

CONNECTING  
**PEOPLE, PURPOSE, & PLACE**

SUU STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2030

**SUU** SOUTHERN  
UTAH  
UNIVERSITY





## CONNECTING PEOPLE, PURPOSE, AND PLACE

Southern Utah University (SUU) is an institution built on a foundation of being people-centered, purpose-driven, and place-empowered (the three P's). Our people are our highest priority and our work is fueled by a desire to change lives and to create a sense of place where our university community feels like they belong. Following the success of its previous strategic plan (2015–2022, Explore, Engage, Excel), SUU is implementing this strategic plan to guide the university's planning, decision-making, and resource allocation for the years 2024–2030. This plan intends to build on five strategic priorities: enhancing student success, enriching the academic experience, cultivating a culture of caring, increasing access and affordability, and expanding alumni and community engagement.

## THE MISSION AND VISION

### MISSION STATEMENT

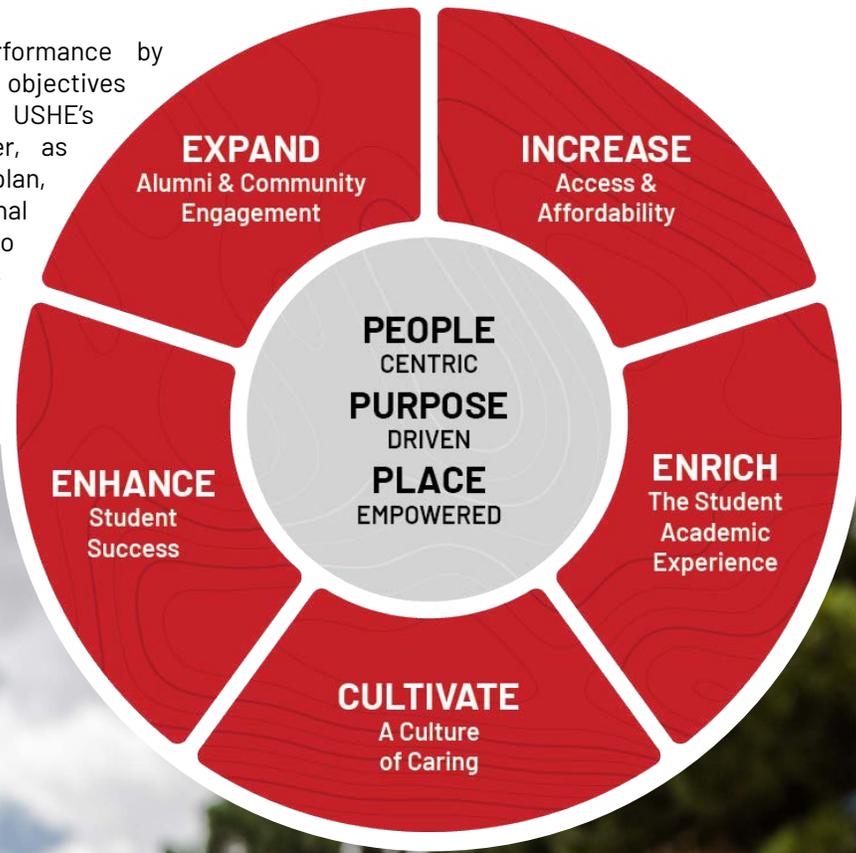
Southern Utah University is a dynamic teaching and learning community that engages students in experiential education leading to personal growth, civic responsibility, and professional excellence.

### VISION STATEMENT

SUU will be an inclusive and innovative institution of higher education that strengthens students' connections to each other, the campus, their discipline, career of choice, community, and the world. SUU will deliver quality and affordable academic learning and an outstanding student experience.

# THE FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SUU will measure and improve its performance by implementing the strategic priorities and objectives below. These gains will include exceeding USHE's performance and growth metrics. However, as institutional measures of the success of this plan, SUU has selected a limited number of institutional outcomes and benchmarks for each goal to track SUU's progress over the duration of this plan. Terminology and context for institutional outcomes can be found in the appendix.



