses also increased by 2.7% over the 5-year period; 1.6% for Native Hawaiian students.

The increase in our completion rates may partially explain the drop we’ve been seeing in continuing student registrations.

Part IV.A. Analysis of Program or Unit Measurable Goals (previously known as service area outcomes or SAOs), Program Level Outcomes (PLOs) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Collectively, Student Services facilitates students’ enrollment, persistence through and then completion of their education. Although each program/unit contributes to these outcomes in different ways and provides varying levels of support at different junctures of the student journey, all strive to impact these institutional outcomes. To date, however, Student Services as a whole does not have program level outcomes. Instead, each office has their own target outcomes that they try to achieve. The lack of Student Services wide outcomes results from the fact that the area has never been asked to look at what they are trying to achieve as a collective. Each unit has only been asked to look at what they are trying to individually achieve. This is something that we are already starting to change and will discuss in section VII of this document.

Although we lack specific, officially adopted, program level outcomes, we can still evaluate our progress and the lack thereof.

Areas of Improvement  
Over the past 5 years, we have done well in many areas.

Improved Yield Rate  
Over the past 5 years, our enrollment of new students has been stubbornly declining. Although we have been successful in getting students to apply, our ability to convert admitted students to enrolled students has been steadily worsening. Between Fall 2016 and Fall 2020, our overall yield rate dropped from 50% to 45.5% with an all-time low of 42% in Fall 2019. This means that, after all of our effort to get students to apply and then to admit them, less than half actually register for classes. This is a less than ideal outcome considering the resources allocated to produce it.

In Fall 2020, we pivoted our Recruitment Office and refocused their efforts on recruitment vs. outreach in response to this trend. Historically, this office spent most of its time engaging in outreach efforts—i.e., efforts that raise awareness about the College, its programs and its offerings (such as campus tours, career & college fairs and workshops). Although these activities were important and successful (i.e., our application submission rates improved), they
were also time consuming and saw little return on investment. We did not see significant gains in enrollment even when application numbers increased; instead, we saw a steadily falling yield rate. So, in Fall 2020, the Recruitment Office was asked to focus on increasing the enrollment of those who were admitted to the College. To be successful, the office had to rethink and redesign its activities. They shifted to a case management model where students were tracked, monitored and supported as they went through the College’s on-boarding process. They also partnered with other areas of Student Services (e.g., Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, Counseling, New Student Orientation) and marketing to fully implement their plans. The effort was successful, producing yield rate gains of almost 7% (typical historic gains averaged about 2%) in Spring 2021. So, although this metric had been stagnant for the first 3 years of this evaluation period, both the Fall and Spring yield rates generated after the change showed an uptick.

Perhaps most significant was the impact this change made on our direct from high school population (i.e., those who entered College right after high school graduation). The yield rate for this population had been even more concerning—falling from 47.8% in Fall 2016 to 35.5% in Fall 2020 despite our best efforts. Our Recruitment team had not been able to reverse this trend even though 1) the majority of their focus was invested in our service area high schools; 2) our service area encompasses the largest number of high schools; and 3) the high schools in our area have some of the largest student populations. However, in Fall 2021, after the changes in the office were established, we saw this yield rate jump from 35.5% to a historic 53.2%.

Although we attribute the gains in our outcomes to hyper-focus on the goal and the related changes in programming it caused, there are other factors that also contributed.

**Additional Staffing.** It is also important to note that we added an additional staff member to our Outreach and Recruitment Office in Fall 2020. We would not have been able to make the changes we did without the additional staffing, and we are only able to sustain them with the additional staffing. This additional staff member is temporary, however. So, if the College wants to continue to make gains in our enrollment, we need to solidify the resources committed to this area.

**Increased Efficiency in Admissions.** Prior to Spring 2021, our Admissions & Records Office lagged in their ability to admit students quickly. Between 2016-2020, our average processing times vacillated between 7-42 days, and was influenced heavily by the number of applications being processed at any one time as well as the office staffing levels. It was very common, especially in the last 3 years, for students to wait 4-6 weeks for an admissions decision—particularly when application volumes were at its peak. This inevitably had an impact on students’ willingness to continue through our entire process.

