UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

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UNIVERSITY of West Georgia

Division of Academic Affairs
Carrollton, GA 30118-4150

Office of the Provost and
Senior Vice President

October 27, 2021

Regents' Momentum Year Awards Selection Committee
Board of Regents, University System of Georgia
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-1450

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

On behalf of the University of West Georgia, I am particularly pleased to nominate the Department of Student Success for the 2022 Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. This department is an important part of the University College at UWG and, as the following portfolio will demonstrate, has been making important and influential improvements to academic outcomes for students.

At UWG, the Department of Student Success contains the Center for Academic Success, Academic Advising Center, the University Writing Center, and the STEM Tutoring Center. Collectively, these units prioritize student success continuously, focusing on data-driven strategies that respond to students' needs and help them to make productive choices for their courses. Each of the units in the Department of Student Success work steadily to ensure that improved outcomes for students shape and inform their programming. For example, the department's supplemental instruction (SI) is one of only 48 accredited SI programs in the nation. Data show that students who participate in SI at UWG increase their grade by a full letter grade in their courses.

The Department of Student Success, under the excellent leadership of Carrie Ziglar, has followed a student-centered, holistic approach to each student's support, success, and planning. For instance, as learning moved online as a result of the pandemic in the spring semester of 2020, the advisors worked seamlessly to pivot from a predominantly face-to-face advising structure to a fully virtual one. Within mere days—while most people were still learning what Zoom was—they had already adopted the platform and formalized training for all their staff. Along the same vein, the student success programs established effective methods of virtual communication to continue with tutoring, coaching, and supplemental instruction through the following year.

The tireless work of the Department of Student Success was integral to the progression and wellbeing of our students through the extreme demands related to the pandemic. In the summer

of 2020, the Student Success team got on the phones to contact students using every method of outreach they could. In doing so, they contributed significantly to an increase in our retention rate by 7%. After the traditional registration period in spring 2021, advisors worked to reach out to students who had not yet registered, resulting in 2,225 of those 3,891 students to re-enroll.

The responsiveness of the Student Success team is truly a testament to their overall commitment to students. When our data platforms could not provide the requisite information needed to track enrollment, the team simply created their own enrollment tracker, which still provides some of the most up-to-date enrollment information from semester to semester. Additionally, when prompted to change the advising model from four sessions during Orientation to over 100 sessions, the Student Success team not only agreed but also did so enthusiastically and proactively. Even when summer neared an end, their enthusiasm for the new model never waned because they saw it as a system that was best for the students.

Those within the Department of Student Success show their ongoing dedication to students and faculty alike: they are often managing thousands of appointments throughout each semester (including a multitude of drop-in sessions) and have to coordinate students' needs with their various support centers. The Student Success team members manage to do so flawlessly with a mindset of continuous improvement. They remain hungry for critique and eager to form new faculty partnerships while nourishing existing relationships. Because of the team's work and approach, UWG has been able to increase the number of instructors using SI, as well as provide students with more access to tutoring and coaching. The results, as outlined in the portfolio, indicate strong benefits for students and their movement towards graduation.

The University of West Georgia is proud of the continuous efforts and solid results of the Department of Student Success. The following pages provide compelling evidence for how the program has approached the goals of the USG's Momentum Year. Because of the many ways the Department of Student Success contributes effectively to improving student outcomes, I offer my resounding support for the nomination of our outstanding department for the 2022 Regents' Momentum Year Awards for Excellence in Advising and Student Success.

Sincerely,

Jon Preston
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Tel 678-839-6445 • Fax 678-839-4766

Recommendation from Demoines Ham (Current student)

As a student at the University of West Georgia, I have developed the idea to always use my resources in a time of need during my college years. Over time, I learned that these resources could aid in my overall succession as an undergraduate student. One particular resource that has played a significant role in my college experience has been the Academic Advising Center of the university. Within this department, I can have an advisor and a mentor to navigate me through these four years. When I arrived at the university as a first-generation student, this became a new realm that I did not know how to tackle. With the assistance of my academic advisor and other resources, I have been able to achieve the goals I wanted to reach as a student. As I enter the Advising Center, I am welcomed by smiling faces who care to see their students succeed in college. Receiving help when choosing classes, internships, and post-grad options become relieving when you have a helping hand that reaches out. Academic advisors are equipped to provide students with fewer worries during their undergraduate experience, and I really appreciate the assistance they provide to all students.

Demoines Ham

-Demoines (Trevon) Ham

UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

Recommendation from Laney Rogers (Current student)

UNIVERSITY of West Georgia

The Advising Center, at the University of West Georgia, has been an integral part of my time in college and success while here. My first meeting with an advisor was at my freshman orientation. I was new to college, confused, and worried about which classes to choose. The advisor was incredibly helpful and worked with me to build a schedule that would work with myschedule outside of school, and that would be manageable for a first-semester freshman. Since then I have met frequently with my advisor to discuss classes, future plans, and preparing for graduate school. Advisors are there for students in times of need or stress, as well. When I was taking my first semester of organic chemistry, the difficulty of that class was steering me away from taking the second semester of the class. My advisor went over the requirements of the graduate schools I was interested in, to see if only taking one semester would be an option. Whenwe found out that both semesters of organic chemistry were needed for the programs, he helped me find resources on campus for the class. I was doubting my ability to do well in my current program, but the support from my advisor gave me the confidence to keep working and take the classes. Overall, advisors not only provide basic information about degrees and classes. They are motivators and support systems for all college students and play an influential role during a student's time in college.

Laney Rogers

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UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

Recommendation from Dr. Meg Pearson, Dean of University College

University College
Carrollton, Georgia 30118

Dear Members of the Regents' Momentum Year Award Committee,

I write to nominate the University of West Georgia's Department of Student Success for the Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. I have had the honor of supervising this unit within University College since the summer of 2020, and I cannot speak highly enough of this unit's successful work in increasing student success. University College was built to obliterate the barriers between student success and academic departments, and the Department of Student Success, which contains several units, including the Center for Academic Success, the University Writing Center, the STEM Tutoring Center, and Academic Advising, has played a massive role in that work.

I will begin with the successful work demonstrated by Advising in encouraging completion of core curriculum and promoting students to complete Math and English requirements along with thirty hours of study in their first year. University College contains the Department of Student Success as well as the Department of General Education, which houses the First Year Mathematics and First Year Writing Programs. Advising has played an invaluable role in the past sixteen months especially by working closely with faculty in those units not only to schedule these core courses at the times and in the modalities required by students, but also to create and strengthen the learning support corequisite sections that do so much to aid in student progression through the Mathematics and English requirements. Advising leads and the head of General Education now remain in constant contact throughout the year to track enrollments, predict the needs for Learning Support sections, and encourage greater faculty participation in intrusive advising techniques such as the Early Alert system to guarantee our students are progressing successfully through year one. Supplemental Instruction (SI), housed in Student Success, similarly plays a much larger role in the core. Our SI program is one of only three accredited programs in the state, and one of only forty-eight in the nation, and students who participate with the program earn a full letter grade higher in their courses. The current 2021-22 academic year has the distinction of the highest number of SI usage by faculty in their courses in University College, due in no small part to the relentless outreach of Student Success.