# 1: Enhance Student Success

## Intended Outcomes

- **Increase Retention Rates<sup>1</sup>**
  - Benchmark: 73.2% (average for the past 5 reporting periods)
  - Goal: 74%
- **Increase Graduation Rates<sup>2</sup>**
  - Benchmark: 53.5% (average for the past 5 reporting periods)
  - Goal: 60%
- **Increase Credentials Awarded<sup>3</sup>**
  - Benchmark: 4,679 (2022-23 Academic Year total)
  - Goal: 5,000
- **Increase Students with successful post-graduation placement<sup>4</sup>**
  - Benchmark: 81% (average for the past 5 reporting periods)
  - Goal: 85%

## Key Initiatives

- **Expand Student Experiences:** Expand student experiences beyond the classroom to enhance students' connections and academic, social, and emotional well-being.
- **Close Academic Performance Gaps:** Evaluate and intentionally close attainment gaps in academic programs, retention, and graduation measures.
- **Increase Program Completion:** Enhance enrollment and support processes that will draw students into degree programs and connect them with academic and social environments that will help keep them enrolled through graduation.
- **Improve Postgraduate Preparedness:** Intentionally build connections to postgraduate opportunities, including employment, graduate school, or other meaningful experiences.



<sup>1</sup>Year 1 retention rate for fall Cohorts of first-time full-time bachelor's degree seeking students.

<sup>2</sup>The 150% completion time rate of first-time full-time all degree-seeking students.

<sup>3</sup>Total number of certificates, associates, bachelor and graduate degrees awarded per academic year.

<sup>4</sup>Measured by both the employment rate and the continuing education rate upon graduation.

## 2: Enrich the Student Academic Experience

### Intended Outcomes

- **Maintain small undergraduate class sizes<sup>5</sup>** in the face-to-face and online environments.
  - Benchmark: F2F=23 Online=27
  - Goal: F2F=23 Online=27
- Continue to **meet USHE High Yield<sup>6</sup> Attainment Goals** within the USHE workforce alignment framework.
  - Benchmark: 71%
  - Goal: 74%
- **Enhance instructional quality<sup>7</sup>** in all modalities
  - Benchmark: Forthcoming
  - Goal: Forthcoming
- **Maintain a current Campus Master Plan**
  - Benchmark: Previously completed plan
  - Goal: Continuously current revised plan

### Key Initiatives

- **Enhance Curriculum:** Use evidence-based practices to refine existing curriculum and introduce new curriculum to foster improved learning outcomes, timely completion, and workforce alignment.
- **Recruit and Retain Mission-Aligned Faculty:** Attract and retain faculty who are committed to SUU's student-centered mission through institutional support of scholarship and instructional improvements.
- **Strengthen Open Inquiry and Academic Freedom:** Foster a culture among students and faculty of openly inquiring about diverse ideas and viewpoints, and participating in civil and constructive dialogue.
- **Support Experiential and Applied Learning:** Encourage experiential and applied learning inside and outside of the classroom.
- **Support Campus Infrastructure:** Update the campus master plan annually to ensure facilities, faculty, staffing, technology, and other resources sufficiently support the student experience.

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<sup>5</sup>Data includes enrollment in undergraduate classes (excluding concurrent enrollment classes) taught as regular class, lab, or regular class with lab and is broken out by face-to-face and online classes.

<sup>6</sup>Percent of awards that are aligned with high-wage, high-demand occupations determined by USHE.

<sup>7</sup>Measured by end-of-semester course feedback surveys submitted by students.



### 3: Cultivate a Culture of Caring

#### Intended Outcomes

- **Maintain Employee Retention**
  - Benchmark: Annual Retention 91% Faculty, 77% Staff
  - Goal: Annual Retention 91% Faculty, 80% Staff
- **Increase # of Employee Engagement Opportunities**
  - Benchmark: Forthcoming
  - Goal: Increase 20%

#### Key Initiatives

- **Advance Belonging Efforts:** Improve efforts to ensure that every employee has an opportunity to succeed.
- **Strengthen Support Services:** Review and strengthen support services for faculty, staff, and the SUU family. This review will ensure that the assistance needed to achieve success is sufficient, that employees feel direct involvement and responsibility to contribute to a culture of caring, and that compensation levels for staff and faculty are competitive.
- **Improve Engagement Opportunities:** Continuously connect employees to current efforts, streamline and link opportunities to make more meaningful professional and social connections, and create new engagement opportunities as needed to reduce silos.
- **Recognize T-Bird Contributions:** Develop and implement varied, meaningful, and intentional methods for recognizing service, contributions, and excellence.
- **Campus Safety:** Continue enhancing safety on campus with the allocation of additional resources, improved training opportunities, and a stronger culture of shared ownership for crime prevention.