In Summer 2020, the UHCC system adopted a new online application and processing portal that introduced much needed automation and a number of other efficiencies. Our Admissions & Records Office quickly adopted these tools and implemented them for the
Spring 2021 application season. The results were almost immediate. In that inaugural semester, processing times were reduced to an average of 14 days with the median being 6 days. Our second implementation in Summer 2021 showed even better results, reducing wait times to 1-3 days.

Our improved efficiencies resulted in reduced wait times for students and the ability to move through the on-boarding process faster. This certainly contributed to the improvement in our yield rates. We expect our processing times to continue to improve as we become more acclimated to using the new tools.

**Immediate access to New Student Orientation.** In Spring 2020, the College purchased a new online orientation platform. Historically, New Student Orientation had been done in-person; and although we had an online version, we limited access to that platform in order to encourage attendance at the in-person sessions. NSO Online had also been very clunky; the College had not invested in an online platform; instead, we had retrofitted our NSO into an outdated and unsupported testing software.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed all of this. Because in-person sessions were no longer permitted due to health and safety concerns, NSO had to transition to a fully online platform. The College purchased an online NSO software, which was rolled out in Spring 2021. This software introduced new efficiencies for both the College and students. Students could now have immediate access to NSO and could complete it at any time. The platform was available to them 24/7, so students could take this step immediately and then move on in the process. This also inevitably contributed to the improvements in our yield rates.

**Changes in Counseling Strategies.** Our Counseling Unit has always contributed to the on-boarding of new students. Through New Student Advising (NSA) appointments, all first-time students must meet with a counselor to discuss and then devise their first semester schedule. It was always counseling’s intention to have students leave their NSA appointments registered. This didn’t always happen, however, for a variety of reasons. In 2020-21, in order to help impact our enrollment numbers, counselors adopted the goal of ensuring that all students who attended NSA appointments, registered. So, they followed up with any student who did not register during the NSA appointment and continued to track and monitor them as well as to offer assistance until they registered. This likely contributed to the increased yield rate as well.

It is also important to note that, despite the gains made on our yield rate, our Outreach and Recruitment Office continues to struggle with work efficiency issues. Because the office lacks access to important tools and resources, including ready access to relevant and timely data, much of their work is manual, which results in the production of obsolete information and unnecessary work. This will always limit what the office is able to accomplish and achieve.
Improved Entry Pipeline
The improvement in our yield rate has also been accompanied by an improvement in our onboarding pipeline metrics. This is a natural byproduct of our efforts to improve admissions to enrollment numbers. In order for us to ensure the enrollment success of new students, we had to make sure students made it through our onboarding process. Over the last year and a half, we have made significant strides, as outlined above, in improving several areas of the pipeline. Our onboarding process has been the subject of much discussion and evaluation over the last 5 years; so, the recent changes that we made and the impact they have had on outcomes are noteworthy.

Beginning in Fall 2020, our Recruitment Office began to track and monitor students as they took their steps, nudging those who paused via phone calls, emails and text messages, to take the subsequent ones. That effort enhanced the changes made in Admissions, NSO and counseling, pushing the number of students who made it all the way through the pipeline up 2%. We only have looked at our pipeline data over the past 2 years; so, our ability to really gauge our progress in this area is limited. Still, in that time we have already begun to see improvement. Again, we will only be able to continue to make gains in this area if we provide the tools needed to improve work efficiency.

Improved Enrollment in Specific Student Groups.
Although we didn’t see overall gains in our enrollment, we did identify areas of potential growth.