Early Alert and similar advising technologies play important roles in student progression, for they connect students directly with the deep bench of tutoring support contained within Student Success. Every single student who receives an academic alert from a faculty member in the first several weeks of the semester is contacted directly by the Center for Academic Success for academic coaching and tutoring, and close to 50% of students contacted accept the assistance. In addition to the peer tutoring offered by the CAS, Student Success also offers tutoring support through the venerable University Writing Center, which continues to work closely with disciplinary writing success, and the brand-new STEM Tutoring Center. The latter was recently developed in response to the need to expand mathematics tutoring to upper division courses in all the STEM fields. Both the University Writing Center and STEM Center offer some peer tutoring, but they largely offer consulting from full time faculty and graduate students on campus, which gives student even greater access to faculty and the

relationships—the support and encouragement by faculty noted in the Big Six College Experiences—that encourage student retention.

Beyond the first year, UWG Advising's work engages students and encourages them to explore their potential, particularly through a holistic approach to advising that links academics with students' lived experiences on and off campus. Using the high-quality documentation and communication available through EAB software on campus, advisors connect with each other and with faculty mentors to make sure they possess a complete picture of their advisees before each appointment. From the student's first moments on campus during Orientation until their final meetings as they register for graduation, UWG advisors keep close track of their students' highs and lows in order to help those students stay on the best path to graduation. Before an appointment, an advisor at UWG may read notes from a faculty member that a student has mentioned in class a sick parent or childcare issues. This information allows the advisor to check in with the student about their needs, to ask about the parent to create and strengthen a personal connection, and to link the student to childcare options in the community. This all-inclusive approach to advising has made our advisors vital participants in our student's success. Indeed, other units such as Financial Aid and Enrollment Services have noticed the success of Advising's holistic strategy from sharing space with them in the Momentum Center, leading to better practices across campus which result in students who feel cared for and engaged.

Advising is particularly worthy of praise for its work in innovation. Working closely with other units in academic affairs as well as with stakeholders such as Career Services, Academic Transition Programs, and New Student Programs has allowed Advising to test new and better approaches to their work while also assessing and documenting their successes and failures. For example, the necessity of moving to virtual advising in Spring of 2020 unexpectedly increased student engagement with advising in several growing sectors, such as adult learners. This knowledge led Advising to market virtual advising options to this particular group even after our return to campus with excellent results. Similarly, Advising realized quickly that students were responding better (and more quickly) when Wolfie, our mascot-themed chatbot, reached out to them about returning to school after the upheavals of COVID. Using Chatbot Wolfie in a targeted manner since then has resulted in a new capacity to connect students with financial aid support, guidance in returning to school after taking a break, and a new understanding of the many different barriers that kept so many students from staying in school during Fall of 2020.

I could honestly go on and on about the many successes of Advising in just the past year at UWG. Truly, they model for me the multipronged systemic approach to student engagement and progression encouraged by the Momentum Approach and the University System of Georgia. In the midst of a pandemic and shrinking enrollments across the system, Student Success has continued to enable student success through their dedication to innovative practices and caring for the whole student. I learn more about helping students from them than I have in twenty years of teaching. They are wildly deserving of the Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success, and I am honored to write on their behalf. Thank you for reading.

Respectfully,
Meg Pearson, PhD
Dean of University College
Professor of English

Recommendation from Dr. David Newton, Professor & Senior Fellow for Student Success

UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

Dear Members of the Regents' Momentum Year Award Committee,

I write in support of the University of West Georgia's Department of Student Success for the Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. In my role as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, I worked directly with leadership and staff in multiple units across campus to strategically align our campus support for student success in advising and academic success. This reorganization was the direct result of our Momentum Summit planning under the leadership of Interim President, Dr. Stuart Rayfield.

Prior to 2020, UWG employed a hybrid advising structure with a University Advising Center and separate advising units in some academic colleges and schools (Education, Business, and Nursing). While most of the advising units were highly effective, challenges with communication and coordination sometimes negatively impacted students, especially students transitioning between programs in different colleges or schools. Communication among advising units on campus was also affected. Advising loads varied significantly across units, and processes for advisor training and professional development differed as well. The reorganization followed recommendations from UWG's NACADA site visit and was preceded by campus research on advising models at other USG system institutions. The NACADA report recommended the following: 1) Establish a leadership position to direct academic advising initiatives across the institution; 2) Convene an academic advising leadership council to formalize collaboration on advising issues; 3) Create a director of training and professional development position; 4) House all academic advising under one administrative unit; and 5) Allocate additional resources for academic advising that comes from central funding sources.

As a result of this organizational change, all advising units on campus were reorganized under an Advising Executive Director who also oversees the Center for Academic Success. The reorganization also created cost-efficiencies that allowed University Advising to recruit and hire new academic advisors, eliminating excessively high advising loads in some academic units. As part of the reorganization, an Advising Training Coordinator position was created to develop processes for onboarding new advisors and professional development for existing advisors. This helps with the knowledge base and consistency across professional advisors. A campus advisory committee was established to assess the progress of the new advising structure and make recommendations to the Executive Director. University Advising is also developing a mentoring and training program for faculty advisors.

While this new organizational structure did not become effective until July 1, 2020, in the middle of the pandemic, we have already witnessed evidence of success such as the coordinated work that campus advisors have done in improving F20 retention rates. During the spring and summer months academic advisors identified all students who were enrolled during the previous semester and who had not yet registered for F20. Individual academic advisors were responsible for outreach to these students via email, text or personal phone call. Students were encouraged to work with their advisor and complete a schedule for the upcoming term. With the implementation of the Advisor Tracker document, this "at a

glance" document allows each advisor as well as administrative staff to see the status of the student without having to dive into other software products. Notes are available regarding the student's status. Weekly review of the tracker document looking for percentages of advised/enrolled identified students who required additional outreach to support enrollment. While many advising units on campus had engaged in outreach over the previous semester, coordinated efforts like this with specific strategies to communicate with students had not occurred. This process is now built into the advising process / calendar. Each semester advisors identify potential drop-out / stop-out students who could be encouraged to continue enrollment, address their barriers / concerns, and provide enrollment options. This process—supported by new initiatives in advisor training—focuses on personalized outreach to students to better understand and diagnose why they have not registered, identify barriers they may be facing, or provide encouragement to continue with their education that they have invested in. This allows students and advisors to create a plan or curriculum map for degree completion. While retention rates dropped below 70% to 68.84% in FY18 and saw a slight increase from FY18 to FY19 (69.07%), UWG—through the targeted strategic action in advising—increased its retention rate to 72.82% for F20, a significant increase over the previous two years and the highest since FY13 (74.11%). This increase is the result of collaboration across campus on Momentum-related initiatives to improve student retention and success. In particular, efforts to align the coordination of advising across units on campus directly contributed to this improvement.

While the success we have witnessed in terms of improved student support is, in part, the result of reorganization and more purposeful alignment of institutional priorities, it would not have occurred without the commitment of dedicated colleagues from across campus. Leadership and staff from multiple units worked collaboratively together to design and implement a new organizational model that was based on putting the success of students first. Along the way, there were multiple challenges. Units had to move out of their institutional silos to create a new cohesive, collaborative approach to student success. Success in situations like this are never certain. It has taken risks--especially during a pandemic--to engage in such large-scale institutional reorganizing. However, leadership and staff have both embraced this work to support our students. And we are now seeing the results. I am honored to work with colleagues who are not only willing to look at the evidence and make substantive changes, but who are also deeply engaged every day in the mission of the university to make those changes successful. My colleagues in the Department of Student Success have my deepest appreciation and strongest support.

