



# SPECIAL VISIT REPORT

FEBRUARY 23, 2017

FROM

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST

1409 WALNUT GROVE AVE, ROSEMEAD, CA 91770

TO

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES SENIOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY COMMISSION

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*Cutting the Ribbon at the 25th Anniversary Celebration (December 19, 2016)*

## INTRODUCTION

### INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

University of the West is a private, non-profit institution located in Rosemead, California, about ten minutes east of Los Angeles. UWest was founded in 1991 by Venerable Master Hsing Yun of the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist order of Taiwan and is one of five schools in the Fo Guang Shan university consortium [CFR1.5]. UWest offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees as well as a number of certificates. The mission [CFR 1.1] of the institution is...

*...to provide a whole-person education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values and to facilitate cultural understanding and appreciation between East and West.*

UWest currently offers whole-person education to 329 students across six academic departments, including a hundred or so living in two residence halls. East meets West on campus every day as approximately half of UWest's students are international, predominately from east Asia, while the other half are domestic students, predominately from Southern California. Students, faculty, and staff from over forty countries and over thirty U.S. states form our campus community. Buddhist wisdom and values are represented in UWest's institutional learning outcomes and institutional values, respectively (see page 17 for more information).

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### INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

**KNOW:** Students integrate broad knowledge from across multiple academic disciplines, fields, and topics, demonstrate deep knowledge of their chosen profession or field of study, and apply their understanding of multicultural perspectives and practices.

**BE:** Students embody a love of learning and articulate a personal mission based on an explicit values system that integrates a community identity with an ongoing cultivation of personal development.

**DO:** Students demonstrate mastery of core academic competencies, the ability to apply creatively the methods and practices of their chosen profession or field of study, and exemplify personal, professional, and social ethics.

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### INSTITUTIONAL VALUES

Belonging to a university community founded on Humanistic Buddhist principles means:

- Becoming people of strong **CHARACTER** who behave ethically, cultivate awareness of self and others, and develop wisdom.
- Practicing **COMPASSION** and working with others to relieve suffering and promote equality.
- Building a sustainable **COMMUNITY** by embracing diversity and achieving harmony through common purpose.

University of the West is committed to graduating students with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their educational, professional, personal, and spiritual goals and to perpetuate these values as the cornerstones in creating a better world – Character, Compassion, and Community.

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The mission, ILOs, and values guide [CFR 1.1, 4.7] UWest to achieve its strategic vision to...

*...model Whole-Person Education through engaged and interdisciplinary learning in all programs; an exceptional, caring faculty and staff who fulfil our unique mission; and service projects seeking to*

*improve local and global communities. UWest graduates will practice social responsibility, value diversity, and pursue lifelong learning and spiritual growth. UWest will be a widely recognized name.*

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## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

University of the West offers four bachelor's, four master's, and two doctoral degrees, as well as certificate programs ([Academic Catalog](#), p. 119) at the undergraduate and graduate level.

- Certificates
  - English as a Second Language (ESL)
  - Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
  - Business Administration (various concentrations)
- Bachelor of Arts
  - Business Administration (concentrations in Accounting, Computer Information Systems, International Business, and Marketing)
  - English (concentrations in Literature and TESOL)
  - Liberal Arts (customized concentrations)
  - Psychology
- Graduate Certificates
  - Business Administration (various concentrations)
  - Post-Master of Business Administration Certificate (various concentrations)
- Master of Arts
  - Psychology (Marriage & Family Therapy)
  - Religious Studies
- Master of Business Administration (concentrations in Computer Information Systems, Finance, International Business, and Nonprofit Organization Management)
- Master of Divinity in Buddhist Chaplaincy
- Doctor of Buddhist Ministry
- PhD in Religious Studies (concentrations in Buddhist Studies and Comparative Religious Studies)



FALL 2016 ENROLLMENT	
BA in Business	35
BA in English	18
BA in Liberal Arts	20
BA in Psychology	25
BA (undeclared)	5
MA in Psychology	25
MA in Religious Studies	5
MBA	55
MDiv	24
DBMin/ThD	6
PhD	35
Non-Degree Seeking	98
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>351</b>

## ACCREDITATION HISTORY

1998	UWest began process to achieve Initial Accreditation
2002	UWest achieved Candidacy status
2006	UWest achieved Initial Accreditation
2010	Capacity and Preparatory Review Visit for Reaffirmation of Accreditation
2012	Special Visit for Reaffirmation of Accreditation
2014	Educational Effectiveness Review Visit for Reaffirmation of Accreditation
2015	Accreditation reaffirmed for seven years, Special Visit scheduled
2017	Special Visit for update on three areas of concern
2022	Reaffirmation of Accreditation Visit scheduled

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## ACTION LETTER OF MARCH 6, 2015

In their most recent [action letter](#), the Commission commended the university's improvement in assessment practices and "closing the loop" on assessment findings, enhanced leadership, and mission clarification. They recommended UWest continue to pay close attention to streamlining assessment practices, use of student success data, completing and implementing the Strategic Plan (in process at that time) with an examination of resource allocation, improving class scheduling, continuing to build the 'nascent' enrollment management function, improving graduate culture, and increasing the number of full-time faculty. While UWest has made progress in all of these areas, and more, the Commission designated three particular areas to be reviewed in this Special Visit:

- a. *A discussion of the completed strategic plan, including the process by which it receives final approval, the development of an accompanying tactical (or operational) plan to achieve its goals, and the results of the first period of its implementation*
- b. *A discussion of analysis done on disaggregated student success data, to include the conclusions reached from that analysis and the actions taken based on those conclusions*
- c. *A discussion of enhancements taken to further the development of a graduate culture, in light of the institution's programmatic direction towards expanded graduate offerings (e.g., the ThD proposal).*

The present report addresses these three areas in detail. The institution welcomes inquiries and feedback in all areas and can provide information and evidence beyond these three areas upon request.

## MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PRIOR VISIT

Since the 2014 EER Visit, UWest has made two changes to its academic programs, added four new members to the [Board of Trustees](#) (BOT), reorganized the Executive Team (ETeam), and adopted and implemented a [Strategic Plan](#) and [Five-Year Budget Plan](#). The first three changes are outlined below. For more information on the Strategic Plan, please see page 8.



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#### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS: ThD TO DBMin

The Doctor of Theology (ThD) in Applied Buddhist Studies program [approved by WSCUC](#) in February 2015 was renamed Doctor of Buddhist Ministry (DBMin) ([approved by WSCUC](#) in October 2015 and effective January 2016) in order to better reflect the content and purpose of the program. Two students chose to continue to matriculate in the ThD program, while three students chose to shift to the DBMin program. The DBMin is described in the [2016/17 Academic Catalog](#) (p. 130).

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#### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS: BA IN GENERAL STUDIES TO BA IN LIBERAL ARTS

Likewise, the name change for the undergraduate major from General Studies to Liberal Arts better reflects the content of the program and is better understood within the higher education market. This name change was faculty driven and does not involve any significant change in the content of the program. It took effect in the [2016/17 Academic Catalog](#) (p. 185).

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#### NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS

Since 2014, the following members have retired from the Board of Trustees:

- Capera Clement Norinsky
- Venerable Yi Kong Man Tsu
- Henry Chen
- Venerable Hsin Ting Shih
- Venerable Hui Chi Shih

The following members have joined the [Board of Trustees](#):

- [Venerable Hui Dong Shih](#) joined in March 2015
- [Victor Manuel Franco](#) joined in July 2015
- [Lydia Chao](#) joined in November 2015
- [James Chao](#) joined in November 2015

At the [July 2016 meeting](#), Lydia Chao was nominated and approved as the new Chair of the Board of Trustees. The BOT consists of fifteen members, including six Fo Guang Shan monastics, one layperson employed by Fo Guang Shan, and eight independent members [CFR 3.9].

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#### REORGANIZED EXECUTIVE TEAM

The Executive Team (ETeam) was reorganized effective July 1, 2015. The position of Chief Financial Officer was phased out when Dr. Bill Chen returned to his former position as faculty of Business Administration. The position was replaced with a separate [Controller](#) and a [Chief Analyst](#) (both internal promotions) who oversee accounting and budgeting, respectively. The former Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. William Howe, left the university in June 2014 and that title was changed to [Chief Academic Officer](#) with the hire of [Dr. Peter M. Rojcewicz](#) in June 2015 (following a one-year interim dean) [CFR 3.8, 3.9]. The [Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Campus Culture Officer](#) was also added to the Executive Team. The current membership of the team is:

- [Dr. Stephen Morgan, President](#)

- [Dr. Peter M. Rojcewicz, Chief Academic Officer](#)
- [Ms. Vanessa Karam, Dean of Student Affairs](#)
- [Dr. Maria Ayon, Dean of Enrollment](#)
- [Ms. Amy Chong, Controller](#)
- [Mr. Michael Oertel, Chief Analyst and Institutional Research Officer](#)
- [Rev. Monica Sanford, Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Campus Culture Officer](#)

Expanding the size and scope of expertise on the Executive Team has resulted in more collaborative and data-rich decision making. The ETeam is currently working with other campus leaders to better define and utilize the University [Cabinet](#) not only for budget decisions, but also in relation to institutional policies. This is part of an ongoing effort to improve communication and streamline administrative workload at UWest.

#### PARTICIPATION & PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

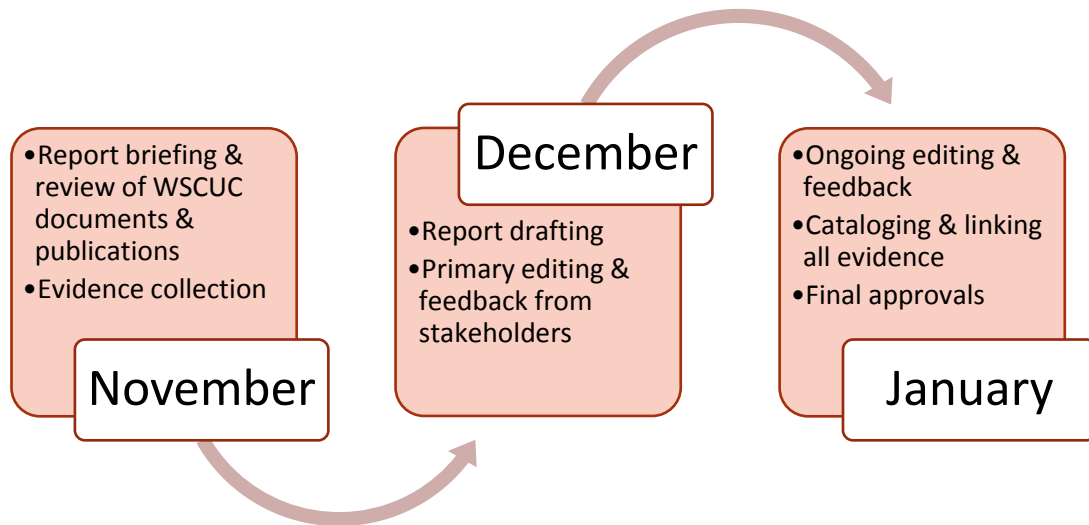
This report was prepared principally by the ETeam with input from faculty and staff in all units, particularly the Academic Affairs Leadership Team (AALT), the Student Life Team (SLT), and the Enrollment Management Team (EMT). Updates on the report were provided to the Board of Trustees at their [December 2016 meeting](#) and by the University Cabinet at their November, December, and January [meetings](#). Feedback and comments were solicited from the BOT and Cabinet via email. The chief editor was Rev. Monica Sanford, Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Campus Culture Officer, with contributions from the other ETeam members on various sections as indicated below.

#### PRIMARY AUTHORS BY SECTION

Strategic Planning	Student Success Data	Graduate Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rev. Sanford, Institutional Effectiveness</li> <li>• Dr. Ayon, Dean of Enrollment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Oertel, Institutional Research</li> <li>• Dr. Ayon, Dean of Enrollment</li> <li>• Ms. Karam, Dean of Student Affairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Rojcewicz, Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>• Dr. Bill Chen, Interim Chair of Business Administration</li> <li>• Dr. Victor Gabriel, Chair of Buddhist Chaplaincy</li> <li>• Dr. Jane Iwamura, Chair of Religious Studies</li> <li>• Dr. Hiroshi Sasaki, Chair of Psychology</li> </ul>



## PROCESS



## SUMMARY: RESPONSES TO IDENTIFIED ISSUES

In relation to the three areas of concern, the visiting team will see that UWest has made progress in all areas. Comprehensive updates in each area can be found following this short summary. We have implemented the [Strategic Plan](#) that was in development during the 2014 EER visit. Implementation has been monitored and regular updates provided to the ETeam, BOT, Cabinet and other stakeholder groups. [Subsidiary plans](#) have been developed and implemented by other departments and committees on campus. Subsidiary plans align with the institutional plan. A [Five-Year Budget Plan](#) has also been developed and is in the process of being implemented in the 2017/18 budget planning cycle. All plans include metrics and targets. The first major benchmarks for the Strategic Plan will be measured and reported in summer 2017.