Financial Aid Recipients. In order to help impact our falling enrollment numbers, our Outreach and Recruitment Office began to follow up with Financial Aid recipients who failed to register for classes. They first began this work in Fall 2020. We can see that this has made a difference. Although the yield rate (i.e., the percentage of financial aid awardees who enrolled) had been trending upwards since 2016-17, the gains had been modest. After an initial jump of 4.8% in 2017-18, we only saw gains of about 1.5% a year. In 2020-21, we again saw a 4.8% jump, taking the yield rate to 86.1%. So, in this last year, we only lost 14% of those awarded. In previous years, we had lost anywhere from 18.8%-26.9%. Even though the overall reduction in financial aid awardees meant that the improved yield rate failed to produce more enrollments, it was still an important step towards improving this metric.

Early College. The demand for our Early College programming continues to grow. Not only has student participation grown by 35.9% over the last 5 years, but our course offerings have grown by 96.9%, and our instructor pool by 67.3%. Our Early College population now represents around 10%-11% of our student body. These students, by and large, are successful in their classes. So, overall this program is a success and represents a potential area of opportunity to help us enroll more high school students from our service area post-graduation.

What the data doesn’t convey, however, is the amount of resources that are needed to support our Early College Program. Because it is an endeavor that is based in partnerships—both with the Department of Education schools and other UH campuses—this program is highly complicated and is constantly changing. Each partnership is unique in what it is trying to
accomplish, is customized to the needs of those involved and is governed by the resources available. Additionally, the initiative is constantly evolving as people have new ideas about how to tackle the work, as new players enter and as people seek to build upon what they’ve already learned. In the last 5 years, Early College has changed from a simple proposition of offering college classes to high school students to one that involves the building of career pathways; scaffolding high school, 2-year college and 4-year college curricula; sharing resources between high schools and offering high school students the opportunity to finish their first 2 years of college prior to graduating from high school. Although the program has grown in leaps and bounds in all ways, the amount of resources allocated to it has not followed. Because Early College is a trailblazing endeavor, there are lots of natural barriers that have to be addressed and overcome—both in higher education and within the K-12 system. Currently, our campus struggles to keep up with both the programmatic and student support workload. Even though we have the largest, most sophisticated Early College Program in the UH system, we still resource the team with just 1.5 full-time, permanent counselors, 1 full-time temporary counselor and a portion of our Student Services Program Officer. In the last 2 years, we have had to also pull in additional help via a variety of temporary reassignments, casual hires and the like. This is not a sustainable model.

Completion and Transfer
Another area where we have seen significant gain is in the awarding of certificates and degrees and in the transfer of our students to 4-year campuses—i.e., completion. In 5 years, we have increased our conferring of credentials by 26.9%. These gains were facilitated by the implementation of auto-conferral and reverse-transfer, which were systemwide endeavors to automatically award students their credentials upon completion. Once these initiatives were implemented, students no longer had to initiate the conferral process—it was automatically initiated for them. However, the strength of our STAR-build (which is done primarily by counselors with the help of our BANNER Specialist) and the participation of our counselors also facilitated this increase. The accuracy and sophistication of the tools we had on-hand (i.e., STAR) were key in our ability to perform degree audits in-mass, and students were appropriately and consistently advised on how to efficiently earn their credentials.

As positive as these efforts have been for students, they have introduced new administrative burdens on the offices that execute them. The success of our auto-referral and reverse transfer processes hinge on the involvement of our Transcript Evaluator, thus increasing the workload in an already under-resourced area. Because of this, our transcript evaluation process is further taxed and compromised as it needs to take a back burner to the graduation process several times a year. Similarly, the degree audit process requires the focused and time sensitive attention of the entire Counseling Unit. During these points in time, other Counseling services also have to take a backseat. Further, our Counseling Unit is regularly taxed by the need to configure, maintain and monitor the STAR tool. Although STAR is a systemwide tool, each campus has to customize it for its use. Our STAR team, which is one of the strongest in the UH system, is comprised of 4 counselors and our BANNER Specialist. These counselors regularly dedicate a significant portion of their time to the administrative work of building, maintaining and
facilitating the use of the STAR software. This workload, albeit important, decreases the capacity of the Counseling Unit overall.