Sincerely,

David Newton, Ph.D.
Professor & Senior Fellow for Student Success
Office of the Provost
University of West Georgiz

Overview

Institutional Mission and Student-Body Profile

The University of West Georgia, a charter member of the University System of Georgia, is a comprehensive, residential institution providing selectively focused undergraduate and graduate education primarily in the West Georgia region. The University is also committed to regional outreach through a collaborative network of external degree centers, course offerings at off-campus sites, and an extensive program of continuing education for personal and professional development. Opportunities for intellectual and personal development are provided through quality teaching, scholarly inquiry, creative endeavor, and service for the public good.

The University of West Georgia has 101 active programs of study, including 45 at the bachelor's level, 30 at the master's and specialist levels, 5 at the doctoral level, and 14 at the advanced certificate level. The institution awarded 2968 degrees in FY2021, which, compared to FY2019 and FY2020, was (+)6.5% and (-)2.5% in degrees conferred, respectively.[1]

There are 12,712 students currently enrolled at the institution[2], including 9,557 undergraduate and 3,155 graduate students, of which 63.4% are full-time and 45% of the undergraduates are first-time students. The university's student body is predominantly female (68.8%) and of traditional college age (18-25, 71.7%), with almost half (45.5%) identifying as black, indigenous, and/or person of color. The student body is comprised of residents from 34 states, with the majority being from all 152 counties of Georgia (94.3%).

From FY 2012-2021, UWG's four-year graduation rate has increased from 19.5% to 25.0%, marking a 5.5% increase, which was second only to the four-year graduation rate of FY2020 (25.4%).

When comparing first-year retention from 2012 to 2019, the rate has remained relatively unchanged (71.8% vs. 72.8%, respectively). For 2020, there was a notable reduction in first-year retention by 4.1%. While lower than the previous years' cohort, was still markedly higher than either the F17 or F18 first-year retention rates (1.36% and 1.91%, respectively). Further, in more recent years (F17-F20 cohorts), first-year retention was the highest for the F19 cohort (72.8%), which was 3.75% higher than first-year retention for the F18 cohort.

[1] Degrees awarded were obtained from USG degrees conferred report and do not account for students with more than one major.
[2] As of September 6, 2021 from Daily Enrollment Report

Key Indicators of Success at the University of West Georgia (From FY2016-2021)

- The preliminary second-year retention rate[3] for our F19 full-time cohort is higher than any year since 2012 (58.3%)
- Increased retention of continuing students by 7% over summer 2020 by reaching out personally to each student who had not registered
- Increase in rate of first-year retention of Black, first-time students from 69.52% for F18 to 75.6% for F19.[4]
- 95% of first-time students taking ENGL 1101 within first year (<30 hours).[5]
- F18-F20 students who declare a focus area took approximately two (mean=1.8) courses designated in their focus area within their first year (<30 hours).

Given these indicators of progress, we are thrilled to submit this nomination for consideration of the Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. These successes are particularly noteworthy when considering that institutions have been facing unprecedented challenges with enrollment and retention given the pandemic over the past 18 months, which coincided with a reorganization of student success and in 2020, occurring only a year after the student-success units were rehomed under academic affairs as part of University College. Our student success team has not only managed to maintain equilibrium--they have also managed to adapt, innovate, and collaborate throughout the chaos, resulting in improved methods of intentional outreach, proactive schedule creation, and personalized advising, coaching, and instruction.

Transforming Student Success

Integrating Academics

In 2019, following the recommendation outlined in NACADA's (The Global Community for Academic Advising) audit, advising and academic support were rehomed from the division of student affairs and enrollment management to the division of academic affairs. This structural change was the first step in breaking down barriers in an effort to align student advising and support with traditional academic units. This change took effect on July 1, 2019, in which advising and academic support joined first-year programs and interdisciplinary studies as the first units within University College, which was formed to centralize and enhance opportunities for students focused on the initiatives of momentum year.

The original vision for University College was then expanded in 2020 with a college reorganization, during which time four academic programs were structured into two departments and housed within University College: The Department of General Education, which included core faculty teaching first-year writing and math courses, and the Department of Civic Engagement and Public Service, housing both the political science and criminology programs.

[3] As of 09/08/21, pre-census date

[4] Overall retention rates for F19 have been verified by institutional research; however, F19 FY retention rates by ethnicity were calculated using cohort student IDs and verified with USG reporting data through the Qlik portal.

[5] These rates have not been validated through institutional research

Given the restructuring of University College and the inclusion of FYW and FYM courses and faculty, these core faculty and student success staff have been able to collaborate and develop more effective and efficient ways to courses based on students' needs in both format and time, as well as finding innovative ways to design, schedule, and message interdisciplinary block classes and learning communities.

Consolidating Student Success

Prior to 2020, the advising structure at the University of West Georgia was relatively decentralized and vastly varied in structure, approach, and delivery. While most of these systems were effective in a vacuum; collectively, these insular units hindered communication and collaboration, which harmed students transitioning from one program to another. Moreover, without any central oversight, there were significant inequities in advising loads across units. Following the recommendations from NACADA's 2018 audit report, all units of advising, student success, and the writing center were consolidated under the Director of The Department of Student Success. These efforts of consolidation have been advanced further in 2021 with two additional changes: One, the previous math center being rehomed in student success and rebranded as the STEM center; and two, the addition of four professional advisors to streamline advising for majors previously advised by both professional and faculty advisors, allowing faculty to foster more formalized mentoring programs. This restructure will allow the university to focus more on professional development opportunities for mentorship training and development. Lastly, members of the student success staff have also been key to the success of the new Momentum Center, which opened in fall 2020. This one-stop shop has staff from each key unit (including an advisor of the day) to serve a mission of owning any student's problem until they can solve it.

The confluence of student success' rehoming and consolidation has provided us with the opportunity to redefine the relationship between traditional support and academic units by breaking down barriers while maximizing organizational efficiency, all within the spirit of building **students' momentum** and **fostering a growth mindset** for each student and their distinct college journey. The student success staff provide a holistic approach to a students' wellbeing, incorporating career preparation, financial and personal wellbeing, academic performance, and academic planning.

Innovating instead of Mitigating: Reconceptualizing Student Outreach during Covid

During the pandemic, advisors and student success staff quickly adapted to meet students' needs by identifying challenges for distinct student populations and working with academic departments to communicate with their students about course and curriculum changes. Advisors and student success staff took the pandemic as an opportunity to seek innovative practices, many of which have become permanent practices within the department. Specifically, advisors have created hybrid models of advising to provide students with the platform that works best for their needs and safety. In Fall 2020, advisors established a help-ticket system to provide face-to-face appointments that maintained social distancing practices. This system proved popular: from the start of school through drop add, advisors answered 1,754 help tickets and another 1,036 after drop add. One of the newest additions is Midnight

Madness: in April of 2021, advisors held open advising hours virtually from 11pm to 1am throughout the first week of registration. The work of our advisors is evident in students' assessment: of 603 students, 93% indicated that their advisor made them feel welcome and pleased with their advising experience. Moreover, students indicated they had a good understanding of available courses (94.7%), Important dates (95.5%), how to register (96.7%), Degreeworks (95.8%), and Core/Degree Requirements (95.8%).