Student Success Data is regularly collected, analyzed, disseminated, and used in decision making processes. Enrollment data is regularly shared with all departments. Retention, persistence, and graduation data are regularly reviewed by the [Retention Committee](#) and [University Wide Assessment Council](#) (UWAC) and made available to all academic and student services departments. The university also maintains a strong culture of assessment through the development and implementation of learning outcome assessment plans by the academic departments. Although learning outcome assessment will not be covered in detail in this report (see the EER Report), assessment findings and actions plans are available in [evidence](#). UWest has disaggregated its student success data to identify most successful and least successful groups and target interventions accordingly. UWest has also [reviewed related literature](#) to implement best practices and benchmark results against national and state trends.

UWest has a robust graduate culture tailored to the needs of its academic programs. Students in the MBA, MDiv, MA in Psychology, DBMin, and PhD program all have opportunities for professional practice in their field prior to graduation, either through internships, clinical experiences, or teaching and research opportunities. Students in the MA in Religious Studies are mentored to ensure they are well prepared to enter PhD programs in Religious Studies. Though faculty growth is a major goal of the [Strategic Plan](#), unexpected losses have reduced full-time faculty numbers since 2014. UWest has responded by recruiting quality adjuncts, hosting visiting

professors, holding additional conferences on campus, and initiating [faculty searches](#), underway through spring 2017.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

During the October 2014 Educational Effectiveness Review, the WSCUC [visiting team found](#) an institution in the midst of a two-year, institution-wide strategic planning process. The team praised our efforts and advised:

*The team was impressed with the systematic and thoughtful approach to the planning and is confident that the final plan will be evidence-based and collaboratively developed blueprint for UWest's next five years. Given its importance to overall institutional direction, the team recommends that UWest continue its work on the strategic plan, and develop measurable goals, initiatives, indicators of success, and budgetary implications as planned. (CFRs 4.5-4.7)*

*In summary, UWest has made considerable progress in planning for growth, and will complete its full five-year strategic plan in spring 2015. At this point, planning for growth is lagging behind the growth itself. The team congratulates UWest for the steady incremental pace of growth, in both enrollment and finances, over the past four years, while at the same time having some concerns about the impact of that growth on the institution and its capacity to educate the larger numbers of students in the excellent manner that it values and aspires to. ...The team supports UWest in the development of these plans and encourages timely completion and implementation. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 2.6, 2.10, 2.13, 4.1-4.3, 4.5-4.7)*

We are pleased to report that the institutional [Strategic Plan](#) was completed on schedule and adopted by the Board of Trustees in [March 2015](#). [Subsidiary plans](#) with greater operational detail were then developed by various divisions, departments, and committees; a complete listing can be found on page 13. The Strategic Plan has been implemented and is monitored via an [annual update](#) completed each summer (with a special fall 2016 update supplement in preparation for this visit). Last, but perhaps most importantly, a [Five-Year Budget Plan](#) has been developed that incorporates the goals and strategies of the institutional and subsidiary plans. The Strategic Plan, subsidiary plans, and Five-Year Budget Plan exist in a dialogical relationship, each development prompting reexaminations, revisions, and refinement of earlier documents and guiding later documents and actions [CFR 3.4, 4.6, 4.7].

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### PLAN [PROCESS](#)

June 2013	Dr. Stephen Morgan becomes president and announces new strategic planning initiative	
August 2013	Phase I: Identity	Mission reaffirmed, Vision created, Values revised
June 2014	Phase II: Environmental Scan	Internal and external review developed and shared
August 2014	Phase III: Goals & Strategies	Five initial goals developed, with metrics and strategies
March 2015	Adoption & Implementation	BOT approved Strategic Plan, subsidiary plans begun
March 2016	Update & sub-plans reviewed	Sixth goal added to the institutional plan
December 2016	Five-Year Budget Reviewed	BOT approved Five-Year Budget Plan

## GOALS, STRATEGIES, & METRICS

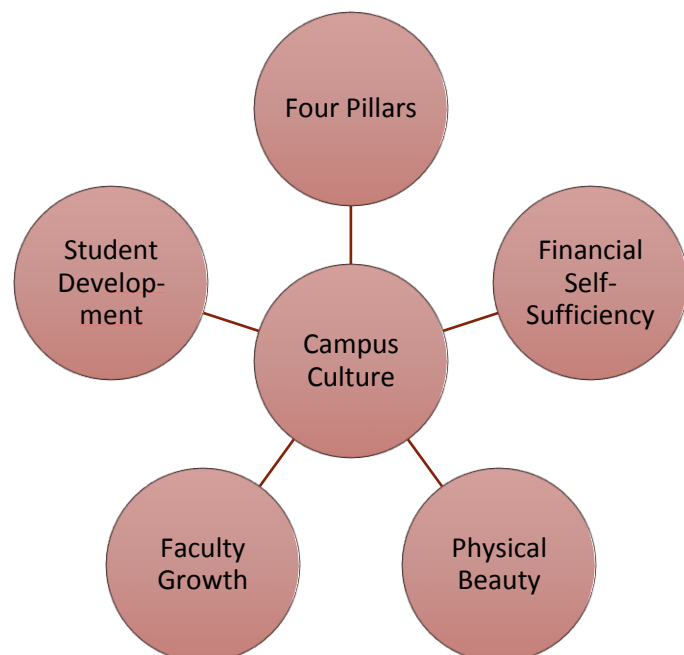
The institutional [Strategic Plan](#) has six goals. Each goal is implemented via five to seven key strategies and tracked via three or more metrics. These goals were developed by the twenty-person [Strategic Plan Working Group](#) that included the Executive Team, faculty chairs, staff representatives, and student representatives. This group met for 90 minutes every two weeks from August 2014 to March 2015. [CFR 1.1, 1.4, 1.6, 2.4] The goals they developed are:

- **Improve Campus Culture:** UWest takes pride in its identity and cares for its people. Between now and 2020, we will strengthen a campus culture of care based on our mission and values in which each community member takes pride.
- **Promote the Four Pillars:** UWest promotes its mission and values through a unique [Four Pillars](#) approach to education by linking interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary learning, study abroad opportunities, service, and contemplative education to engage students in all programs.
- **Enhance Physical Beauty, Safety, & Sustainability:** Become a more desirable physical place to study, learn, live, and work through the triple strategies of beauty, safety, and sustainability.
- **Achieve Greater Financial Stability & Self-Sufficiency:** Raise other sources of revenue to become 60% financially self-sufficient, with a 40% Board of Trustees contribution by 2020, and balance budgets every year.
- **Grow the Faculty:** Develop the full-time faculty pool to a desirable target through systematic hiring, workload, and tenure policies to support more classes taught by these faculty, particularly at the undergraduate level, to better engage and support students.
- **Enhance Student Development:** UWest students engage in the creation and pursuit of a personal self-development mission in a university environment that promotes a love of learning, spiritual growth, value for diversity, and social responsibility and provides opportunities to put their mission into practice on campus, in the community, and throughout their lives.

As mentioned in the timeline above, the Student Development goal was added in [March 2016](#) (following additional meetings of the working group) to better focus on the importance of the student experience at UWest.

The [Strategic Plan](#) was distributed to the entire campus community, can be found on the UWest [website](#), and is

### “HUB & SPOKE” RELATIONSHIP OF THE SIX GOALS



posted on a hallway in the Administration Building near the Marketing and Recruiting office for all, including prospective students and their families, to review.

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## IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

Implementation of the [Strategic Plan](#) began in spring 2015 through two major avenues. In some cases, the goals and strategies of the Strategic Plan are implemented directly. For example, Four Pillars Strategy 1: “Revise the Institutional Learning Outcomes to support the four pillars...” which was accomplished via a workshop held in Fall 2015 (summarized further on p. 17) and implemented in the [2016/17 Academic Catalog](#) (see p. 12). In other cases, the goals and strategies of the institutional plan are further developed through [subsidiary plans](#). See the following section for detailed examples.

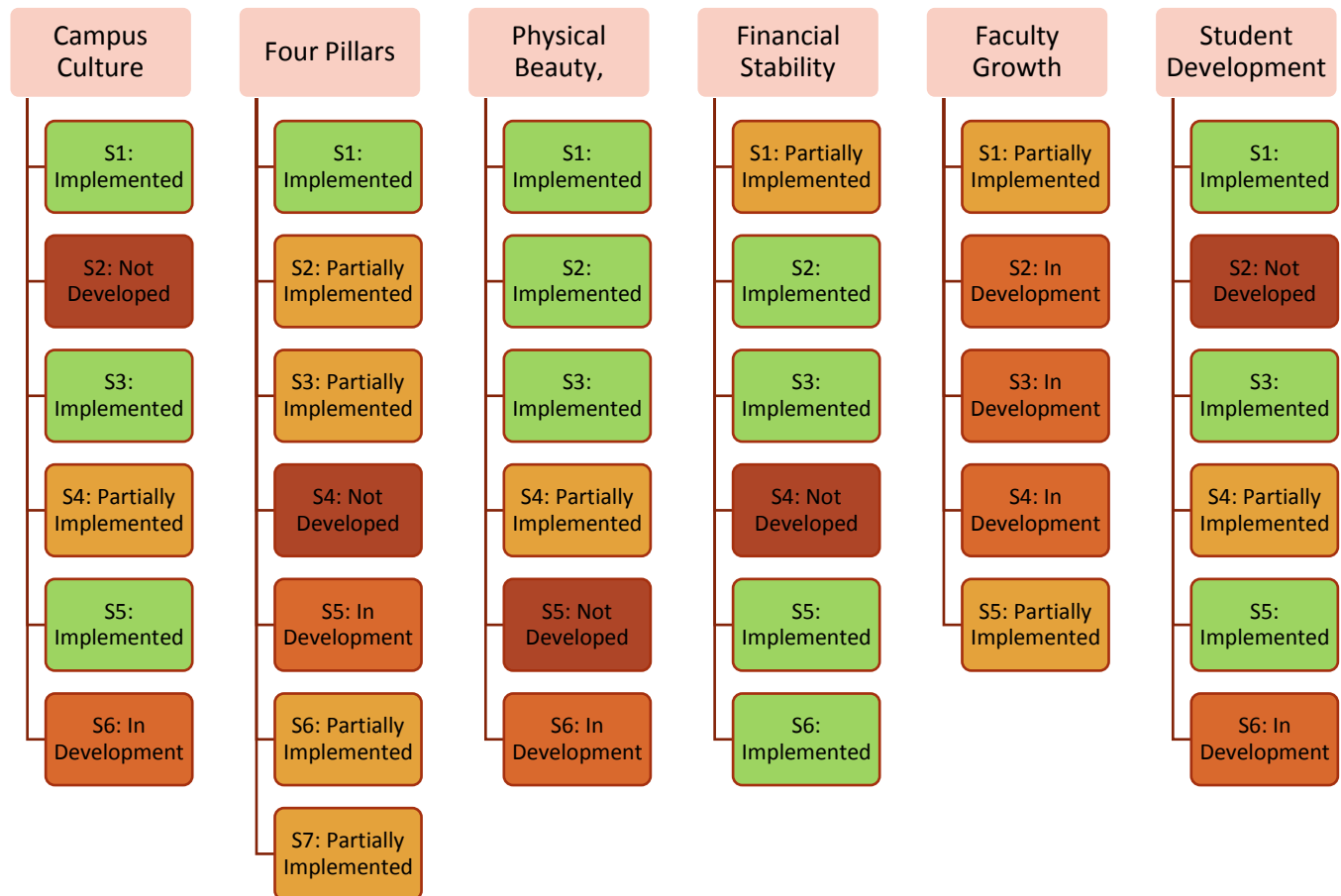
The Strategic Plan is monitored through an annual [update](#) process, taking place each summer. One cycle of this update process is complete, and UWest conducted a special mid-year update in November 2016 in preparation for the Special Visit. The update summarizes the progress made towards each goal and strategy, referring to subsidiary plans when necessary. The update does not, however, completely summarize progress of the goals and strategies within the subsidiary plans. This remains the responsibility of the authors, be they divisions, departments, and committees [CFR 3.10]. Institutional Effectiveness monitors the subsidiary plans and prompts various groups to complete updates in a timely manner; a two-year cycle is currently believed most appropriate, making update reports due on most subsidiary plans in summer 2017 or, for a few, summer 2018. The annual update process is new to UWest, placing more priority on strategic planning within the operations of the institution. The resources necessary to support ongoing strategic thinking, planning, and monitoring have been allocated to the Institutional Effectiveness Office, which became its own [budget center](#) in the 2016/17 fiscal year.