Improved Customer Service and Increased Efficiency
In Spring 2021, Student Services introduced several new tools to help improve customer service to students and the public and to create more efficiency for our offices.

The Welcome Center. In January 2021, Student Services opened its Welcome Center, which is a one-stop shop where students and the public can get the majority of their needs met. The goals of the Welcome Center were to 1) provide patrons with comprehensive assistance; 2) decrease the “run around” for students as they tried to seek help; and 3) provide patrons with a pleasant and quality experience. The Welcome Center also introduced more efficiency for Student Services offices by centralizing the fielding of basic questions and needs, thereby allowing the subject matter experts (i.e., the offices) to focus and concentrate on higher level needs. So far, the Welcome Center has been effective in meeting these goals.

Ocelot ChatBot. Student Services also purchased and adopted a ChatBot. The ChatBot uses artificial intelligence to provide customized information, 24/7, to patrons online. The ChatBot broadened the accessibility of needed information and the metrics collected by it allows us to improve the information that we make available. We have also introduced a live chat feature which allows patrons to chat in real time with Welcome Center Associates.

Both of these initiatives have expanded Student Services ability to provide students, employees and the general public with accurate and “just in time” information as it is needed.

Continued Challenges
Although we have seen some major areas of improvement over the last 5 years, there are also areas where we continue to experience challenges.

Overall Application Decline
The gains that we have seen in our yield rate have come at the expense of our application submission rates. Although initially trending upwards from 2016-2019, it fell in 2020-21, which coincided with the changes in our Recruitment Office. It is possible that this dip in applications was also caused by 1) the COVID-19 pandemic, as online learning within the DOE and the general economic uncertainty within the community led to less engagement in higher education; and 2) the new online application, which was rolled out in Spring 2021, prevented students from applying to multiple UHCC campuses. They could only apply to one. However, it is also plausible that the reprioritization within the Recruitment Office also played a role in this outcome; their need to focus on case management meant that they invested less time and effort in outreach activities.

Over the next 5 years, we will have some opportunities to improve in this area. The UHCC system is working to centralize admissions processing, including Early College admissions.
Once this occurs, we may have greater capacity in our campus’s Admissions & Records Office to attend to application submission matters.

Additionally, we will be working within Student Services as well as across campus to initiate Strategic Enrollment Management discussions and strategy sessions. Improving application submission rates to the College is not a one or two office endeavor. To be successful, it must involve the entire campus community and must be grounded in data and strategy.

Even with these potential areas of opportunity, however, additional staffing is needed in our Recruitment and Outreach Office if we expect it to be a hub for both outreach and recruitment.

**Participation in Financial Aid is Declining**

Over the last 5 years, we have seen a gradual decline in students’ participation in financial aid. We have seen less students submitting FAFSAs, less students awarded and less students participating in Pell. However, we know the need exists as the number of enrolled students from underserved regions has increased by 27.8% over the past 5 years. This is problematic as we know that 1) financial barriers are often the reason why students either do not engage in their education and/or stop engaging in their education; and 2) students who receive some kind of financial assistance tend to have higher persistence rates.

Again, we may have an opportunity to improve this metric in the next 5 years. First, as the case management system for recruitment and the communication systems being developed for continuing students solidifies, we will have more capacity to incorporate activities that address financial aid participation into these efforts. Second, the UHCC system is moving to centralize financial aid processing. Once that occurs, our campus personnel will be able to spend the majority of their time and effort on financial aid outreach and support. Third, the UHCC system is working on implementing a financial aid program in Signal Vine—which is a 2-way texting platform. Once that occurs, our Financial Aid Office will have a greater capacity to connect with, remind and nudge students into taking the necessary steps to enroll in and keep their financial aid.

However, the fact that we are seeing falling participation in financial aid programs is further evidence that our Recruitment and Outreach Office needs additional resources. Although it is true that continuing students can and should apply for financial aid, students most often apply at the beginning of their educational journey. Decisions to enroll at our campus often happen only when there is a belief that it is affordable. Therefore, our Recruitment and Outreach Office needs to have sufficient resources to focus on both educating students about financial aid as well as supporting them through the process of applying. Currently, the office lacks sufficient capacity to consistently incorporate this work into what it is already doing.