Enhancing the College Experience: Targeted Messaging based on Self-Identified Interests
In Fall 2021, Student Success and University College partnered with Student Affairs to determine how data collected in the new student profile might be used to strategically target students' self-identified needs. In the past, the New Student Profile survey has promised confidentiality; and therefore, it has not been disaggregated. Starting in Spring 2022, the survey will be rebranded to focus more on how the data will be used to serve each student and their needs. Using Tableau Reader, advisors will have workbooks that incorporate their currently used platforms along with individual and group-level reports on their advisees.

Within the group-level dashboard, advisors can examine counts of key actors like academic self-perception, grit, college activities of interest, and potential barriers and difficulties and filter by age, gender, ethnicity, and first-generation status. We are particularly excited about generating contact lists of students by identified interests in college activities, barriers, and difficulties. Using our EAB software platform, we can then craft text message to students about activities and resources not just available to them, but specifically relevant to their interests and concerns. While no message will include any reference to the new student profile, for students who identify an interest in Greek life, for example, can be sent messages about fraternity and sorority rush; students who identify math skills as a potential difficulty will be messaged about the STEM center. Target messaging should increase student access to key relevant information; and in turn, increase involvement and engagement with campus organizations and support resources.

One of the priorities of University College is collaboration, especially when considering the retention and progression of first- and second-year students. Being part of a college with a unique structure of academic faculty and academic support staff has allowed for us to look holistically at students' processes from declaring a major, signing up for courses, and taking those courses—while all the while seeking the resources available through academic coaching, supplemental instruction, and other forms of academic support in the writing and STEM centers.

Maintaining Momentum: Student Success and Faculty Collaboration
The student success staff have collaborated with faculty across campus to implement communication systems for students who may be in need of additional academic support. One of the primary methods that faculty are able to initiate these concerns are through the use of early alerts, which are managed through the EAB platform. Student success requests early alerts from any instructor teaching first-year students and athletes. The impact of these alerts is impressive: approximately 45-50% of students contacted use at least one of the services offered by student success as a direct result of the early alert. Within the reorganized structure, we established that some faculty were unsure of the impact or process of what occurred after they initiated an alert. Student Success helped to create infographics, which associate deans can provide to faculty across campus when early alert requests are communicated.

This year, student success was also able to identify program success markers (i.e. courses that indicate likelihood of successful retention and graduation in a program's curriculum) for every undergraduate program across campus. While a part of EAB's program that helps to identify students who are at risk, only about 50% of programs had ever identified success markers, with many of these not being updated since 2015. UC dean's office and advising center teamed up to meet with faculty, advisors, and/or chairs from each program to identify these markers by examining what the data revealed to be most predictive courses to predict student success within each major and then working with faculty and advisors to use the curriculum to contextualize these findings. Within these discussions, programs typically identify three lower-level courses that are predictive of success within the major, along with a grade cutoff (such as students are most successful when earning a "C" or better in this course), and hours by which the course should be completed to stay on path for four- and six-year graduation (e.g., 0-30 hours). These meetings were also used for UC and Advising to provide a refresher/overview of the EAB platform and its utility to all faculty and staff across campus.

Maintaining Momentum for Students through Advisors' Momentum
In their audit report, NACADA pointed to student often having multiple advisors in their college career. While this was partially attributable to inconsistent models of advising across programs, it also was due to advisor retention, as there was no pathway to promotion within the traditional advising structure. To remedy this, a career-ladder structure was created allowing advisors to apply for promotion to advisor II and advisor III positions within applicable time periods. This took effect this past year, allowing six advisors to apply and be awarded promotion to advisor II, and two advisors to be promoted to advisor III positions.

Academic Support
Our supplemental Instruction program is one of only 45 in the nation that are accredited through UMKC, which is attributable to student success' staff work in coordinating and building faculty partnerships to sustain this program. In Fall 2021, we have supplemental instruction in 118 course sections (all but two are 1000- and 2000-level courses),the which is the highest number of sections we have had yet) and are averaging 119 student visits a week. Participation in the program is valuable: in spring 2021, 86% of those who participated in SI returned in the

fall 2021 semester. Even more impressive, the mean grade-point average for those who attended SI was 1.04 points higher than those who did not (3.09 and 2.05, respectively).

Similarly, peer academic coaching and tutoring are popular and successful support systems, with over 1349 students making 2075 appointments were just in the last academic year. In 2019, these numbers were even higher: 3035 appointments made by 1,689 students. Within the current semester, peer tutoring is currently supporting more than 150 courses, and providing students with options for drop-in appointments both during and outside normal working hours.

Purposeful Choice

A focus at UWG is ensuring students are **intentional** in choosing a degree by considering how a program encompasses their passions, skills, and career goals. To cultivate **purposeful choice** with our students, we have incorporated various methods of assessment and advisement, which occur iteratively in students' first year: prior to orientation, at orientation, and during their first year. Through collaborative efforts across divisions, we have created a self-reflective and student-centered process. Specifically, through our Visual Zen platform, students are able to identify their interests, major area they are considering, and their scheduling preferences, which advisors then use to make each student their own schedule of 15 credit hours prior to attending orientation. In Summer 2021, in partnership with new student programs, advisors made ~2700 schedules and served our incoming students in more than 100 scheduled orientation sessions. This new orientation format allowed advisors more individual time with each student, creating an opportunity **to foster students' intentionality** in selecting courses and a major.

For students who are unsure about their major, advisors often encourage a focus area; however, **intentionality** is still central to this process. Prior to commencing their first semester of coursework, advisors work with students to complete the Focus2 assessment, which provides students with self-assessments to help inform their choice in a focus area. Further, all students are encouraged to enroll in one of our cornerstone courses (previously called first-year seminars), in which students complete four lab assignments that focus on career self-assessment, growth mindset, developing curricular plans, and practicing academic skills. As of Fall 2021, approximately 80% of our fulltime first-time freshmen were enrolled. Cornerstone's integration of academic support services increases students' awareness of the resources available to serve students, helps them to establish a clear path for completion, and also encourages continual reflection and assessment of **purposeful pursuit** of a program connected to their future career goals and interests.

To **enhance the path for completion**, we have worked to redesign our program maps to increase their appeal and utility to students, while also providing a template that will allow for the addition of co-curricular activities, (in line with our momentum year goals for the 21-22 school year). Further, these emphasize the 15-in-4 message. For our F20 cohort, we did observe a slight increase in the mean number of enrolled semester hours from the previous three years (F17$\bar{X}$=14.1, F20$\bar{X}$=14.4).

The program maps also provide guidance regarding the successful completion of early math and writing courses within the first year. Our current estimated three-year mean rate of registering for (or having received credit) for English 1101 is 87.5%. We have seen a small decrease in this rate from 2018, which is at 89%. Of those students who took English 1101, the DFWI rates steadily decreased from F17 to F19 (20.6% to 17.3%). We have, however seen a significant increase in DFWI rates for F20 (to 28.6%), much of which we attribute to the unique structure of dual modality occurring during the pandemic.