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<sup>8</sup>Includes all degree and certificate-seeking students enrolled in the SUU campus. Concurrent enrollment and continuing education students are excluded.

<sup>9</sup>Includes students enrolled in the SUU Online (SON), AP and Speedway campuses. Students enrolled in the SUU campus who take online courses are not included in this measure.

<sup>10</sup>Includes high school students enrolled in classes for college credit/enrolled in college programs and students enrolled in credit bearing classes for professional development.

## Goal 4: Increase Access and Affordability

### Intended Outcomes

- **Grow Face-to-face Students<sup>8</sup>**
  - Benchmark: 8,719 (Fall 2023 third-week headcount)
  - Goal: 10,000 - 10,500
- **Grow Online Students<sup>9</sup>**
  - Benchmark: 3,056 (Fall 2023 third-week headcount)
  - Goal: 5,500
- **Grow Concurrent, Pre-college and Continuing Education<sup>10</sup>**
  - Benchmark: 3,258 (Fall 2023 third-week headcount)
  - Goal: 3,600

### Key Initiatives

- **Expand Access Points:** Intentionally expand entry points into the institution, offer marketable degree programs, and optimize educational delivery models, including those that will reach underserved and underrepresented student populations. Further remove other barriers to entry into the institution.
- **Sustain Financial Health:** Provide a reasonable cost of attendance by maintaining financial stability through balanced budgets, rigorous forecasting, fundraising, expense management, revenue generation, and increasing need-based aid.



## Goal 5: Expand Alumni and Community Engagement

### Intended Outcomes

- **Increase the level of philanthropic giving** through a comprehensive fundraising campaign.
  - Benchmark: \$105 million (Result of the last comprehensive campaign)
  - Goal: \$115+ million
- **Increase alumni and community engagement**
  - Benchmark: Alumni - 30,509 Community - Forthcoming
  - Goal: 10% increase in # of participants

### Key Initiatives

- **Strengthen Alumni Success:** Facilitate network connections and opportunities for current students, elevate career entry points for graduates, support successful careers for alumni, and celebrate traditions and legacy.
- **Enhance Thriving Communities:** Be a champion for convening the economic engine that supports thriving communities. Build outreach efforts that leverage University talent and resources. Invest in community development that supports meaningful community engagement and connections to campus.
- **Elevate Philanthropy:** Develop mutually beneficial partnerships that help donors fulfill their hopes, give students opportunities, and help SUU accomplish its mission.





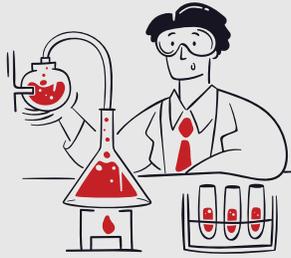
## INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENTS

SUU is built on a foundation of being people-centered, purpose-driven, and place-empowered. The following institutional statements provide context for the institution's history, purpose, and core values. Taken collectively, these statements establish the soul of the institution and provide guardrails and aspirational qualities for decision-makers and stakeholders.

### History and Purpose

- **Motto:** Learning Lives Forever
- **Land Acknowledgement:** SUU wishes to acknowledge and honor the Indigenous Communities of this region as original possessors, stewards, and inhabitants of this Too'veep (land), and recognize that the University is situated on the traditional homelands of the Nung'wu (Southern Paiute People).
- **History:** SUU is built upon the actions of hardy founders who sacrificed their health, properties, and businesses for the privilege of hosting an institution of higher education. Their goal was to enhance educational accessibility for underserved populations. Their determination and tenacity still resonate today.

## Core Values



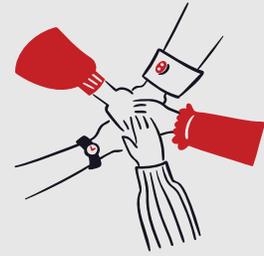
### Quality Academic Learning

SUU is a student-centered institution that prioritizes quality teaching and evidence-based practices to optimize academic learning. SUU connects the process of knowledge acquisition to its experiential application within an academic discipline or interdisciplinary learning environment. Academic learning leads to personal growth, civic responsibility, and professional excellence.