**Transfer Student Enrollment**

In the next 5 years, an important area of focus for Student Services will be on the entry, participation and persistence of our transfer students. Over the last 5 years, our data has shown that although we have a healthy application rate from these students, an average of 60%
of them never enroll with us. Our continued efficiency challenges in transcript evaluation coupled with these transfer student metrics indicate that we need to take a deep dive to see if this is an area where we can affect positive change.

**Persistence of Continuing Students**

The persistence levels of our students continue to be an area of concern. Over the last 5 years, our Fall to Spring persistence rate has plateaued at 68% and our Fall to Fall rate is even lower than that. When we disaggregate the data, we are most concerned with the registration behavior of our continuing students; over the last 5 years, there has been a steady and consistent loss of our continuing students at each registration cycle.

In Student Services, we have already initiated several things to try and address this.

**Registration Nudges to Continuing Students.** Beginning in Summer 2021, Counseling has sent text messages to students who remain unregistered. Via a 2-way text messaging platform, counselors not only remind students to register, but are available to text with them about any registration and/or continuation issues they may be facing.

**Intervention with Underperforming Students.** Once students underperform in their classes, we tend to lose them. Data regarding UAP students, or students who receive academic sanctions due to performance, show us that once an academic sanction is received about half don’t return. However, preliminary data also shows us that counseling interventions with this population are successful in facilitating persistence. Therefore, our Counseling Unit has begun to devise a strategy to intervene with students after their first academic stumble. The goal of this initiative is to facilitate students’ continuation. Counseling plans to implement their strategy in AY 2022-2023.

**Increased Mental Health Services.** It is well known that students’ life challenges vs. academic challenges often lead to their stopping out of college. Therefore, it is imperative that we, as a College, have the capacity to support students when they face mental health challenges. Previously, we have filled this gap in services through a partnership with University of Hawaii at Manoa’s Counseling Services. In 2019, we were able to secure a full-time, Mental Health Counselor position. While we recruited for that position, we partnered with the University of Hawaii West-Oahu’s Counseling Services to provide mental health services to our students. We have since filled our permanent position, have secured grant funding to acquire more mental health services and have continued our partnership with UHWO. We expect these additional resources to significantly add to our campus’s ability to provide needed services and support to students.

**HINET.** Our data has shown that students who receive financial assistance tend to persist at higher rates. HINET data pulled over the last year show that this is indeed true for their population. HINET students persist at a higher rate than our overall population—75% vs. 68%. Our HINET Program has already begun to increase it’s reach. In the last year, they received 619 inquiries, which represented an exponential bump up from previous years.
where inquiries averaged around 120. Hopefully this expanded reach will result in wider support and thus wider retention rates for students in the coming years.

Part V. Survey Results (if applicable)

CCSSE data continues to show that students are satisfied with the services offered by Student Services. Across the board, most students said they were very satisfied with all of the services offered. A smaller portion said they were somewhat satisfied. Few students said they were not satisfied at all. The only exception is Job Placement assistance. For this service, only 45% of student participants said they were very satisfied with the service. More were only somewhat satisfied. This could reflect the fact that our Job Prep Services office was fully online during the survey year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, this is something to note and to potentially address in the coming years.

Most students also felt that the services offered by Student Services are important. All types of advising were deemed the most important. Student Organizations and services for active military and veterans were deemed less important. However, it’s important to note that most students answering this survey also indicated not interacting with these services at all. Also, only a small number of students who answered this survey were military/veterans. Therefore, these ratings may not reflect the true sentiments of those who actually need and utilize the services.

<table>
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<th>Service</th>
<th>How Satisfied (%)</th>
<th>How Important (%)</th>
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*Source: Community College Survey of Student Engagement 2021

Part VI. Overview Analysis of Program or Unit

Over the last 5 years, Student Services has performed well and has been able to meet students’ and the College’s needs. We have made several strides forward in important areas, and have continued to be challenged in others.