Our current three-year mean rate of registering for (or having received credit for) a first-year math course is 88.7%, of which F19 was the highest rate (90.2%)[6]. The grade distribution for those who took a first-year math course showed steady declines in DFWI rates from 37.3% in F17 to 31.05% in F20 (with the lowest being in F19 at 28.64%).

Additionally, Student Success is working with University College to embed student-led narration within the program maps to provide an engaging and personalized interaction for students using screen readers. Focus-area maps also outline three courses for students to take within the core that fall under the umbrella of the general discipline.
Our three most popular focus areas are health professions, business, and stem, which collectively account for 92.3% of students in the F18-F20 cohorts who started in a focus area, with the most popular being health professions (66%), which is often treated as a pre-nursing track. While there have been eight focus areas, three have had 25 or fewer students across three cohorts, with the lowest, humanities, having enrolled only seven students across the F17-F20 cohorts. Students within these cohorts have, on average, taken 1.8 core courses within their focus area by 30 hours, with those in the health professional focus area averaging slightly higher ($\bar{X}$=2.2).

Within this past year of momentum planning, we have recognized the need to investigate the success of our focus areas and determine whether we should redevelop these areas. This has provided us with an opportunity to examine students' pathways from focus areas to other majors. There still appears to be a low rate of retention among student who select focus-area majors, which demonstrates a need for us to rethink the design and development of students within these areas. However, when comparing retention rates of each focus area to that of previous[7] "undeclared students" (from F13-F17), the retention rate was 6.9-24.6% higher for all retention areas with the exception of STEM and social science focus areas, whose retention rates were 7.1% and 10% lower, respectively.

We have also been assessing whether the focus areas are reflective of student's future majors by examining the third-year majors of students who were initially in focus areas major. With three exceptions, (health professions, business, and humanities), less than 30% of students in focus areas stay in that focus area or select a major within that same broad discipline of the

[6] These rates have not been verified by the office of institutional research.
[7] Sports and Wellness was omitted as they had no students within the last two cohorts.

focus area. In fact, of cohort students initially within a STEM focus area initially, only 9% remained in that focus area or major in focus area by their third year. Student success has realized the natural challenges associated with STEM majors; thus, they are inviting all focus area STEM majors to the new STEM center and encouraging collaboration among one another in an effort to build STEM community and continue cultivating strong STEM tutors and Supplemental Instruction leaders

Appendix I: Example of a new designed program map

Appendix II: Early Alert Infographic

Student Success Issued Early Alert Progress Report - Campaign

Did you know that about 40% of students attend academic coaching as a direct result of you taking the time to submit your Early Alert Progress reports?

By Third Week

Center for Academic Success sends out an email the third week of the semester to any instructor who is teaching those who are athletes and/or first- and second-year students.

By Withdrawal

Using the link provided, the instructor has from the third week until around the withdrawal deadline to submit progress reports on these students that indicate whether or not that student is at risk.

Initiating Contact

After a student is marked as at-risk within an Early Alert Progress Report, the student is contacted by email and text message and invited to make an academic coaching appointment.

To the Student

The message that students receive includes a direct link to sign right up for a session. If the student signs up, they immediately get a confirmation email, and they get reminder emails (even an hour before) to make sure they know to attend.

Respondents

For those who do not initially respond, the office reaches out to them one more time. There is evidence demonstrating that further contact after this is likely harmful.[1]

40% Attend

Of those contacted, approximately 40% attend at least one academic coaching session.

50% for 1

Approximately 50% utilize at least one CAS services during the semester.

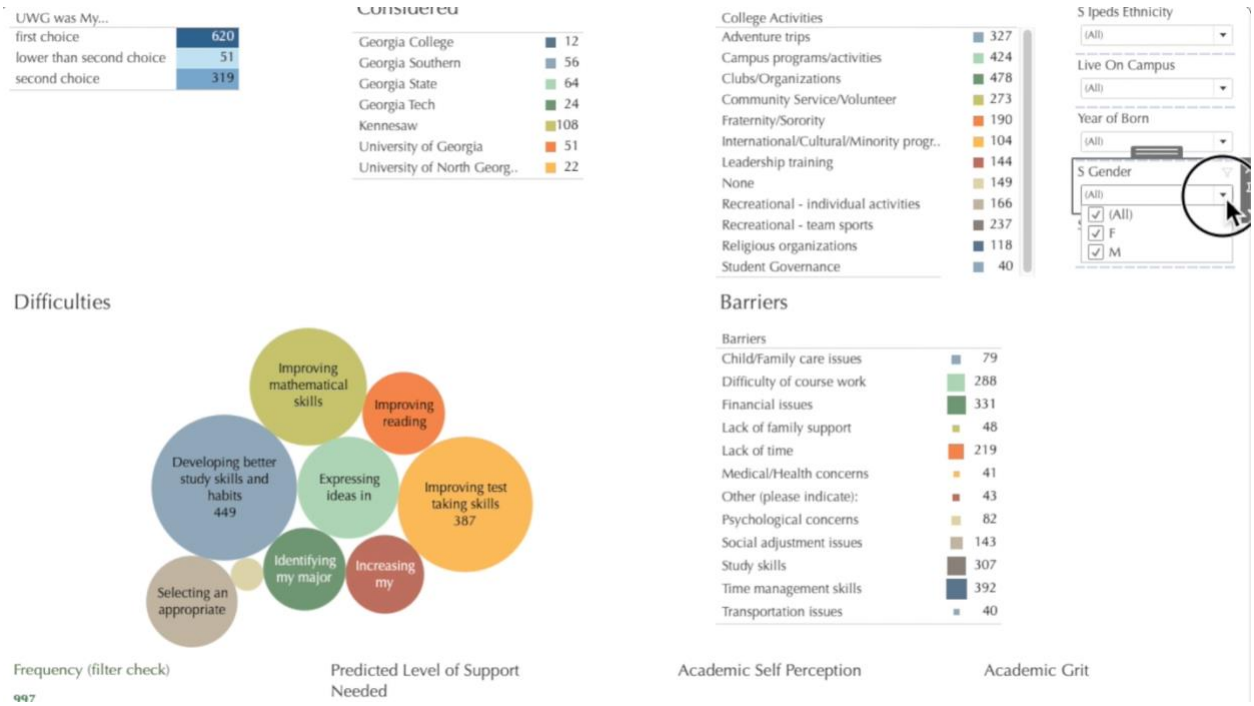
Additional Contact

Students that are marked at-risk three or more times have additional contact by their Academic Advisor and other student success units.