The progress of the implementation of the Strategic Plan is visualized on the following page for easy reference. A few highlights from the 52-page [2016 update](#) are listed below.

- **Campus Culture** [CFR 2.11]
  - Over 50 faculty, staff, and students deep cleaned the Education Building on the fall [Service Day](#), held on November 18, 2016, the largest participation yet in such an event
  - UWest held a [25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration](#) on December 9, 2016, which drew over 200 attendees including U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu, Rosemead Mayor Sandra Armenta, San Gabriel Mayor Chin Ho Liao, LA Community College District Board Member Mike Eng, members of the Rosemead and San Gabriel Chambers of Commerce, the local Buddha’s Light International Association Chapter, and abbots from various Buddhist temples and orders (see [video](#))
- **Four Pillars**
  - Institutional Learning Outcomes were revised and [streamlined](#) based on a Buddhist framework that better reflects the mission.
  - UWest has [enrolled 60](#) students in Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS, [Academic Catalog](#), p. 221), Contemplative Studies (CONT, [Academic Catalog](#), p. 227), and Service Learning (SRVLG, [Academic Catalog](#), p. 238) coursework over three semesters.
  - A Learning Community ([Academic Catalog](#), p. 183) cohort of first-time freshmen was launched in fall 2016.
- **Physical Beauty, Safety, & Sustainability**

- The [Beautification and Facilities Committee](#) developed a [comprehensive process](#) for evaluating and selecting projects for the capital budget and for ongoing project management.
- During 2015/16 and early 2016/17 the committee completed a comprehensive ADA survey (available to the visiting team upon request) and the remodel of Ken Locke Hall, the Recreation Center, and the Fitness Center.
- **Financial Stability & Self-Sufficiency**
  - [Enrollments](#) remain stable despite increasing competition from Cal State and UC schools; growth targets will be re-evaluated based on applications received in the upcoming recruitment cycle.
  - UWest maintains a [balanced budget](#) and [clean audits](#) [CFR 1.7].
  - The [Five-Year Budget Plan](#) was completed and presented to the BOT in [December 2016](#).
- **Faculty Growth** [CFR 2.1]
  - The budget plans for faculty growth from 17 in 2015/16 to 18 full-time faculty in 2016/17; however, two departures (Business Administration, Religious Studies), one death (Religious Studies), and the failure of an open search to find a suitable candidate brings the number of full-time faculty to 14 in 2016/17.
  - Open searches are currently underway for a new [Business Administration chair](#) and [Religious Studies faculty](#).
- **Student Development**
  - The [Learning Community Task Force](#), made up of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs members, is developing comprehensive programming and curriculum focused on the undergraduate experience, student leadership, and whole-person education. [CFR 2.1] Major results of these efforts include the four linked LC courses ([Academic Catalog](#), p. 183), the development of required labs supporting the ILR 101 College Success course ([Academic Catalog](#), p. 228), [study jams](#) to support midterm and final exam preparation, and the introduction of [peer mentoring for LC students](#) in spring 2017. [CFR 2.1]

The key metrics in the [Strategic Plan](#) itself fall into one of three categories 1) currently and continuously monitored, 2) scheduled for data collection via established methods, 3) data collection plans still in development contingent on the implementation of various strategies. Among the first category, financial, enrollment, and student success metrics are tracked continuously and regularly shared. The second category contains two primary metrics, the [Employee Satisfaction Survey](#) and the [Student Satisfaction Survey](#), which will be re-administered in spring 2017 (on a two-year cycle). Preliminary results will be available to the visiting team when they are on campus. The third category primarily relies on participation measures for programs and projects not yet fully implemented. In some cases, the strategy itself may be the collection and analysis of data, such as Campus Culture Strategy 6 “Benchmark pay and benefits...” Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research collaborate on monitoring the key metrics of the Strategic Plan and expect to produce an implementation scorecard, as referenced in the plan, in summer 2017.



*As a purely visual aid, we aim to have all strategies implemented, or showing green, by fall 2020.*

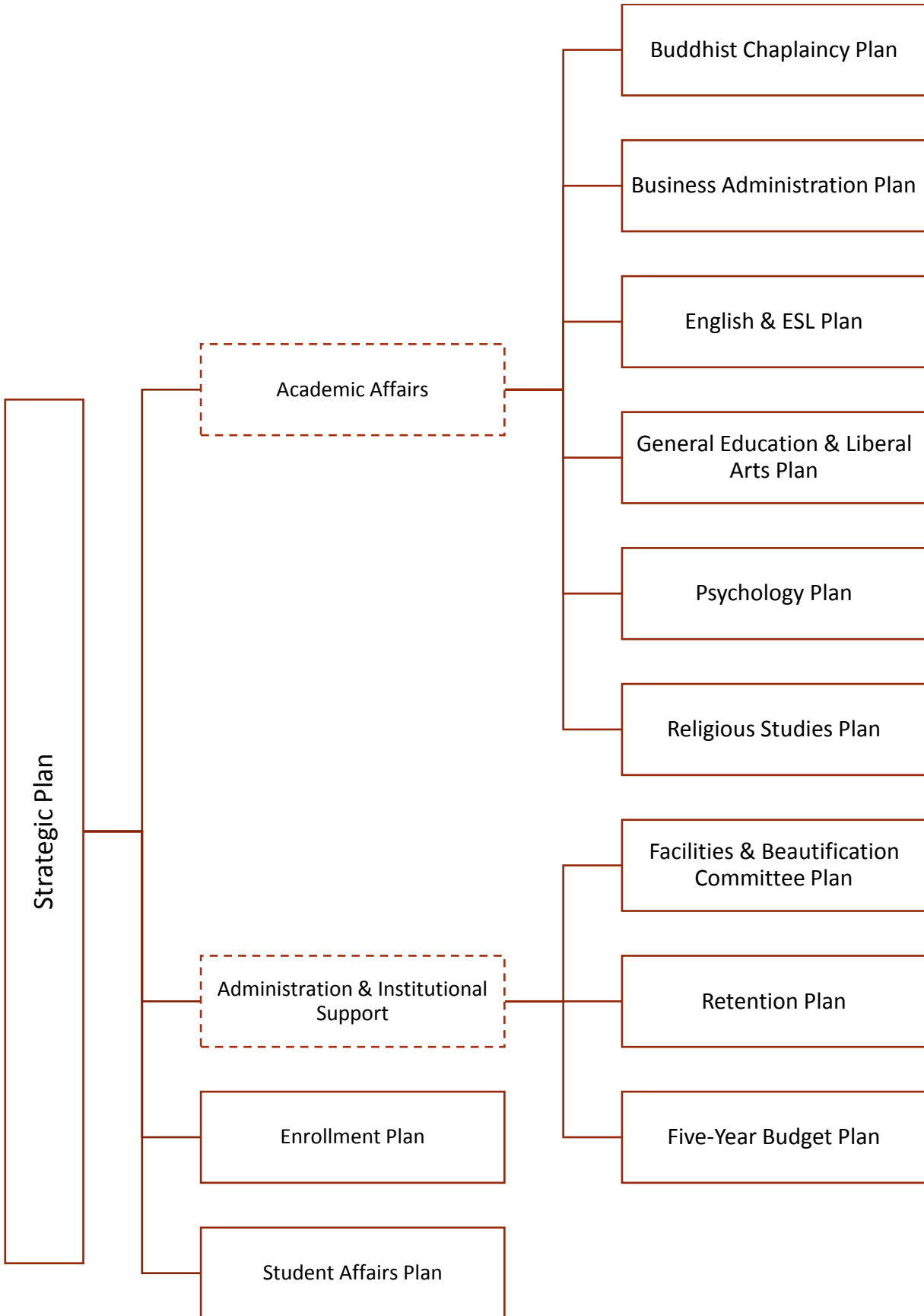
The current strategic plan is version 3.0. The plan is considered a “living document,” subject to regular updates by the Executive Team and [University Cabinet](#), with feedback and approval from the Board of Trustees, who are [briefed quarterly](#) on the progress of the plan [CFRs 1.5-1.7, 3.7, 3.9, 4.6]. The [annual update](#) includes recommendations from Institutional Effectiveness for adjustment to specific strategies or their implementation processes. Recommendations are considered and may be adopted either by the party responsible for the implementation of that strategy (identified in the plan), the ETeam, Cabinet, or the BOT as appropriate. [CFR 1.7]

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#### RELATIONSHIP OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN TO SUBSIDIARY PLANS

Subsidiary plans prepared and implemented by various campus groups are key to the implementation of the larger [Strategic Plan](#). Almost all members of [the Strategic Plan Working Group](#) went on to develop [subsidiary plans](#) within their own divisions, departments, or as part of an inter-departmental committee. Each of [the six academic departments](#) developed a strategic plan with input from their faculty. Two functional divisions, [Student Affairs](#) and [Enrollment](#), also developed strategic plans. Two standing committees, [Beautification & Facilities](#) and [Retention](#), have developed strategic plans. Finally, the [Five-Year Budget Plan](#) was developed by the [Chief Analyst](#) with input from all of these plans and under the guidance of the Executive Team and [Board of Trustees](#). [CFR 3.6-3.9, 1.5] See the following page for a full list of subsidiary plans. Other subsidiary plans may be developed as the university moves forward and fully implements the institutional Strategic Plan.





In several cases, especially for division and committee created plans, significant overlap of personnel enables clear lines of communication and the coordination of content among the various plans. For example Financial Stability & Self-Sufficiency Strategy 1 “Increase enrollment to 600 students (500 FTE) by 2020...” is primarily implemented through the [Enrollment Plan](#) and the [Retention Plan](#) [CFR 3.7]. The Enrollment Plan for 2015-2020 includes goals related to enrollment, marketing, recruiting, financial aid, and student experience. The Retention Plan for 2016-2019 was developed by the [Retention Committee](#) (which includes the [Dean of Enrollment](#) and Marketing Coordinator, among other members) sets targets for improving retention by better understanding students, the institution, its context, and best practices, and through four specific operational goals (see more on p. 27) [CFR 4.6]. The goals contained in these two plans likewise have numerous strategies and metrics, with the overall purpose of increasing enrollment by recruiting new students, retaining existing students, and graduating well-educated students who become alumni willing to contribute to and promote the institution.

Likewise, the six academic departments each produced strategic plans outlining both enrollment growth (in close consultation with Enrollment) and faculty growth. Naturally, all academic departments have an interest in hiring new faculty but cannot all do so in the same year. Faculty chairs work together on the Academic Affairs Leadership Team (AALT) to negotiate faculty hiring priorities each year based on budget and enrollment realities. So far, AALT has been able to reach consensus and make well-reasoned and data-driven recommendations for faculty hiring to [the University Cabinet](#) (which serves as the annual budget committee), keeping the goals of the institutional [Strategic Plan](#) in sight. Academic department plans are then updated accordingly.

A full review of subsidiary plans in the upcoming summer 2017 update will further detail the connections between the goals and strategies of the Strategic Plan and subsidiary plans to determine if any significant gaps or discrepancies exist. Institutional Effectiveness will then submit recommendations for how to address these.

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## FIVE-YEAR BUDGET PLAN

Based on the institutional [Strategic Plan](#) and [subsidiary plans](#) completed in 2015 and early 2016, the [Chief Analyst](#) produced a [Five-Year Budget](#) that was approved by the Board of Trustees in [December 2016](#). The Chief Analyst incorporated 3-5 year actual expenses and external conditions into this budget [CFR 3.8, 3.9]. As stated in the budget:

*The Board of Trustees has asked University of the West to begin reducing its financial dependence on the Board. ...As a result, the Chief Analyst has prepared this report to highlight the institution’s plan to reduce its financial dependence on the BOT.*

At the same time, the budget preserves the growth of the institution, especially in essential areas identified by [the Strategic Plan](#) and by WSCUC, particularly: 1) enrollment functions, 2) educational effectiveness, especially faculty growth, and 3) student services. In order to preserve and promote investment in these areas, the Five-Year Budget proceeds under the following parameters:

- Hold expense growth at 5% per year (or below)
- Maintain enrollment growth at around 3% per year (or above)
- Increase undergraduate tuition at 7% per year (compounded)
- Increase graduate tuition at 10% per year (compounded)
- Increase comprehensive fees at 7% per year (compounded)

- Increase room and board fees at 3% per year (compounded)
- Maintain student discount rate at 30% of tuition & fees per year
- Reduce BOT contribution by \$100,000 per year

It is important to note that the Five-Year Budget and the Strategic Plan have one significant discrepancy. While the Strategic Plan optimistically sets a target of 600 headcount (500 FTE) enrollment in fall 2020, the Five-Year Budget is calculated on more conservative enrollment numbers based on past trends. It projects a fall 2020 enrollment of 415 headcount (341 FTE). UWest is fully aware of this discrepancy and prefers to be too conservative over too liberal in our budget strategy at this time [CFR 3.4, 4.7].