Program Gains: Overall, here are the areas in which Student Services has seen significant strides over the last year:
**Increased Collaboration and the Identification of Shared Goals**

Over the last few years, Student Services has made great strides in better understanding what we’re trying to accomplish as a Division, what each area is trying to accomplish individually and how we might gauge our progress. This has resulted in increased focus and intentionality in our units, a better alignment with the College’s Student Success goals, higher flexibility in the way that each unit views and approaches its work, and broader collaboration and a sense of unity across all areas.

Despite this greater “coming together” that has been occurring, Student Services still lacks formal program goals as well as target outcomes. The leaders in Student Services have already begun the work to identify and define shared goals and outcomes within Student Services, which units can then seek to align themselves with and that Student Services as a whole can review and evaluate every year. This work will continue throughout the 2021-2022 academic year, as will the work to develop an infrastructure that will facilitate our utilization and engagement with these guideposts as well as keep them in the forefront and relevant.

**Improvement in Recruitment and Retention**

Although there are still some areas of work that are worthy of improvement, as a whole we have made great strides in this area. Several of the units within Student Services have better defined the impact that they can make on both helping students access and then stay engaged in their education, and then have adjusted their services as well as their program evaluation processes so that they can make those impacts. Additionally, units have begun to be more proactive in intervening with students when they start to disengage and/or when they are at-risk for disengaging; so, we are more actively facilitating student retention. Due to these efforts, we have already begun to see some progress in some areas—such as in our yield rates, our Early College engagement and success rates and in our improved onboarding rates. In other areas, such as our work with continuing students, we have not yet seen an impact, but expect to as the renewed plans and strategies get underway and are better solidified.

However, as Student Services has attempted to tackle the work both in initial engagement and the continued engagement with students, one thing has become clear—we cannot accomplish this alone. The limited role and capacity of Student Services in both of these areas also limits how much the Division can produce the related outcomes by themselves. To really be effective, we need campus-wide strategic enrollment management strategies and collaborations that utilize the strengths, resources and opportunities of multiple areas as well as leverage the power produced by their collaboration with each other. We need to establish a stronger partnership with instruction and academic services so that there is more interplay and sharing of information/strategies between the groups for the sake of students.

We hope to see these types of efforts occur in the upcoming years.

**Improvement in Completion**

Over the last 5 years, we have made great strides in our completion (i.e., graduation and transfer) rates. The collaboration between our Counseling Unit, our STAR team and
Admissions & Records Office is strong and has produced significant upticks in our ability to help students earn their credentials. However, the process is still very labor intensive and preoccupies the time and attention of all 3 groups at least three times a year, which creates shortages and lags in other necessary areas. Reports utilized to do the work still contain errors; so, all assessments done by these reports have to be rechecked manually. So, there is still a significant cost of producing these outcomes.

**Continued Challenges:** Although we have seen great strides in many areas, we continue to lack the resources to do so in other areas. The lack of resources severely limits our capacity to make gains on important fronts. Students Services is lacking the following types of game-changing resources:

**Personnel**
A 5-year review of our area shows that we are lacking sufficient personnel in several different areas. Most notably, we are lacking resources in our Recruitment Office, our Transcript Evaluation and Transfer Credit Management area within Admissions & Records, our Early College Program and in our Counseling Unit. Without the requisite levels of personnel in these areas, we are severely limited in our capacities to manage the current workload to a degree where we can be proactive, intentional and targeted in what we do. We therefore are also limited in our ability to impact specific enrollment, retention and completion outcomes. It is important to note that our need for Counseling personnel comes from the fact that many of our counselors are tapped to assist with the configuration, management and maintenance of software systems used by counseling. Having separate personnel allocated for this type of work and additional technological tools would eliminate our need for additional counseling staff.