1 This has been examined at UWG specifically, but also consistent in other student success initiatives research.

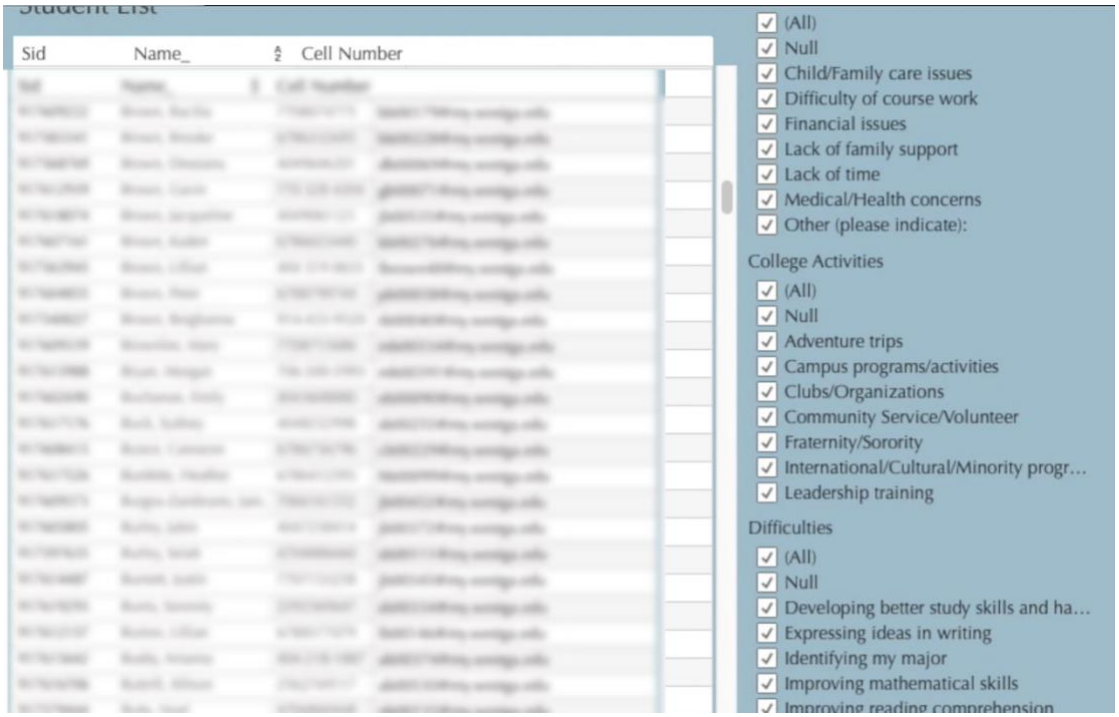
Appendix III: Screenshot of Group-Level Filtered Dashboard

Gif of Appendix III Available on Google Site



Appendix IV: Student List Generator (Names Blurred for Privacy)

Gif of Appendix IV Available on Google Site



Appendix V: Focus Area Descriptions

UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

ACADEMIC FOCUS AREAS / META-MAJORS

Academic focus areas or meta-majors are designed for students who have not declared a major upon entering West Georgia. Focus areas group major programs together so that undecided students can pursue coursework that offers a successful pathway to completion and explore majors in a general area of personal or professional interest. The courses aligned to each academic focus area will count across all major programs within the focus area and will also offer an informative exposure to the focus area field. These courses are applicable across a wide range of majors within the focus area and will help students avoid unnecessary credits as they narrow their program choice. The nine focus areas or meta-majors offered at UWG are described below.

ARTS

Do you love art, music, theatre, or film? Might you want to be certified to teach art or music in the schools by the time you finish your bachelor's degree? Might you want to work professionally as an actor, artist, or musician, or in the film industry? If you answered yes to any of these questions, the Arts meta-major may be for you. In this meta-major, you'll take core curriculum classes especially targeted for the arts, including a special interdisciplinary XIDS 2100 pathways course that will help you think critically about arts-related career options.

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

The Health Professions meta-major at the University of West Georgia currently encompasses the Tanner Health System School of Nursing. This meta-major would be of interest to those seeking a career in healthcare with a focus on nursing and employment within the field of nursing. Nursing encompasses a wide range of opportunities for employment outside the traditional hospital setting. Nurses are employed in physician and other healthcare provider offices and clinics, the school system, public health departments, law offices, insurance company facilities, research labs, government offices and facilities, and a myriad of other organizations and institutions. The range of care nurses provide opens up opportunities for those wishing to become part of a world-wide profession or those who wish to work with a specified population in providing care or services to improve or maintain the health of others. Core requirements for the health professions meta-major include courses focused on the social and biological sciences such as psychology, sociology, anatomy and physiology, and microbiology. A broad base of understanding of human behavior and of human biological function is essential to success in this meta-major.

EDUCATION

The Education meta-major provides students with opportunities to explore careers in teaching in a variety of educational settings. Foundational courses engage students in observations and interactive experiences with children from diverse backgrounds. Completion of the majors in Elementary Education, Special Education and Physical Education prepares students for initial teacher licensure in the state of Georgia.

BUSINESS

At the Richards College of Business, we are in the business of transforming lives through education, engagement, and experiences, and we mean that. Through our business majors, students are introduced to various theories and concepts that will guide them far beyond the academic walls to become global leaders in business and industry. Our students acquire more than knowledge during their time with us and leave us prepared to not only lead, but to make an impact on the business world. We have had the pleasure to educate top managers, entrepreneurs, accountants, financial analysts, economists and marketing executives who are alumni of the Richards College.

During your first year, you will be exposed to our curriculum with courses in macroeconomics, microeconomics, and computer applications. Our engaging faculty are well-versed in meeting the needs of all students. If you are excited about impacting the lives of others through service in the world of business, the Richards College of Business is the academic home for you. Go West! Go Business!

SPORT AND WELLNESS

The Sport and Wellness meta-major fosters a transformative learning environment where students can engage in research, service, and experiential activities that empower them for success in a dynamic, diverse, and global environment. Through this meta-major students will have options that lead to careers in athletics, recreation, fitness, speech language pathology, health and human services, wellness education and promotion, public health, coaching, sport business operations, and other related fields.