The Enrollment Team is working diligently to exceed the projections in the Five-Year Budget and achieve the targets of the Strategic Plan. However, as this is the first recruiting cycle in which UWest has experienced the efforts of a complete recruiting staff (having operated with a much smaller department prior to 2014), we cannot accurately judge the return on these investments until late spring or early summer 2017, when most applications for fall 2017 will be received. At that point, both the Strategic Plan targets and Five-Year Budget projections will be reconciled and more realistic (aligned) figures included in both documents.

	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY2021/22
<b>Total Income</b>	9,355,580	9,802,342	10,380,581	10,952,417	11,653,803
<b>Total Expenses</b>	9,093,087	9,644,470	10,254,222	10,899,435	11,614,911
<b>Surplus</b>	262,493	157,872	126,359	52,983	38,892

The Five-Year Budget includes sufficient planned investment in the three key areas listed above through the 5% growth in expenses. The trend line over the five-year period keeps UWest in the black but cannot continue long term, as expenses will begin to outstrip income in the sixth or seventh year. This trend could be ameliorated by greater than projected enrollment growth, stabilization of the [BOT](#) contribution after five years, cultivating new sources of donor revenue, curbing growth in expenses, further increasing tuition and fees, or some combination of these strategies. During this five-year period, the budget helps UWest achieve several goals in the Strategic Plan, especially as they relate to Financial Stability and Self-Sufficiency, including the goal to reduce the BOT contribution to 40% or less of total revenue and to hold the student discount rate at 30% or lower, while promoting an overall growth strategy [CFR 3.4, 4.6, 4.7].

	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY2021/22
<b>Gross Tuition &amp; Fees</b>	3,929,753	4,384,381	4,962,790	5,541,585	6,250,313
<b>Institutional Aid</b>	(1,071,324)	(1,197,408)	(1,352,523)	(1,509,851)	(1,703,099)
<b>Net Tuition &amp; Fees</b>	2,858,430	3,186,973	3,610,267	4,031,733	4,547,213
<b>BOT Contribution</b>	3,900,000	3,800,000	3,700,000	3,600,000	3,500,000
<b>Total Net Revenue*</b>	8,284,256	8,604,934	9,028,058	9,442,566	9,950,704
<b>% BOT Contribution</b>	42%	39%	36%	33%	30%
<b>% Tuition &amp; Fees</b>	42%	45%	48%	51%	54%

*\*Includes Auxiliary Enterprises and some other small revenue and donor sources*

During this period, Cost of Attendance (tuition, fees, room and board) is projected to increase from \$19,628 per year to \$26,182 per year for undergraduate students. This remains well below the [2016 national average](#) of \$36,589 for private four-year colleges in the United States, which will also undoubtedly increase during this period. Institutional aid to students will also increase from \$1.1 million to \$1.7 million over the same period.

UWest will thus maintain its market advantage. Tuition and fee increases will be reconsidered each year as part of the annual budget setting process, and, when possible, will be held below the projected 7-10%.

UWest's primary expense is salary and wages, accounting for roughly 56% of expenditures. Planned revenue growth will be almost exclusively allocated to personnel, maintaining payroll at a similar portion of total expense. This includes new hires in addition to annual percentage increases to salary and wages for existing staff (2.5%), adjunct faculty rates (4%), student employee hourly wages (meet legal increase in minimum wage), and graduate assistant stipends (10%). In total, UWest plans to increase personnel expenses from \$4.7 million in 2016/17 to \$6.2 million in 2021/22. The total number of new personnel hired will very much depend on the positions prioritized and could result in the addition of between five and ten new full-time faculty and/or staff. Naturally, additional revenue from goal-exceeding enrollment growth will be allocated to hiring as the top priority. New hiring in the coming five years will support the goals and strategies of the [Strategic Plan](#).

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#### REFLECTIVE ESSAY ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AT A BUDDHIST INSTITUTION

Strategic planning at UWest has both challenges and surprising opportunities. Challenges and opportunities are both cultural and logistic. Strategic planning, as a formal, inclusive, collaborative process to create a document (the "plan") which is then implemented and monitored step by step, is a western invention. As a university founded, still largely funded, and employing many people of eastern cultures, we have come to modern strategic planning perhaps late in the game. When we did, strategic planning tended to be top-down (a more common eastern management style) rather than inclusive and collaborative (best practice in western organizations). Strategic plans were produced before the current incarnation, but their implementation was often haphazard or unverified simply because we were then too small to dedicate personnel to ongoing monitoring. That is no longer the case, and these challenges, both cultural and logistic, have largely been overcome by capitalizing on existing opportunities.

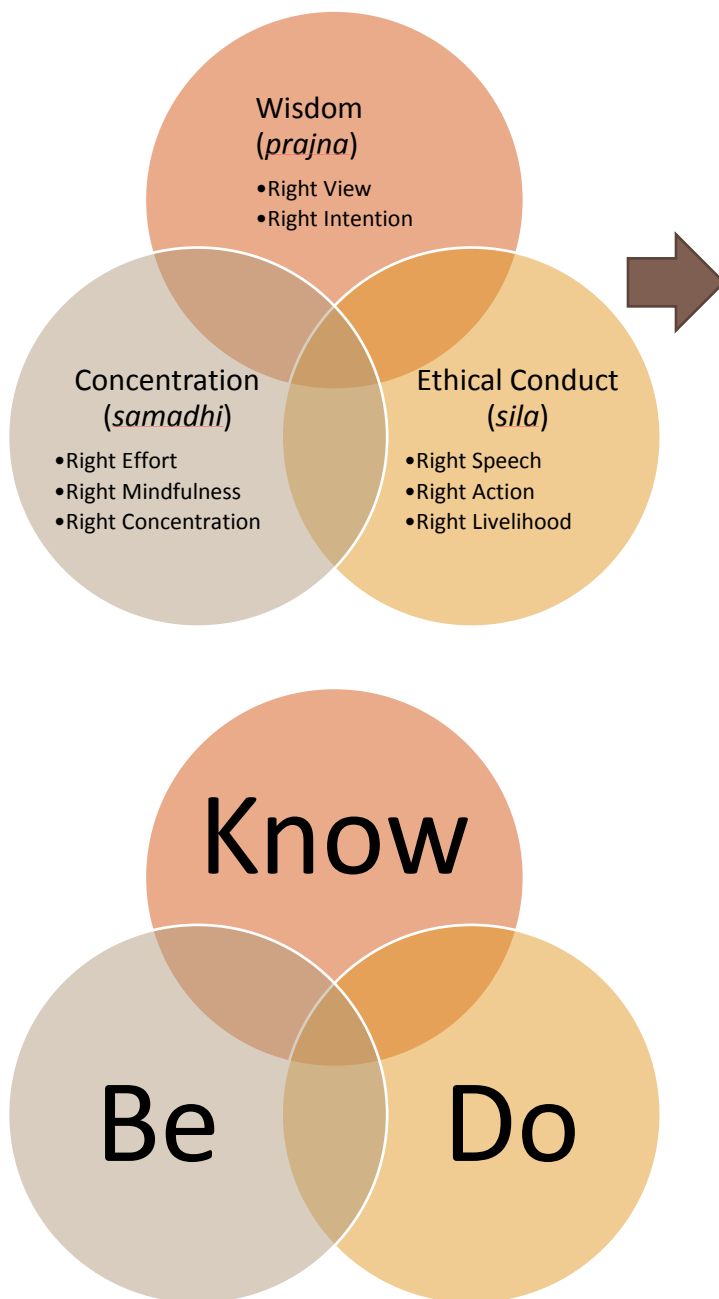
The most important strength [UWest](#) brought into the strategic planning process was a clear mission and vision. UWest spent almost a year exploring its identity. We were aided in this process by clear and voluminous writings from the university's founder, Venerable Master Hsing Yun, who outlines his vision for education as not merely academic or professional, but also moral and compassionate. This process allowed UWest to recommit to its original mission. It ensured all members of the community share a common understanding of that mission, participated in revising the institution's values, and developed a strong vision statement that encapsulates how we will pursue our mission and values in the near-term. The process itself built a stronger community and increased the social capacity of individual members.

Logistically, there is also more support for strategic planning than previously, as evidenced by the creation of an Institutional Effectiveness Office with a dedicated, full-time staff person. Since 2015, the [Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Campus Culture Officer](#) reports directly to the [president](#), sits on the ETeam, serves on several inter-departmental committees, and works with every division and department on campus to lead or assist in strategic planning processes, review plan documents, monitor implementation, provide regular feedback and recommendations, report on progress of various plans to the ETeam, [Cabinet](#), and [BOT](#), and also directly implement aspects of the [Strategic Plan](#) when necessary [CFR 3.6, 3.7]. The Strategic Plan itself and the [2016 Strategic Plan Update](#) are outcomes of this new position.

Strategic plan activities and processes are assisted by another strength of the university: our small size. All stakeholders who need or wish to be involved in strategic planning can easily be gathered in one room. Decisions can be made and changes implemented in a relatively short period. UWest has not yet reached the aircraft carrier size of many modern institutions and still turns more like a speedboat, allowing for more inclusive, collaborative, and flexible plans. For example, the [Student Affairs plan](#) did not simply involve managers or representatives of that division. Rather, the entire Student Affairs staff (including part-time members) were able to contribute to its development, and therefore experience a sense of ownership for its outcomes [CFR 3.3, 4.4]. Inclusion and ownership predict successful implementation of plan priorities.

Finally, another aspect of strategic planning at UWest which may appear to be a challenge but which we regard as an opportunity is the necessity of [code-switching](#). UWest is a Buddhist-founded institution with a Buddhist-based mission and a Buddhist funding organization. We are a place where East truly meets West. We are also open and inclusive. Our admissions and hiring processes do not ask about religious affiliations. Only two of the seven ETeam members profess to be Buddhists, though all are well versed in Buddhism and committed to the mission. We do not expect our prospective students, families, potential faculty or staff hires, visiting scholars, community stakeholders, donors, or WSCUC reviewers, for that matter, to be Buddhist or have any familiarity with Buddhist culture [CFR 1.5, 3.6]. Therefore, many ‘public’ documents, including the Strategic Plan may seem somewhat devoid of Buddhist foundations – unless one knows in advance what to seek.

For example, Spoke 1, Strategy 1 of the Strategic Plan called on UWest to “Revise the Institutional Learning Outcomes...” that were created in 2011/12, prior to the development of the plan or the implementation of an assessment system. The revision was carried out in Fall 2015 during a two-day workshop hosted at [Hsi Lai Temple](#) that involved all full-time faculty (adjuncts were also invited), administrators, and student affairs staff. The result can be found on page 2 of this report and was added to the [2016/17 Academic Catalog](#) (with revised PLOs to follow). The Know-Be-Do [ILOs](#) may seem secular in their presentation, but documents from the workshop and presentations to the Cabinet and BOT reveal they are deeply rooted in the Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path, which traditionally has a three-part structure. Buddhist wisdom is recapitulated in secular language.



Many conversations during the strategic planning process centered on the mission and how to fulfill our commitment to “Buddhist wisdom and values” in a manner that is also inclusive of non-Buddhists and consistent with Buddhist commitments to religious pluralism. The [ILOs](#) above are just one such example of how a thoroughly Buddhist conversation (complete with scholarly wrangling over the proper translation of Sanskrit terms) developed into an articulation of outcomes that all stakeholders can understand and support.

What characterizes strategic planning at a Buddhist institution like UWest? It is energizing, because we have a clear vision of who we are and where we want to go. It is highly collaborative, because we need to hear from many different voices with various disciplinary and cultural perspectives to make it work. It is empowering, because everyone can participate somehow. It is genuinely interesting, because we must constantly evaluate if



what this means to me is the same as it will mean to you or different. It is deeply responsive, because we are still small enough to be flexible and listen to everyone. It is simply fun, because the nature of our compassionate community means we truly care about doing what is best for each other, our students, and the university as a whole.