### Community

SUU is known for its commitment to student success and its engagement within the communities of which we are part. Everyone with a relationship with the University is included and supported in learning and service initiatives. SUU fosters meaningful collaboration among groups to propel students into lives of service and engagement. SUU creates spaces for everyone to feel safe, challenged, and welcomed as they learn and grow together.



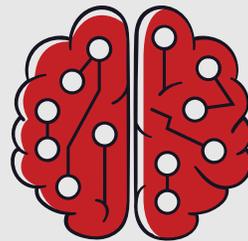
### Belonging

SUU fosters cooperation, respect, empathy, and belonging as it recognizes differences at all levels and among all demographics. We aspire to collectively address systemic barriers to encourage success among all populations and within all campus groups.



### Innovation

SUU explores and implements innovative partnerships and opportunities in and out of the classroom. SUU uses collaboration and emerging technologies to innovate administratively, pedagogically, operationally, culturally, and artistically. All of the University's innovation is directed toward providing students with the most engaging and supportive educational experience possible.



### Stewardship

As part of the SUU experience, each member of the community expands their perspective through acquiring knowledge, lived experiences, and social connections. With this growth comes the obligation to appreciate and protect our connections to history, learning, the environment, civil conversation, and the scientific process of knowledge creation. SUU works to instill in all members of its community the value of stewardship.



### Well-being

SUU values wellness and prioritizes resources to ensure support and well-being for individuals on and off campus. Taking a comprehensive approach, SUU strives to meet holistic needs through learning programs and resources for students, the campus, and the community. SUU advocates balance in all things and integrates those principles into the learning environment.

# APPENDIX

## Student Success

### Retention

- This is the year 1 retention rate for fall Cohorts of first-time full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students.
- Benchmark is the calculated average for the past 5 reporting years.
- Data is collected and reported by the Institutional Research Office.

### Graduation Rates

- This is the 150% completion time rate of first-time full-time all degree-seeking students.
- Benchmark is the calculated average for the past 5 reporting years.
- Data is collected and reported by the Institutional Research Office.

### Credentials Awarded

- This is the total number of certificates, associates, bachelor, and graduate degrees awarded per academic year.
- Benchmark is from the academic year 2022-2023.
- Data is collected and reported by the Institutional Research Office

### Post-graduate Placement

- Post-graduate placement is measured by both the employment rate and the continuing education rate upon graduation.
- Benchmark is the calculated average for the past 5 reporting years.
- Data is collected and tracked by the Career Center via the Graduate Questionnaire and reported by the Institutional Research Office.

## Academic Experience

### Small Undergraduate Class Sizes

- Data includes enrollment in undergraduate classes (excluding concurrent enrollment classes) taught as regular class, lab, or regular class with lab and is broken out by face-to-face and online classes
- Benchmark reflects the average for the past 5 academic years (fall and spring semesters) based on end-of-term data
- Data is collected and reported by the Institutional Research Office.

### USHE High Yield Attainment Goals

- This is the percentage of awards that are aligned with high-wage, high-demand occupations determined by USHE.
- Benchmark was calculated and provided by USHE for the 2022 year.
- Data is collected and tracked by USHE in collaboration with SUU's Institutional Research Office.

### Instructional Quality

- This will be measured by end-of-semester course feedback surveys submitted by students.
- Benchmarks are still to be determined.
- Tracking is still to be determined.

## Access & Affordability

### Face-to-face Students

- This includes all degree and certificate-seeking students enrolled in the SUU campus. Concurrent enrollment and continuing education students are excluded.
- Benchmark reflects Fall 2023 third-week headcount.
- Data is collected and reported by the Institutional Research Office.

### Online Students

- This includes students enrolled in the SUU Online (SON), AP, and Speedway campuses. Students enrolled in the SUU campus who take online courses are not included in this measure.
- Benchmark reflects Fall 2023 third-week headcount.
- Data is collected and reported by the Institutional Research Office.

### Concurrent, Pre-college and Continuing Education Students

- This includes high school students enrolled in classes for college credit/enrolled in college programs and students enrolled in credit-bearing classes for professional development.
- Benchmark reflects Fall 2023 third-week headcount.
- Data is collected and reported by the Institutional Research Office.