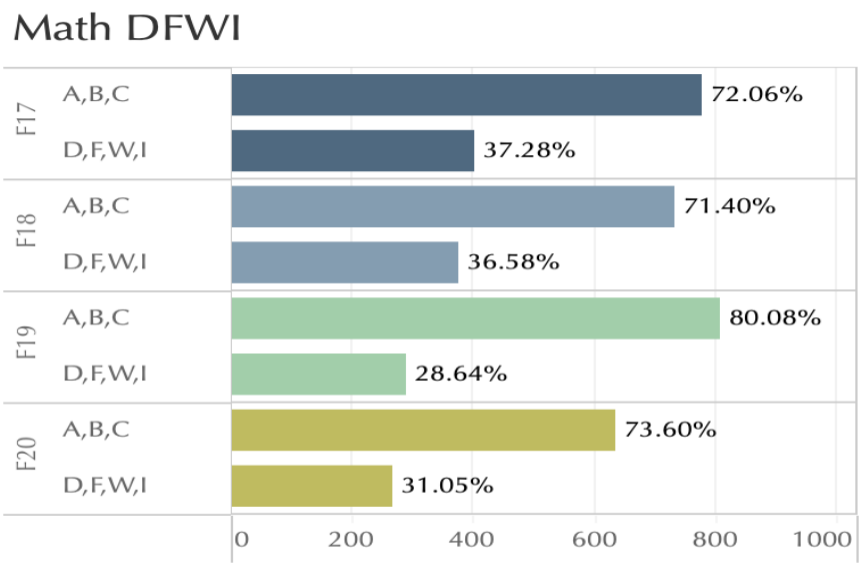
HUMANITIES

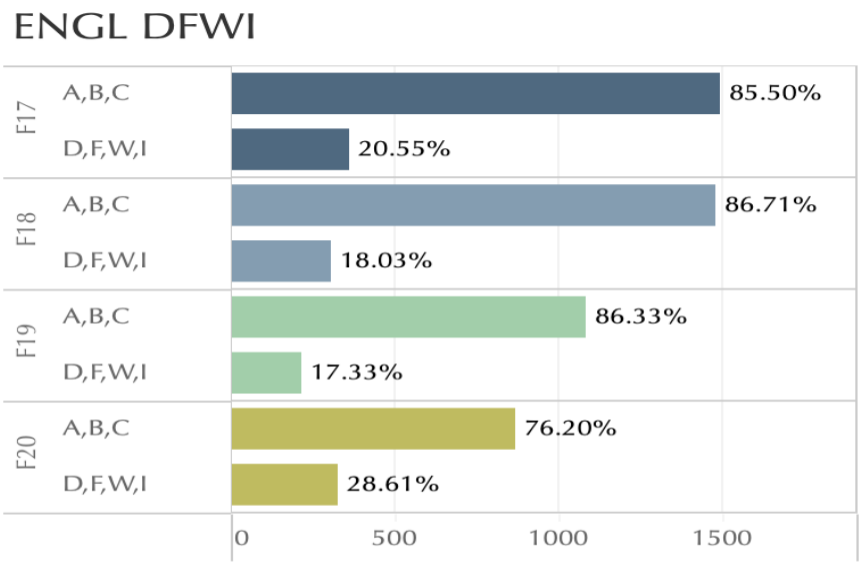
Do you love reading, writing, and thinking? Ever thought about working in a museum or writing a book or screenplay? Might you want certification to te h English, French, Spanish, or Social Studies as part of your bachelor's degree? Want a degree that will prepare you for graduate school in diverse academic and professional fields? If you answered yes to any of these questions, the Humanities meta-major may be for you. In this meta-major, you'll take core curriculum classes especially chosen for those pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree. This meta-major provides immediate access to the foreign language and other core curriculum courses that you'll need to graduate, including a special interdisciplinary XIDS 2100 pathways course that will help you think critically about promising careers that might be approached through a humanities degree.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

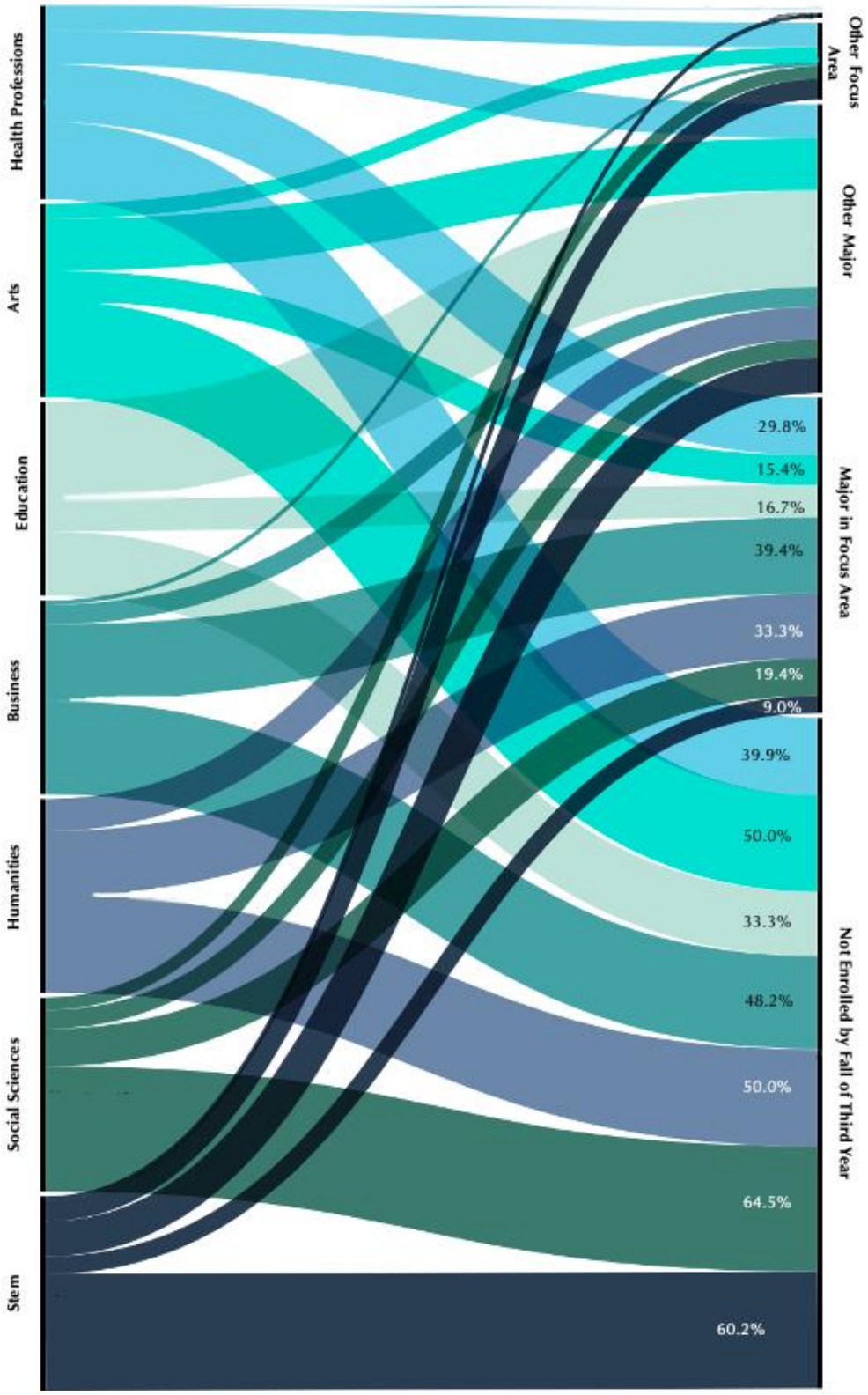
Are you interested in serving humanity and doing public good? The Social Sciences meta-major is the scientific study of human society and social relatio hips. As a Social Sciences meta-major you will have the opportunity to explore key aspects of the human condition and broaden your understanding of life and how it is lived. This exploration is critical to the development of informed, engaged, and active members of our communities. The Social Sciences meta-major includes courses in Anthropology, Criminology, Geography, Mass Communications, Political Science, Psychology, Social and Behavioral Health, and Sociology.