**Technological Tools**
A review of our areas collectively shows that although the offices within Student Services have access to various types of software systems and technology, they do not have access to the types of technological tools that actually help with workload. The majority of the tools they have access to are those that are rooted in databases and/or are student-facing (not employee facing) technologies. Databases, although helpful, are mostly geared toward data storage; not information usage. So, navigating the information in the database and/or piecing together information from various databases is still a highly manual and therefore time-consuming and personnel-dependent endeavor. It also produces static results. So, these types of technologies do not facilitate the efficiency, efficacy or intentionality of people’s work. What is really needed are technologies that facilitate both intra- and inter-office workflows; that piece together live information so that they can be easily retrieved and utilized to inform and/or prioritize efforts; and that automate tasks. This is the only cost-efficient way that offices can build the needed capacities that will allow them to reach target outcomes.

**Access to Timely and Relevant Data**
In addition to needing more technology, our areas also need better access to timely and relevant data. Over the last 5 years, in order to move the needle on student access and
success, Student Services has become more intentional and targeted in its efforts—especially within the last few years. However, all offices struggle with the ability to be deliberate, targeted and focused because they do not have access to the appropriate data in a relevant and timely way. Our Recruitment and Early College Offices, for example, struggle to identify the students who are at different points of the on-boarding process because they have to draw down the data from static reports and then piece them together because no one report exists with all requisite information. This task takes days, and by the time they're done, the information is no longer accurate because students continue to move on their journey as the office puts together the information necessary to intervene. All of our other offices face similar dilemmas. Counseling has no way of knowing, for example, if the students who attended Incoming Student Advising (ISA) actually registered for classes. Financial Aid cannot easily track if their awardees registered for classes and/or if their awardees take registration actions that render them ineligible for aid. HINET has to pull reports and/or ask for information from the Office of Planning, Policy and Assessment (OPPA) before they can work on recruiting students for their program. The lack of regular access to accurate, live, usable and manipulatable data severely limits what Student Services' is able to do, across the board.

Part VII. Action Plan

Over the next 5 years, Student Services will focus on the following things:

1. **Finalizing Student Services’ shared Goals and Target Outcomes.** It is imperative that Student Services finishes its quest to identify shared, program-level goals and target outcomes. Having these tools will allow each office within Student Services to better focus and prioritize their efforts. It will also allow for easier identification of needed resources as well as more efficacious and meaningful evaluation and improvement efforts. Once Student Services leaders develop these goals and outcomes, the following will also need to occur:
   a. Each Student Services office will need to align their own goals and target outcomes with the program-level goals and outcomes.
   b. Data needed for effective tracking and monitoring, both at the Division and at the Unit level, will need to be identified and ascertained on a regular basis.
   c. A system for using these goals, objectives and data for program evaluation and improvement will need to occur at both levels. On the Unit level, they will be incorporated into annual ARPDs. At the Division level, we will need to institute an annual process for engaging all Student Services members in the review, evaluation and improvement discussions.

2. **Personnel Acquisition.** Once goals and target outcomes are finalized, we are going to need to focus on acquiring personnel in key areas. Currently, the most notable needs are in Recruitment, Early College, Transcript Evaluation and Transfer Credit Management, Technology and Software Management and the Welcome Center. Another burgeoning area of need is in Mental Health services. However, personnel
needs, along with all other resource needs, will be prioritized based on its potential to impact the Division’s shared goals and target outcomes.

3. **Technology and Software Acquisition.** Similarly, Student Services will continue to seek and utilize technology that can increase the efficacy and efficiency of its offices. Examples of software applications that can be leveraged are client relationship management (CRM) software, communication management software, student retention software; and software that can assist in the tracking and monitoring of various student groups. Additionally, software that assists in electronic workflows (e.g., Kuali Build, electronic signature software) as well as data matching for processing will be sought out and/or leveraged to help increase efficiency and thereby increase the capacity of offices. The goal is to minimize manual processing and intervention as much as possible.