*Trustee Victor Franco, Trustee Venerable Abbot Hui Dong, and President Stephen Morgan greet U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu at the 25th Anniversary Celebration (December 19, 2016)*



## STUDENT SUCCESS DATA

Student success data are collected and presented to the university at large by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIR&A). Institutional Research posts student success data on its [website](#) and shares these data in great detail with two standing committees on campus: the [University-Wide Assessment Committee](#) (UWAC) and the [Retention Committee](#). UWAC is responsible for analyzing student learning outcome data, and the Retention Committee is responsible for analyzing student success data, such as retention and graduation rates, with some overlap. While UWAC makes recommendations to improve educational effectiveness, the [Retention Committee](#) makes recommendations to improve student success. The [Director of Institutional Research](#), [Institutional Effectiveness Officer](#), [Chief Academic Officer](#), [Dean of Student Affairs](#), and several faculty members serve on both committees and coordinate efforts to ensure the holistic success of students [CFR 2.4, 4.3, 4.4].

Learning outcomes assessment was explored in great detail in the [Educational Effectiveness Report](#) and the visiting team commented:

*UWest has implemented a data-driven process on [TaskStream](#) for faculty to align course learning outcomes with institutional goals. A culture of assessment is being developed, and while faculty are the major actors and participants in the development of assessment tools, there is administrative oversight and support. Both attendance by faculty at workshops on assessment and the use of external evaluators have contributed to an enhancement of faculty expertise at assessment. Significantly, both regular and adjunct faculty members are involved in these activities. ...Faculty are clearly engaged in assessment and have strong staff support in that area.*

While they were impressed by the infrastructure and training that has taken place since 2012 in the area of learning outcome assessment, they also recommended:

*Team members saw a need for more integrated usage of student success data and follow-up to benchmark inclusion at other institutions. The team recommends that the university accelerate its analysis and usage of student success data. The team found that UWest is in the early stages of understanding retention, persistence, and completion patterns of its students, and of disaggregating information so the university can take steps to improve student completion and success. The team recommends that UWest develop goals and targets by looking at other institutions, and by looking at good practices from among other institutions. (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)*

Therefore, the present report will focus on student success data, i.e. retention, persistence, graduation, GPA, etc., and not on learning outcome assessment [CFR 2.10, 4.1, 4.2]. Nevertheless, learning outcome assessment continues, and the [most recent assessment findings](#)—although not detailed here—are among the evidence submitted with this report. Likewise, regularly-conducted student satisfaction [surveys](#), resident satisfaction [surveys](#), and [course evaluations](#) can be found in the evidence but are not the focus of this section.

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## STUDENT SUCCESS REPORTING

Two different [retention](#) and [graduation](#) rate reports are configured by the Office of Institutional Research: 1) [first-time freshman cohort](#) and 2) first-time [cohort by academic program](#). The first report, which will be discussed at length, is standard across all universities. The second report is used internally to gauge first-year retention and graduation rates by academic programs. This report helps academic departments assess student success in both our undergraduate and graduate programs, and is disaggregated by various factors pertinent to each department.

The [freshman cohort report](#) is disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, social-status, and grant/scholarship status [CFR2.10]. The OIR&A reports first-year retention as well as 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year persistence rates. In essence, the OIR&A tracks a cohort of students from matriculation to their last day of attendance. Last day of attendance is attributed to a student dropping, transferring, or graduating. After the 4th year, the retention and persistence report is converted into a graduation rate report. Four-year graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who graduate within 100% of time by the total number of students in the cohort. Six-year graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who graduate within 150% of time by the total number of students in the cohort. The freshman cohort reports are the primary reports used to gauge student success at [UWest](#) [CFR2.4].

UWest is a small private university. The student population was 351 in fall 2017, of which only 29 were freshmen. In fact, the university could not begin to track its first freshman cohort until fall 2012 as undergraduate enrollment had been very low historically. Although UWest has intentionally grown undergraduate programs over the past years, our numbers remain relatively low. Due to our small population size, quantitative studies of our freshman student population are limited; however, we have mitigated this limitation by supplementing our quantitative studies with qualitative research and [literature reviews](#) (see disaggregated student retention data and findings from focus groups on p. 21).

In 2014 the [Director of Institutional Research](#) and members of the [Retention Committee](#) created a [research methodology](#) appropriate for the university and its small population size [CFR4.2]. This methodology focuses on identifying at-risk student populations (quantitative study), conducting focus groups with the at-risk student population to help us identify why they are not succeeding (qualitative study), analyzing these findings in the Retention Committee, and incorporating [best practices literature](#) into our recommendations and retention [plan](#). The plan produced from the Retention Committee is shared with the university at large, and goals and strategies are incorporated into the annual budget. This procedure helps focus our efforts on student success and using evidence-based analyses to improve retention and graduation rates.

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## FINDINGS FROM DATA ANALYSIS

[The Retention Committee](#) has identified the following findings based on their analysis of the quantitative data presented by the [Director of Institutional Research](#) [CFR 1.2]:

1. The students in the fall 2012 cohort are persisting at a better rate than subsequent 2013 and 2014 cohorts. The [Dean of Enrollment](#) conducted a focus group with these students and found that this cohort of students is a tight-knit group. Since the majority of the 2012 cohort originated from the same high school, they were able to reestablish a support base within their own cohort. The 2013 and 2014 cohorts were not as homogenous in this regard.

2. The students in the 2012 cohort entered UWest with a higher high school GPA than their peers (two subsequent cohorts). This finding suggests that the students in the 2012 cohort were better prepared for post-secondary education than their peers, which might be one reason for their ability to persist at a higher rate than their peers.
3. The students in the 2012 cohort earned a higher first-semester GPA than their peers. It has been found in the [retention literature](#) that high school GPA is strongly correlated with first-year GPA. However, given that a few high school GPAs are missing in the database, it was not possible to draw the same statistical conclusion.

High School GPA	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
Students	26	19	29	6
Average GPA	2.86	2.50	2.61	2.67
Median GPA	2.88	2.68	2.52	2.45

First-Year GPA	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
Students	26	19	29	6
Average GPA	3.02	2.42	2.24	3.18
Median GPA	3.21	2.68	2.46	3.08

4. A larger percentage of fall 2012 freshman received institutional support (merit-based [Lotus Scholarship](#)) than their peers: 58% of the 2012 cohort received aid compared to only 11% of the 2013 and 24% of the 2014 cohort. None of the six students in the 2015 cohort received institutional aid.
5. Lotus Scholarship recipients have a 79% fall-to-fall retention rate, compared to 59% for non-Lotus students.
6. Under-represented males (Latino students) have the lowest retention rate, 56% compared to the remainder of the cohort at 72%. This trend is corroborated by national data and [literature](#).
7. Hispanic, non-white students have a lower retention rate, 61%, than their peers, 76%.
8. UWest is seeking ways to better track and report transfer-out students. Anecdotal and observational evidence suggests that many of the fall 2013 and 2014 entering freshmen intended to transfer out from the outset and that they did so when seats opened up in impacted UC and CSU schools and majors. However, for the purposes of retention data tracking, these transfer students must be counted as a “loss” until the university can document their enrollment at another institution.
9. Very few students who enrolled during the fall 2012 semester graduated within 100% of time because most of them took fewer than 15 credit hours per semester.

Based on the [Retention Committee's](#) findings, Latino students appear to have the highest risk of dropping out and not succeeding. This is [not unique](#) to [UWest](#). In fact, Latino students, second only to African-American males, have the lowest retention rates across the country.

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## FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUPS

The [Dean of Enrollment](#) and a psychology professor conducted two qualitative research projects to gather first-hand experience from current students. Both projects asked students to complete a questionnaire regarding their demographic data, after which interviews with semi-structured questions were conducted. The first

project, [Focus Group 2014](#), took place in fall 2014, and the second project, [Student Success Group 2016](#), in spring 2016.

Focus Group 2014 was comprised of three different groups of interviewees: 6 international students from China, 12 international students from Taiwan, and 7 domestic students. Domestic focus group participants were first-time Latina/o freshmen who started in fall 2014. Learning about the three different groups and their UWest student experience provided qualitative data to develop retention strategies and promote cultural tolerance and acceptance through educational activities. Additionally, the focus groups revealed some cultural conflicts among students which are addressed through ongoing programming.

The main themes evident in the Focus Group 2014 include academics, student services, and interpersonal relationships. Students discussed at length their instructors, the curriculum, international student office, residential life, library, cafeteria, financial aid, student life, and cultural conflicts among student groups. The three student groups identified environmental strengths of the campus in addition to academic strengths of the university. Environmental strengths included the small campus environment leading to a positive, unique, calm, meditative, and safe environment. The students identified various strengths in the academic environment, addressing the benefits of individualized attention and describing that faculty focus and pay attention to them, are friendly and helpful, know their names, and make sure they understand [CFR 2.2a].

The data were further disaggregated to differentiate among the Chinese and Taiwanese groups and the domestic group. The Chinese and Taiwanese groups focused their discussions on student services, specifically the International Student Services (ISS) Office, residential life, library, and cafeteria in addition to the academic environment. Students agreed that they would like the ISS Office to be more available for students. They mentioned short office hours, limited availability, and lack of drop-in access for students. Students described the Residential Life Coordinator as very helpful and efficient but complained that most resident advisors did not respond to them promptly to address the maintenance needs in the residence halls [CFR 2.13, 3.1]. Additionally, students discussed substance use in the residence halls and lack of consistent enforcement of [university policy](#) (see page 114). Students complained about library resources, especially the limited time to use books on reserve. Low-income students rely more heavily on textbooks on reserve, creating a higher demand for those books. The quality of the food in the cafeteria was also a theme among the Chinese and Taiwanese group. Additionally some members of this group felt that their UWest classes were not as challenging as they expected.

As a result, in part, of this feedback certain changes have been implemented since the 2014 focus group. For example, the international student advisor position was elevated to full-time, increasing availability by 25% and thus providing more access to students. The office also maintains evening hours twice a week. In 2016, Residence Life added the position of [desk attendants](#) (DAs), providing increased service to residents and allowing resident advisors (RAs) to dedicate more time to programming. Substance abuse in the residence halls has been addressed through consistent enforcement of the university's [conduct process](#) and is currently not an area of concern. Increasing academic rigor has been a consistent topic of conversation among department chairs and faculty over the past two years and has been addressed through the [learning outcomes assessment process](#), not summarized in this report but available in evidence.

The 2014 Latina/o focus group had a different perspective on their student experience. The main themes included student services (financial aid, student life, and student support services) and academic environment. The Latina/o group mentioned that the availability and purpose of some of the student support services were not clearly defined. Students discussed the importance to them of receiving financial aid in the form of [federal](#)

[work study](#). Additionally, they expressed difficulty understanding the staff in the Financial Aid Office and receiving sufficient guidance during the verification process. The Latina/o group also expressed that they would like to be more involved and participate in extracurricular activities offered through the Office of Student Life. This would give them more opportunities to meet international students and be more involved in the campus [CFR 2.11]. Many of the students in the Latina/o group were commuters and had difficulty staying for events due to transportation. They recommended having events on the weekends, providing them transportation to special events, or facilitating a carpool club. Some mentioned they preferred being on campus over being at home due to the lack of emotional support at home. When asked about the academic environment, the Latino students gave positive feedback and when asked about being in classes together with international students, they mentioned they felt they needed to perform to a high standard to match the international students.

In [spring 2016](#), individual interviews were conducted with eight domestic Latina/o students who had entered the university in fall 2012. These students were part of the cohort of students mentioned above who were identified as better prepared for postsecondary education as evidenced by their higher entering GPAs and their higher persistence rates. This focus group attempted to ascertain why the 2012 cohort succeeded better than the cohorts who followed them.

When asked about positive experiences at UWest, the students' most common themes included feeling rather accomplished, developing skills and accomplishing goals, making friends, and developing relationships with professors. The students expressed that their scholarships had provided good support towards achieving their goals. In response to questions about their support network, the students mentioned family and friends as well as staff and faculty at [UWest](#).

The students described their greatest challenges while attending UWest as the commute, high expectations placed on college students, and math or math anxiety. When asked about their high school preparation for college, they mentioned field trips to universities, financial aid counseling or workshops, and participation in student clubs [CFR 1.4, 2.11]. In describing their first year at UWest in terms of academic, social, and financial preparation, half of the students expressed that while they were academically prepared, freshman year had still been challenging. Financially most students were not prepared, relied on scholarships, and felt stressed about paying for school. Most students agreed they were socially prepared but were still shy and/or felt more comfortable around people they knew.

Asked what they would do differently in retrospect, the students most common responses were living on campus, attending more tutoring sessions, and being more serious about their academics. Asked what UWest could do to help students be more successful, students responded they would like more information about and access to student support resources including workshops, individual or group advising, as well as more community building, upgraded facilities, and genuine care from staff and faculty [CFR 2.13].

When asked if they would recommend UWest to other students, all students said they would, they have, or they will depending on what major the prospective student wished to pursue, as UWest has a limited number of programs.