Appendix VI: DFWI rates by cohort for ENGL 1101 within first 30 hours and FYM within first 30 hours

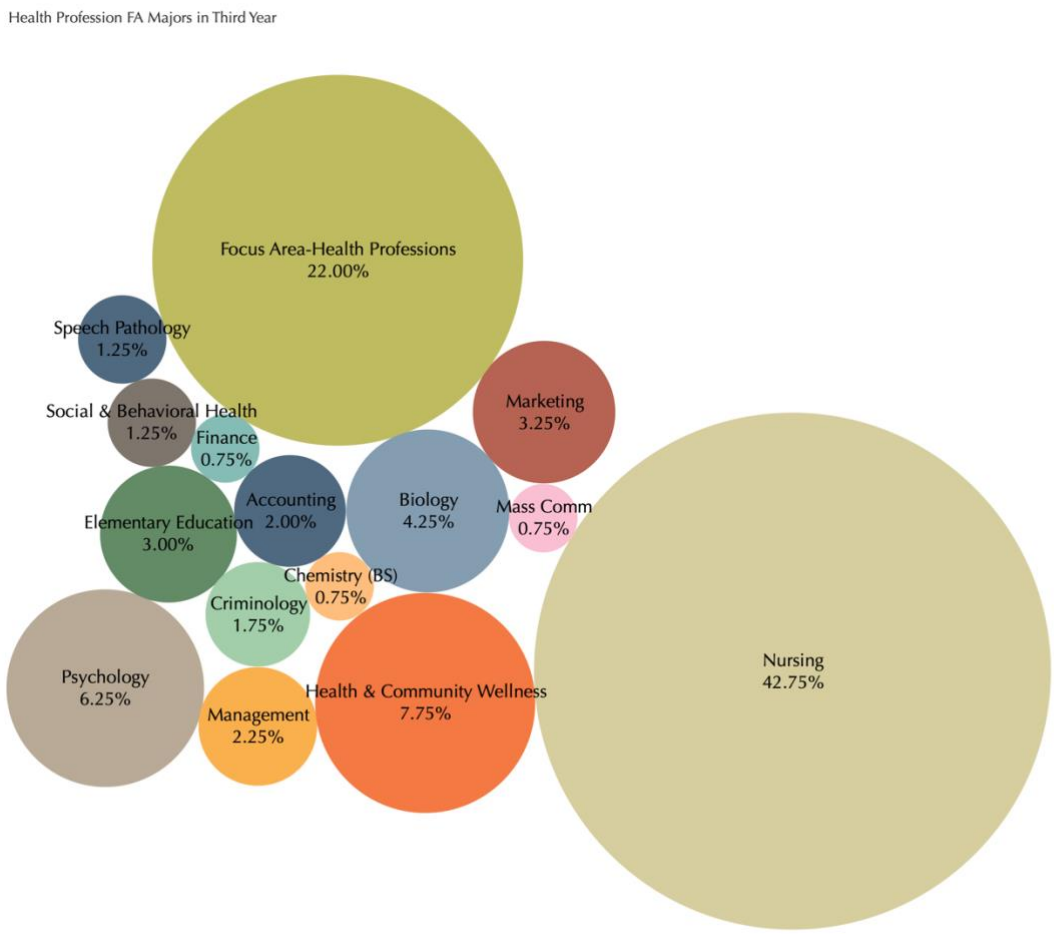




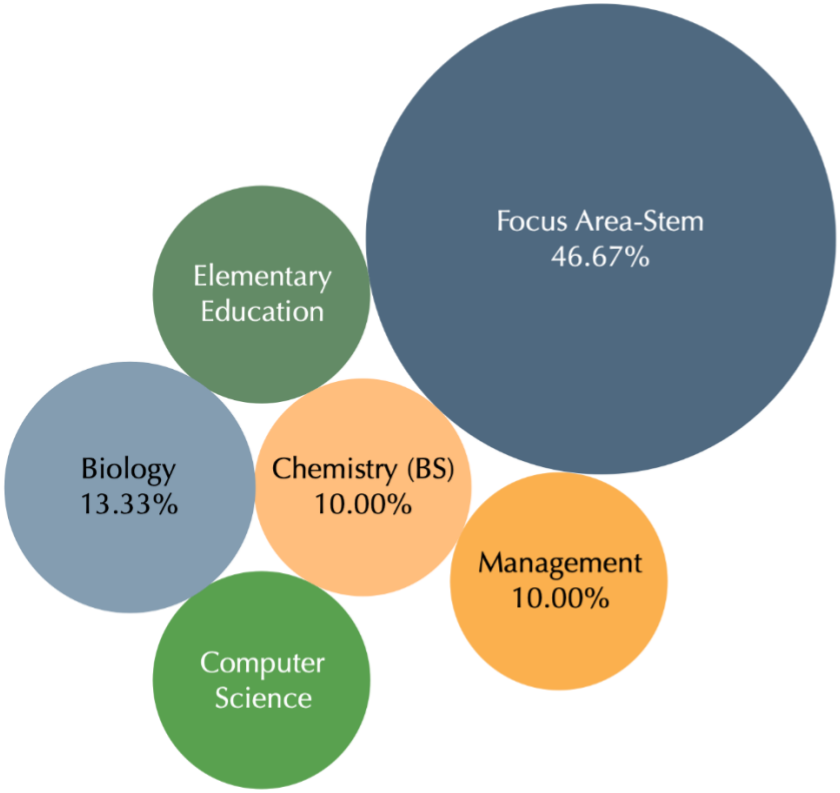
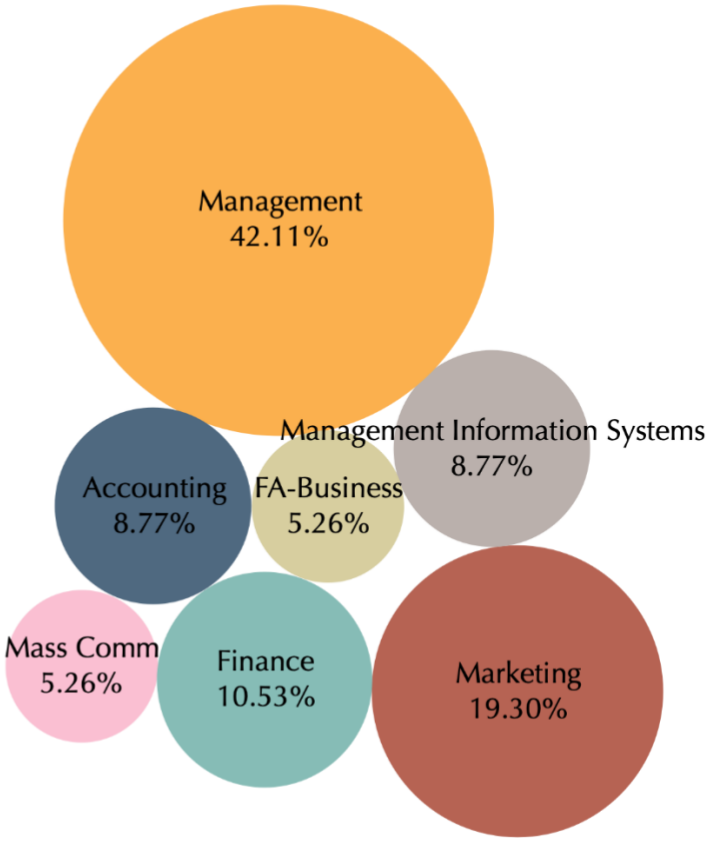
Appendix VII: Pathways of Focus Area Students



Appendix VIII: Third-Year Majors of Health Professions, STEM, and Business



STEM FA Majors in Third Year



Business FA Majors in Third Year