4. **Data Acquisition.** In order for offices to be the most efficacious, they need to have regular and ready access to relevant information. So, over the next 5 years, we will seek to develop the infrastructure that will allow for this information acquisition. We will work to accomplish this on various fronts, including but not limited to requesting the establishments of customized dashboards at both the campus and system-levels (as appropriate), and continuing to seek out appropriate software solutions.

5. **Professional Development.** All members of Student Services must be regularly supported with the necessary knowledge and training to be able to carry out their roles. This will be especially true as Student Services aspires to unify itself behind shared goals and target outcomes. Over the next 5 years, we will seek to build a stronger professional development plan and strategy that includes all Student Services professionals and helps to build their capacities to contribute to both their unit’s and Student Services goals and outcomes.

**Part VII. Resource and Budget Implications**

If Student Services is to be successful in executing its action plan over the next 5 years, it will need additional resources.

**Positions:** In addition to filling the positions we already have but that are currently vacant, Student Services will need to be able to establish new positions. Currently, the highest minimal needs for new personnel are in:

- **Recruitment and Outreach.** Currently, this office is only staffed by a single, full-time employee. If we want to continue to impact enrollment and yield rate numbers, we need at least 2 more full-time employees in this office.

- **Transcript Management & Evaluation.** Our last 5 years of data show that we are severely under-resourced in this area. Processing rates are slow, yet demands are consistently high. Our data shows that:
o We receive approximately 5,000 transcript requests a year.
o Approximately 2,000 transfer students apply to our campus each year.
o Approximately 1,350 students with previous credits enroll each semester.
Approximately 25%-30% of our enrolled student body a year request/need their
previous courses evaluated via the transcript evaluation process.
o Approximately 2,000 students a year are awarded their credentials—most of which
are done via the Auto-Conferral (i.e., the “automatic” conferring) or Reverse Transfer
(i.e., the back applying of credits from the transfer institution to students’ Leeward’s
records post-transferring to another institution). Over the last 3 years, the number of
credentials awarded in this fashion—which requires a higher level of institutional
intervention—has risen from 67% to 80.4% last year. This translates into roughly
1,700 records a year.

Despite this level of demand, however, this area has only been resourced with a single,
full-time employee. The insufficiency of the resources allocated to this area has forced
the adoption of practices and protocols that are not conducive to facilitating student
enrollment or retention, and results in long wait times and inflexible deadlines for
students.

We also need to better comply with VA and Military Tuition Assistance benefit
requirements; both obligate the College to evaluate any past credits held by the benefit
recipient prior to class registration. Instead of doing a formal transcript evaluation, we do
an informal one as we lack the institutional capacity to process a formal evaluation in this
short of a timeframe.

If we want to make gains both in our enrollment, retention and support of students with
past credits and if we want to comply with military and veteran benefit standards, we
need to hire more personnel in this area.

• **Software Programmer and Manager.** Currently, Student Services supports 5 different
software systems—all of which require configuration, regular maintenance, monitoring
and end-user training. Currently, this is being shouldered by at least 7 different
employees within Student Services—all of whom are being taken away, in part, from
their primary duties in order to fulfill the need. This is not sustainable—especially as
Student Services aspires to add more software systems to its docket and as individual
units seek to make greater impacts on its own goals and target outcomes. In order to
increase capacities across-the-board, Student Services needs a full-time employee who
will not just configure and manage the individual software, but who will also help to
integrate the software, inform data uploads into the software, and help to come up with
programmatic solutions across all software in order to help us fully leverage the
opportunities.
Although these are the current personnel needs in Student Services, they will inevitably grow, change and/or shift over the next 5 years.

**Funding:** In order to acquire additional knowledge and tools that will support our work, we will need additional funding. We will need funding to both sustain software that we currently have (e.g., Ocelot ChatBot, Online NSO) as well as to acquire new software tools that will increase the efficacy of our work (e.g., CRM, virtual campus tours, student retention software, etc.). We will also need funds that will support regular professional development as well as membership in national organizations that will also help us build our capacities.