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## SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

As described in the preceding sections, the university collects, analyzes, and disaggregates both quantitative and qualitative data to measure student success and develop goals and strategies for improvement. The [Retention](#)

[Committee](#), a collaborative group of key personnel across Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Enrollment, examines these data and develops the [Retention Plan](#), a working document that is revisited and updated each semester. Per the [Retention Committee Mission & Charge](#), the committee

*...serves as an advisory group responsible for the collection, analysis, and communication of retention and graduation data and for the recommendation and review of programs aimed at improving student retention and graduation rates across the university.*

The Retention Committee meets once per month in the spring and fall semesters. Additionally, permanent groups such as the [Student Early Alert System](#) (SEAS) Team as well as ad hoc working groups, e.g. the [Student Employment Development Committee](#), focus on student success related activities and initiatives and provide essential feedback and recommendations to the committee and other decision-making groups. Major results of these efforts in past semesters include the hiring of a full-time undergraduate [academic advisor](#), the recognition and [celebration](#) of excellent academic performance (dean's and president's list honors), the implementation of 4<sup>th</sup>- and 8<sup>th</sup>-week faculty [reports](#) in all courses, aimed at early identification of academically at-risk students, and, more recently, the [Student Employment Program Recommendation](#) aimed at fostering the student development aspects of on-campus employment and easing students' financial burdens by leveraging student employment on and off campus.

The [2016-2019 Retention Plan](#) identifies five goals: 1) Understand Our Students & Ourselves, 2) Build Trust & Respect, 3) Shift to a Success Pathways Mindset, 4) Ease the Financial Burden of College, and 5) Boost Foundational Skills. Each of these goals with its corresponding strategies is a product of the analysis of student success data such as first-time freshman fall to fall [retention](#) (disaggregated by racial/ethnic demographic, gender, legal status, and financial aid award), academic performance data (GPA, SAP), data from student satisfaction [surveys](#), and qualitative data, e.g. from [focus groups](#). The committee also consults [external data](#) and higher education trends and [studies](#) in order to operate within best practices and plan for changes in the higher education environment.

Each retention goal includes the metrics used for measurement and the target set for improvement. Strategies under the goals determine annual cost, development period, implementation, and primary responsibilities. Goal 1, Understand Our Students & Ourselves, has defined three strategies: identify at-risk groups, understand the challenges they face, and understand the challenges faced by UWest faculty and staff in supporting these groups. This goal is foundational to the rest of the plan; it has provided quantitative data identifying our first-generation Latina/o students as the university's most academically at-risk group, and it has focused the rest of the goals on addressing the challenges faced by this group: financial hardship, academic under-preparedness, and first-generation challenges such as lack of college-specific cultural capital, conflicting demands of study and family, feelings of alienation, etc. The Retention Committee reviews student success in all populations within the institution, including groups which typically have better outcomes such as international students and graduate students. In the case of graduate programs, all faculty chairs sit on the Retention Committee and use data and analysis to directly benefit their own programs.

Goal 3, Shift to a Success Pathways Mindset, features strategies specifically designed for our under-represented first-generation students, e.g. the [Bridge to University](#) (B2U) summer program and the [Learning Community](#), an academic program piloted in fall 2016 that integrates four linked courses over two years and offers mentoring and co-curricular programming using best practices in higher education for the retention of under-represented



and under-prepared first-time freshmen. Our [research](#) has revealed that these are proven high-impact practices for these at-risk groups. Of course, many of the retention strategies also benefit students in general, beyond the identified at-risk group, and contribute to an enhancement of campus life and community building.

In conclusion, the university's retention, persistence, and graduation efforts are planned and monitored by a cross-divisional group of faculty, administrators, and staff, who bring a multiplicity of professional views as well as their own diverse backgrounds to bear. Student success is measured according to evidence-based indicators gathered from quantitative and qualitative studies, which are benchmarked against national and state trends, such as data disaggregated by ethnicity, national origin, gender, and first-generation and socio-economic status. The current plan, borrowing from best practices and covering the period from 2016 to 2019, focuses closely on the identified needs of UWest's first-generation Latino/a students. The Retention Committee continues to monitor this plan, collecting metrics as they become available and measuring the effectiveness of the strategies implemented toward achieving our five main goals: understanding our students and ourselves, creating community and sense of belonging, shifting to a paradigm of opportunity, easing financial burdens, and building foundational academic skills. While we are not yet satisfied with the outcomes for our vulnerable populations, the data to date suggest that we are on the right track in improving their success.

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#### REFLECTIVE ESSAY ON STUDENT SUCCESS AT UWEST

The WSCUC evaluation process has been invaluable in aiding our university to develop a data-driven cycle of goal-setting, measurement, evaluation, and feedback that allows us to view student success strategically. The [Retention Plan](#) delineates key areas for improvement that we have identified and targeted in our ongoing drive for improvement. At the same time, we are able to draw from and adapt best practices while maintaining a holistic, qualitative view of student success, always observed through the lens of the UWest mission and values.

UWest's efforts to support and improve student success are not driven by numbers alone, nor are our nonselective admissions standards simply a necessity for survival in a very competitive higher education environment. Our [mission](#) to "provide whole-person education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values" is a call to serve all people, not a select few. This principle reflects the core of Humanistic Buddhism, which is anti-elitist and seeks to reach the largest number of people possible. Therefore, we welcome and embrace students not all of whom are ready to "hit the ground running"—for whatever reason (lack of preparation, linguistic and cultural difference, etc.). And we remain accountable to these students from the admissions process through graduation and beyond by designing and funding programs and services to support their whole-person development (e.g., [Bridge to University](#), early intervention, [Learning Community](#), service learning, spiritual practice).

Educating the whole person includes providing experiences in and outside the classroom, and on and off campus that develop character, exercise compassion, and foster community. As this report is being finalized, many of our business students are engaged in the annual [VITA](#) program, providing income tax preparation for local individuals and families with low to moderate income. Despite the long hours these students put in, they always comment on how fulfilling it is to provide professional service to those who could otherwise ill afford it. Moreover, our business students are fluent in many of the languages common among the immigrant populations in UWest's neighboring communities: Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Spanish, Thai, and so on. Students thus experience a flowing together of the gifts they bring with them, the skills and knowledge they acquire at UWest, and the embodiment of the values we cultivate. Yet they are neither self-



satisfied nor content to rest on their laurels as evidenced by the current Student Government's plan to provide support to the VITA program so that it can serve even more community members in the future. This is student success.

Turning to the second prong of the UWest mission, when we "facilitate cultural appreciation and understanding between East and West," we are not only creating opportunities for students' cultural enrichment – as important as these experiences are. Our founder, [Venerable Master Hsing Yun](#), has expressed that East and West are also placeholders for two "opposing" sides. Buddhism, of course, seeks to see the unity beyond dualistic positions. This view of East/West is expansive, including everyone; at the same time, it collapses contradictions, revealing our interconnectedness and thereby increasing compassion. An example of what this looks like in practice is visible in the Learning Community, one of UWest's major student success initiatives. This program has been developed, *inter alia*, to help UWest's socio-economically disadvantaged first-generation students meet their frequently much-better-prepared peers from the East on an equal footing. Thematically linked courses exploring questions of identity, journey, character, and community draw on each student's rich cultural heritage while building foundational academic communication and critical thinking skills. The Learning Community, though made up predominantly of domestic first-generation students, is not exclusive. Rather, it is conceived for all first-time undergraduate students, offering a place where students learn from, with, and on behalf of one another.

Finally, as implied in the foregoing, UWest views student success also as a social justice calling. In our own small way, we accept the challenge of breaking cycles of disadvantage, neglect, and oppression by providing opportunity to diverse populations and supporting the success of all students. This is why keeping tuition affordable is important to us even as we become a more well-known and recognized institution. In this, we take inspiration and direction from Venerable Master Hsing Yun, who, without the benefit of formal education of his own, has provided education to countless people around the world. We are aware that by standing on our principles, we have chosen a more difficult path. However, we cannot be true to our values and identity if our students are forced to incur insurmountable debt to attend UWest nor if we turn our back on vulnerable populations in our midst.



*Student workers from the Enrollment Office*

## GRADUATE CULTURE

The university continues to make strides in nurturing graduate culture for our students and faculty. [UWest's 2014 EER report](#) provided evidence on [Graduate Assistant](#) opportunities, [learning outcome assessment](#) in graduate programs, differing perceptions of graduate students highlighted in [campus surveys](#), changes to admissions requirements for graduate students (see [2015/16 Academic Catalog](#) vs. [2016/17 Academic Catalog](#)), elimination of overlapping undergraduate and graduate courses (see [EER Visiting Team Report](#)) [CFR 2.2b], and implementation of [English language learner](#) (ELL) support for entering international graduate students [CFR3.5]. The EER report also highlighted an institutional awareness of our still majority graduate student population even as we continue to grow the undergraduate majors, including two important needs UWest was working towards at the time of the review: 1) to grow and diversify the full-time faculty who work closely with graduate students and 2) for graduate students to engage in practical experiences in their chosen professions prior to graduation (see page 35 of the [EER Report](#)). The visiting team agreed that there was:

*...a need for continued enhancements to the graduate programs and professional preparation of the graduate students, including enhanced resources for research and increased numbers of full-time graduate faculty. As enrollments continue to climb, the team recommends that the university consider providing additional opportunities, such as student teaching for the doctoral students, developing plans for an outpatient clinic that would utilize psychology students, and experiential learning for the business students. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.10)*

UWest entirely agrees with this statement and has continued to enhance graduate culture through efforts already underway at the time of the EER visit as well as new initiatives. In their report, the EER visiting team also expressed concerns over faculty growth and workload, for example:

*...In the response under "Ongoing Challenges," the EER self-study notes the ongoing issue of faculty workload. ...There is no direct response in the EER self-study on the issue of faculty research; however, the committee reviewed a draft document that describes a limited new sabbatical policy for faculty. The financial plan does not have a predication of grant income, nor is there a line item for faculty research. While there is support for "conference and seminar," it is not clear whether these are for scholarly work. While faculty are engaged in scholarship, more financial support in this area should be a strategic goal for the future. The intellectual climate of the university and retention of accomplished faculty are at risk without a commitment to scholarship.*

This section will also address some of these concerns inasmuch as we perceive them to be intimately related to graduate culture. Faculty hiring is referenced and updates on those processes will be available when the visiting team is on campus.

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## MENTORSHIP IN GRADUATE PROGRAMS

UWest offers [six graduate degrees](#) through four academic departments, plus graduate certificates in business.

**Buddhist Chaplaincy** 2 full-time faculty

- Master of Divinity (MDiv) in Buddhist Chaplaincy
- Doctor of Buddhist Ministry (DBMin)

**Religious Studies** 4 full-time faculty (+1 vacancy, search in progress)

- Master of Arts (MA) in Religious Studies
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Religious Studies

**Business Administration** 3 full-time faculty (+1 vacancy, search in progress)

- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Graduate Certificates in Business Administration

**Psychology** 2 full-time faculty

- Master of Arts (MA) in Psychology

Graduate students are mentored by the faculty in graduate programs, often before they even begin the application and admissions process. They have direct access to faculty to via [email](#), phone calls, and face-to-face meetings, sometimes organized by staff in the enrollment office and sometimes on the student's own initiative. It is not unusual to see faculty chairs giving a campus tour and having lunch with prospective students to help them decide if this is the best program for their career goals.

New graduate students, if they are not already acquainted, meet with their faculty chair and faculty advisor during U-Days (new student orientation) the week before classes begin each semester. They receive assistance selecting and registering for courses for that semester, as well as advisement and mentorship to help them achieve their goals over the entire length of their program. While they are enrolled at [UWest](#), faculty continue to provide both [mentorship](#) and 'sponsorship,' which, for many students, continues after graduation [CFR 2.2b].

In support of a healthy community life for graduate students, faculty assume two distinct but related roles: as mentors and sponsors. The former looks to the campus and the latter looks beyond the campus. As *mentors*, UWest faculty serves as professional "friends" who listen to, dialog with, and envision the professional potential of student success in the program. They help students to acculturate to the complex world of the campus, as well as higher education generally, with its unique traditions and abundance of unwritten rules and expectations.

As *sponsors*, graduate faculty at UWest spend professional capital on behalf of their students. Whereas mentors may advise as to the conferences, publications, and grants to which their students can apply to, UWest faculty act as sponsors when they expend their physical energy, teaching and research reputations, and available resources to help pave the way to grants, teaching appointments, research and employment opportunities for their students. For example, faculty in the Business Administration Department exert their time and reputations to secure employment for an MBA students (see list of employers on page 31).

Community at UWest is enhanced significantly by our small enrollment. Students forge lasting bonds with faculty, staff, and peers. From faculty, students receive personal attention thanks to a 10-to-1 student-teacher ratio. Each graduate student is assigned a faculty advisor as soon as they are admitted, and student advisor

meetings take place several times per year. Graduate faculty do not view advising as peripheral to teaching, but integral to it, extending instruction to wherever students gather. 'Small' at [UWest](#) means a dynamic support network of several interlinked departments, including: [Academic Advising](#), [Student Life](#), [Wellness Center](#), [Career Development Center](#), [Financial Aid](#), [Student Success Center](#), and other support services [CFR3.5]. Faculty and staff regularly communicate with one another regarding student needs, such as through the [Student Early Alert System \(SEAS\)](#) that identifies academic distress as well as life challenges impacting student performance and collaboratively provides strategic interventions to improve student success.

Graduate programs ensure the mission of UWest and fulfill our institutional values in many ways. Students practice empathic awareness, compassion, and human mutuality as part of student employment, field-placement, and service learning in their programs. Dialog groups and clubs of faculty and students stimulate the mind to inquire. Graduate program faculty serve as advisors to [the Chaplaincy Club](#), [Entrepreneurship Club](#), and [others](#), and attend regular club meetings and events [CFR2.11, 3.1]. Cross-campus communication in the forms of town-hall meetings, open-spaces, and student meetings with the president strengthens belonging and unifies the campus. Graduate students have a long history of serving in the [UWest Student Government](#) as officers, academic department representatives, and special representatives (e.g. doctoral student senator).

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#### BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY & MINISTRY

FACULTY CHAIR: [REV. VICTOR GABRIEL, MDIV, PHD](#)

[University of the West](#) offers one of only four accredited [Master of Divinity](#) (see page 125) programs specifically for Buddhists in the United States. The [Department of Buddhist Chaplaincy](#) was founded as a division of the [Department of Religious Studies](#) in 2008 and became a separate department in 2012. The department offers two graduate degrees, the [Master of Divinity \(MDiv\)](#) (see page 125) and the [Doctor of Buddhist Ministry \(DBMin\)](#) (see page 130), once called the Doctor of Theology (ThD) degree. The faculty, all of whom are engaged in the practice of Buddhist chaplaincy, specialize in preparing Buddhist practitioners for hands-on work in interfaith settings, such as hospitals, hospices, police departments, universities, prisons, and the military. The department collaborates closely with the departments of [Business Administration](#), [Psychology](#), and [Religious Studies](#).

Buddhist chaplaincy and ministry students are trained to embody high standards of ethical personal/professional conduct. Honoring the expression of different opinions is a hallmark of good education and a requirement of genuine interfaith work [CFR 2.5]. For those reasons, students are expected to adhere to an honor code intended to build character, enhance compassion, and strengthen community (the university's three values). In addition to a clearly defined code of ethical professional conduct, the department looks to the [Association of Professional Chaplains \(APC\)](#) for standards and best professional practices in the field. The chaplaincy program embeds in its curriculum 72 semester hours that cover nine core educational areas specified by the APC [CFR 2.1, 2.2, 4.1].

Recently, visiting professor [Dr. Pamela Ayo Yetunde](#) heightened the academic climate and deeply enriched the UWest graduate culture as a [Lenz Foundation Women in Buddhism Grant](#) recipient [CFR 1.4, 3.1]. This grant helped foster a context on campus for an authentic and unique American Buddhism that takes inspiration from wisdom traditions of the East. Students in the chaplaincy (MDiv and DBMin), and religious studies (MA and PhD) programs significantly valued ongoing engagements in the classroom and across campus with Dr. Yetunde, as well as participating in the panel discussions she organized related to special topics in the field of women and Buddhism and Buddhist spiritual care. As faculty in residence, [Dr. Yetunde](#) lived in the residence halls, took

meals in the communal dining hall, and was largely available to students and their professional and academic needs. She also served in a leadership role, modeling women's success in the fields of chaplaincy, divinity, and Buddhist studies.

Graduate culture is significantly enhanced by the [Chaplaincy Club](#). While participation in the club is voluntary, all chaplaincy and ministry students are members [CFR2.11]. The club meets weekly during the semester and receives oversight and guidance from a faculty member. Club activities are centered on the areas of self-care, education, and service [CFR2.11]. In the category of self-care, during the 2016-17 academic year, students organized [weekly meditation practice](#), [contemplative hiking](#), taiko drumming, and a [farewell party for graduating students](#). In the area of education, the club organized movie screenings on the [Syrian refugee crisis](#) and Korean comfort women, including group discussions that followed the films and a meet-and-greet with a filmmaker (Elias Matar). In the service category, students participate in memorial services ([Pakistan memorial service](#), [memorial service for Bruce Long](#)), interfaith activities ([UWest interfaith service for earthquake victims in Nepal](#), [international and interfaith week](#)), [a peace-walk](#), and leadership training referred to as [the Way of Council](#) [CFR1.4, 2.1].

As part of their service learning engagements, both curricular and co-curricular, chaplaincy students offered [meditation](#), instruction, [service classes](#), and [dharma talks at the Los Angeles Buddhist Union](#) in Rosemead from 2008 -2012 [CFR2.1, 2.11, 3.1]. Currently, chaplaincy students provide weekly meditation instruction for staff, families, and patients at the [Children's Hospital LA \(CHLA\)](#). Students shadow faculty or invited guests before they themselves lead a meditation session at the hospital. Students have reported that this experience has had a major impact on their self-understanding, confidence, and commitment to the professions of chaplaincy and ministry.

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## BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

INTERIM FACULTY CHAIR: [BILL CHEN, PHD](#)

The [MBA degree program](#) provides in-depth technical education in specialized fields, addresses issues of management in different cultural contexts, and covers ethical aspects of decision making [CFR 2.2b]. The program prepares graduates for leadership positions in for-profit and nonprofit organizations. The MBA program pays particular attention to cultural diversity within an organization, as well as worldwide cultural differences, teaching students how to effectively and responsibly manage such differences [CFR1.4, 2.3]. MBA students are provided a collegial and caring learning community with small, interactive classes. They have many opportunities to connect classroom learning and co-curricular learning with real world professional experiences provided through service, conferences and publishing, and local networking and field trips [CFR2.11, 3.5]. Through these activities and through mentoring, advising, and department events, Business Administration builds a strong, community-based culture for graduate students.

Through [the VITA program](#), student clubs, and campus activities MBA students have opportunities for community service based on the Buddhist values of character, compassion, and community [CFR 2.3, 2.5]. Each year, [the Department of Business Administration](#) provides a social benefit activity known as the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\) program](#). With training and supervision by faculty, [UWest](#)



students provide a valuable service to low-income taxpayers in the local community by assisting them in the preparation of state and federal income tax returns. UWest also provides its students opportunities to participate in a variety of student organizations and clubs. The Department of Business Administration, for example, hosts its own student groups, including the [Entrepreneurship Club](#) and the [Sustainable Investing Club](#) to help students to bring sustainable business practices to international competitions [CFR2.11]. Recently, an MBA faculty member and advisor to the UWest Sustainable Investing Club, organized [student participation at the B-corp](#) (i.e., Benefit-corporations symposium in Santa Monica, CA ) to learn first-hand from local business leader what it means to use businesses as a force for the greater good of society and the world. Graduate students are invited to a number of co-curricular activities on and off campus that help to give rise to and shape an overall culture of inquiry and community, including the week-long [International and Interfaith Week](#) (November) and [Common Ground](#) (April) activities, including contemplative practice and celebrations of cultural heritage [CFR2.11].

Every MBA student correlates workplace experiences with theoretical knowledge through a combination of research collaboration, conferences and seminars, networking with business professionals, field trips, and internships. The department provides opportunities for graduate students to work alongside faculty mentors on faculty research projects in the areas of finance, international economic policy, minority and small business, and mindfulness in business [CFR 2.3, 3.5]. Students regularly attend research conferences hosted by UWest, including the [International Conference on Pacific Rim Management](#). In addition, students and faculty attend meetings and seminars sponsored by

## EMPLOYERS OF UWEST MBA INTERNS & GRADUATES (PARTIAL LIST)

Vida Enterprise Corporation, Los Angeles, CA  
 STC Management, Whittier, CA  
 State Farm Insurance, Walnut,  
 AKDY Import, El Monte, CA  
 JC Foodservices Inc., Monterey Park, CA  
 EC Supply Inc., City of Industry, CA  
 Cajet Group Inc., El Monte, CA  
 Lams USA Group, LLC, San Marino, CA  
 Ping On Pharmacy, Los Angeles, CA  
 AAA Capital Investments Inc., Alhambra, CA  
 Pavilion Transport Inc., City of Industry  
 San Gabriel Economic Development Corporation, CA  
 Woodi USA Inc., El Monte, CA  
 Ho & Associate, Monterey Park, CA  
 Nature & Design, Anaheim, CA  
 Merchandising Manufacturing Sourcing Inc., Irwindale, CA  
 Golden City Logistic, Rowland Heights, CA  
 Taiwan Center of Greater Los Angeles, Rosemead, CA  
 P.K. Box Printing, Santa Ana, CA  
 Wells Fargo, Pasadena, CA  
 Crittenton Services for Family & Children, Fullerton, CA  
 JPMorgan Chase & Co.  
 Atos IT Solutions and Services, Los Angeles, CA  
 EC Supply Inc., City of Industry, CA  
 Wyser, Shanghai, CN  
 Keller Williams, City of Industry, CA  
 Republic Services, Long Beach  
 Asian Pacific Family Clinic, Rosemead, CA  
 City of Hope, Duarte, CA  
 LorchGreene, Los Angeles, CA  
 Sol Bridge International School of Business, South Korea  
 Global Management Group, Irvine, CA  
 HD Supply, Orlando, FL  
 Autism Response Team, Los Angeles, CA  
 SafeQuest Solano, Fairfield, CA  
 Rancho Santiago Community College District, CA  
 Prime Wheel Corporation, Gardena, CA  
 Embassy of the Republic of Korean, Washington D.C.  
 Beckett Advisors, Altadena, CA  
 Robust Investment Advisors Inc., Seoul, South Korea  
 The People Concern, Los Angeles, CA  
 Chenbro Micom, Ontario, CA  
 Clearview Treatment Programs, Venice, CA  
 Life Adjustment Team, Culver City, CA  
 Advance Power Group Corporation, Alhambra, CA  
 South Coast Community Service, Santa Ana  
 Citi Bank, Los Angeles, CA  
 Gilead Science, San Dimas  
 Skid Row Housing Trust, Los Angeles, CA  
 Skyline Security, Downey, CA  
 Nature & Design Inc, Anaheim, CA  
 Harmony Tree Learning Center, Monterey Park, CA  
 Enki Health and Research System Inc., Los Angeles, CA



local chambers of commerce and other professional organizations, including the [Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce](#), [San Gabriel Valley Chamber of Commerce](#), [Rosemead Chamber of Commerce](#), and [San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership](#), where they network with business professionals. Recently, faculty organized [a field trip to the Los Angeles Fashion District](#) where students examined the structure and objectives of small business and conversed with merchants to link classroom theory to practice. MBA students gain valuable real-life, hands-on professional educational experience as part of the [MBA 547 Technical and Fundamental Analysis of Financial Securities](#) and [MBA 548 Financial Security Trade and Analysis](#). Student teams prepare during the semester to present their recommendations on what new investments should be pursued through the UWest Student Fund (approximately \$60K) during the following semester. Students learn how to effectively invest real money on Wall Street, informed by the values of sustainability, social benefit, and ethical business. Finally, all MBA students must complete MBA 590, an internship with a local company required for graduation ([Academic Catalog](#), p. 150).

Mentoring and advising begins with new students and continues past graduation. Graduate student culture is nurtured through annual department events. Each August, newly admitted graduate students are invited to the campus to meet their peers and faculty during U-Days orientation. This is an acculturative immersion experience providing graduate students an overview of UWest policies, procedures, practices, as well as an introduction to student support staff and resources. Students are provided opportunities to hear from and interact with current and new students concerning areas of professional interest, courses, research and personal interests and backgrounds. In December, business students attend a departmental holiday meal and reception to mingle with peers, faculty, and staff, extending class discussion topics and modeling collegiality. Community bonding continues up to graduation from the MBA program. Graduate students participating in the annual commencement ceremony have the opportunity to be recognized by their faculty at an informal department reception. The reception is an opportunity for MBA students and faculty to gather together in the spirit of collegiality and mutual recognition. The department annually presents an award to a distinguished MBA student at that gathering.

Finally, MBA students also receive support in obtaining jobs after graduation. UWest recently was able to reclassify the MBA with a concentration in Computer Information Systems under as a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) program with the [Department of Homeland Security](#) (DHS). This reclassification makes international students graduating from this program eligible for a 24-month extension of their optional practical training (OPT) work authorization. Assuming they meet all other eligibility requirements, these graduates can now remain and work in the United States for up to three years post-graduation. During that time, they remain in contact with UWest's International Student Services to navigate the complex visa regulations as they consider next steps in their careers. As alumni, they also continue to enjoy services through the university's Career Development Center as well as their academic advisor's support. Through connections made at UWest, students have obtained

jobs with dozens of domestic and international companies, non-profits, and government organizations (see list on previous page).

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## PSYCHOLOGY

FACULTY CHAIR: [HIROSHI M. SASAKI, PHD](#)

Since 2012, [the Psychology Department](#) has developed a graduate student culture that increasingly fosters professionalism. Moves used to enhance and support professionalism among graduate students include establishing competencies and best practices outlined by the California Business and Professions Code Section 4980.37, regulated by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS). The department has implemented [the Professional Ethics Codes of the American Association for Marriage Family Therapy \(AAMFT\)](#), as well as [AAMFT-CA](#), [the American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#), [the California Association for Marriage Family Therapy \(CAMFT\)](#), and [the American Counseling Association \(ACA\)](#). The department is currently developing a comprehensive process (based on this [example](#)) by which students can file a grievance due to ostensible ethics code violations [CFR 2.2b].

The department looks to best practices from education psychology, including student opportunities for applied and deliberate practical experience supported by accurate and immediate feedback. The culture develops students' abilities to identify, describe, explain, and apply learned psychological concepts, processes, and procedures (e.g. via [PSCYH 505](#), [PSYCH 533](#), etc.) [CFR 2.6]. Students in this learning environment continue to become more aware of the role of cultural assumptions, biases, and stereotypes that, if unchecked, may lead to macro/micro aggressions. See Psychology assessment findings from [2015](#) and [2016](#) for more on how well related learning outcomes are integrated into the curriculum.

In addition, the department is committed to evidence based [research](#), stemming primarily from [Acceptance and Commitment Therapy](#), but also from the field of Multicultural Counseling. From the outset, the department seeks to establish a community of compatibility with one another and the university mission by examining how deep values of family and culture intersect [CFR 2.2b]. The department has created a set of specific requirements to be fulfilled by students who enroll in a pre-practicum course ([PSYCH 505A](#) on p. 254), the successful completion of which allows them to advance to their practicums and see patients in a therapeutic setting [CFR 2.1].

From the initial point of student contact, [the Department of Psychology](#) uses, as part of its applicant interview process, clear and ongoing inclusion/exclusion criteria, as a means to ensure compatibility with the program [CFR 2.2]. Students are asked to articulate what features led them to choose to apply to the program and what features they are now seeking from a graduate psychology program. At these interviews, applicants are invited to speak about their core personal and professional values so that the program can better determine their fit.

As their first course assignment, graduate students in psychology draft a written personal [Mission Statement](#) that is compared with the personal statement they submitted with their application, and is

updated over time as they gather new learning experiences. This statement is again revisited when students apply for a practicum ([PSYCH 700](#) on p. 258) at the conclusion of their first year (two semesters). Moreover, a greater sense of communal bond and commitment to purpose has been noted since the move to a cohort model in 2014/15, fostering increased trust, cohesion, cooperation, and mutual support, as well as individual student resilience.

In fall 2012, the department offered PSYCH 502 Professional Seminar in Multicultural/Buddhist Marriage Family Therapy (currently [PSYCH 505](#) on p. 254) to acculturate incoming students to graduate study. Students now more fully grasp the nature of plagiarism and the rigorous nature of analysis required for graduate-level critical thinking. Incoming international graduate students learn Western graduate practice and tradition, while acculturating to the MFT profession. Because graduate students learn in a social and cultural milieu, the department strives to de-pathologize introversion and related Asian values of inwardness, including how students believe themselves to be perceived or treated by Western faculty. UWest graduate students find their [familial and communal experiences](#) are honored and identified as potentially powerful resources, as the psychology program privileges [strength-based approaches](#) to individual and group change.

The Department of Psychology encourages diverse intellectual exchange of ideas and perspectives. To create an environment defined by broad, dynamic sharing of views and practices, faculty introduce students to the particular narrative threads that make up their MFT education [CFR 2.12]. Students weigh and discuss the program's stated assumptions, values, and biases, including, but not limited to, the following:

- [Multicultural, community-based, recovery oriented practice \(BBS requirement\)](#) (see PSYCH 505, PSYCH 531, PSYCH 607, PSYCH 623, PSYCH 651, PSYCH 700, PSYCH 702, PSYCH 710, PSYCH 712 on pp. 254-258)
- [Intersection of Western \(biomedical/psychological\) and Buddhist ethics](#) (see PSYCH 532 on p. 255) [CFR2.2]
- [Buddhist psychology and how it intersects with "third wave behavioral therapies"](#) (see PSYCH 505 on p. 254 and PSYCH 651 p. 257)
- [Interpersonal neurobiology, an interdisciplinary field that deeply influences the program, particularly in the understanding of relationships, trauma, resilience, and healing](#) (see PSYCH 505, PSYCH 536, PSYCH 540, PSYCH 551, and PSYCH 643 on pp. 254-257)
- [Systems theory and postmodern approaches to therapy](#) (see PSYCH 536, PSYCH 556, PSYCH 651 on pp. 255-257)

While the [Department of Psychology](#) has since 2012 strengthened its graduate culture, it nevertheless recognizes that more work needs to be done to create an environment responsive to other specific needs of its students. For example, the department desires more comprehensive assistance from the university on issues of student disabilities, such as financial support for learning/developmental disability testing to which our underserved population may never have had access [CFR 2.13]. Faculty, in the spirit of university values of compassion and loving kindness, sometimes under-accommodate or

over-accommodate when addressing disability issues. Faculty recognizes that the number of students who face psychological and emotional challenges will likely increase in the future, and seek greater professional training and guidance that results in consistent abiding in California and federal law.

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## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

FACULTY CHAIR: [JANE IWAMURA, PHD](#)

[The Department of Religious Studies](#) offers its graduate students rigorous academic training in religious studies, particularly Buddhist studies. The program provides a whole-person education that develops attentive mentoring relationships with students and features programs and opportunities that allow students to integrate their academic research and learning into their everyday lives [CFR2.3-2.5].

[The Master of Arts \(MA\) in Religious Studies](#) is a two-year full-time program that provides rigorous academic training in order that graduate students gain a critical appreciation and understanding of different facets of religion. In close consultation with a faculty advisor, students design a course of study tailored to their own interests and needs. Students may draw on courses offered at [UWest](#) to create an emphasis in Buddhist canonical languages, history and texts, comparative religions, Humanistic Buddhism, Chinese religions, South Asian religions, Buddhism and psychology, Buddhism and contemporary culture, Buddhist theology and ministry, or any area central to their interests [CFR2.2, 2.2b]. For MA students planning to pursue studies at the doctoral level, the following optional components are available:

- [Language](#): students may pursue up to 12-units of language study, as part of their overall coursework in their first year or whenever the courses are offered (see p. 204)
- Thesis Project: students can enroll in the 3-unit course [REL 700 Thesis Project](#) (see p. 262) at the outset of the semester in which they intend to write and submit their thesis.
- Directed Reading and Research courses and 6-units of Independent Study are allowed

[The Doctor of Philosophy \(PhD\)](#) (see p. 205) degree in [Religious Studies](#) is an advanced research degree leading to a dissertation. Research and writing skills are developed to the level necessary to participate in professional academic discourse [CFR 2.6]. Students provide evidence of broad learning and expert mastery of a particular area of concentration within the field. UWest offers two concentrations in its doctoral program. First, doctoral students may specialize in [Buddhist Studies](#) (see p. 206). This path is for advanced research in the comparative study of Buddhism in relation to another religion, or the intensive study of an aspect of Buddhism, both leading to a dissertation. Second, a doctoral student may choose [Comparative Religions](#) (see page 207). This path is for advanced research in the comparative study of religions [CFR 2.8].

In line with the university's new [institutional learning outcomes](#) (Know-Be-Do), the department has created an environment in which students can hone their critical thinking and writing skills, as well as build a solid academic foundation in the field of religious studies through its classes, dissertation/thesis advising, [UWest Pali Society club](#), and co-curriculum conferences (e.g. [AAR-WR](#) and [Sakyadhita USA](#) are upcoming) and [guest speakers](#) in the field (Know) [CFR 2.8].

Small graduate class sizes allow students to build strong relationships with faculty and with one another. Formal seminars dedicated to dissertation writing and informal workshops on PhD preparation (for MA students) and the qualifying examination process (for PhD students), negotiating

the academic conference, and CV development (for PhD students) provide supportive structures for professional growth and success [CFR 2.13]. Relationship-building and information sharing are undergirded by a compassionate and open approach (Be).

The skills and career profile of UWest graduate students in Religious Studies are developed through the department's [PhD Teaching Program](#) (PTP), initiated in fall 2016. The teaching program introduces graduate students to the realm of university teaching. PhD students enroll in a formal practicum assisted by experienced teaching faculty from across the departments to teach an existing undergraduate course, for which they develop their own syllabi, lesson plans, etc. [CFR 2.5, 2.6]. Student scholarship and professional development are enhanced through course [assistantships](#), academic conference support, and publishing workshops (Do).

Graduate culture in Religious Studies is further enhanced by UWest's [Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon \(DSBC\) Project](#), a collaborative partnership with Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods, Nepal [CFR 2.8, 2.9, 3.5]. The department is engaged in a groundbreaking cultural project, gathering, digitizing, and distributing to the world original Sanskrit scriptures of Buddhism. Within Indian Buddhism, there are approximately 600 Mahayana Buddhist literary compositions known as sutras extant in the languages of Sanskrit, Chinese, or Tibetan. The complete Mahayana Buddhist Canon has survived only in Chinese, but all of the texts were originally composed in Sanskrit. The DSBC is preserving a rich linguistic and cultural heritage through the use of digitization and organization of those texts into a complete and comprehensive Sanskrit Buddhist Canon that is freely accessible online. The digital language and text documentation resources available to our students enrich the linguistic, humanistic, and Buddhist faith-based components of the MA and PhD programs, while simultaneously making the DSBC a valuable resource to the world.

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#### SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

LIBRARY DIRECTOR: LING-LING KUO

Graduate students at [UWest](#) visit the [library](#) more frequently and check out four times more library resources than the rest of the student population. Graduate students also frequently utilize [interlibrary loan services](#), borrowing resources from other libraries via the [Worldcat.org](#) system.

Academic Year	Check Outs per Student		Interlibrary Loan Requests per Student	
	Grad	Undergrad	Grad	Undergrad
2014-2015	27.4	8.7	1.1	0.1
2015-2016	26.6	13.3	0.8	0.1

The university is currently undergoing additional acquisitions and database trials with graduate resources in mind, including other collections from [JSTOR](#). The UWest library is investigating the value to graduate students of the Brill academic publisher ebooks collection, consisting of topics in Asian studies, Biblical studies, ancient Near East and early Christianity, classical studies, Middle East and Islamic studies, religious studies, theology, and philosophy to support our master's and doctoral students in [Chaplaincy](#) (see p. 125) and [Religious Studies](#) (see p. 202). Librarians at UWest provide critical multi-lingual support to graduate student researchers working

in English, Chinese, and Buddhist canonical languages [CFR 2.3, 3.5]. The library website also hosts (and regularly improves) the course reserves system, where instructors can post course-related documents and links and communicate with their students. Library staff show great compassion for “suffering” student scholars and are regularly rated as the most “helpful and approachable” staff on campus ([2015 Student Satisfaction Survey](#)) [CFR4.6].

Because appropriate physical space constitutes community as much as do abstract values, UWest has recently created a special [graduate student study room](#) in the library that features lockable cabinets, assigned study carrels, and comfortable reading chairs. This study space, long sought after by graduate students, opened in spring 2017 and is available on a priority basis to doctoral students, followed by other graduate students on a first-come basis for semester-by-semester (no cost) reservations.

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## FACULTY CULTURE

Graduate student culture heavily influenced by faculty culture. Faculty teach, advise, mentor, and sponsor students according to the time and energy they have to do so, which depends greatly on their workload. Faculty workload has been a concern of [UWest](#) and WSCUC visiting teams for many years and was noted in the [EER Visiting Team Report](#) (pp. 12 & 24). Therefore, Academic Affairs at UWest reduced and streamlined faculty workload to ensure that faculty have sufficient time to devote to students, particularly graduate students.

Based on meta-assessment findings and the recommendations of the EER Visiting Team (Report, pp. 23 & 40), UWest has streamlined the learning outcome assessment process in all departments. Faculty have moved away from a system that collects artifacts and rates learning outcome performance in all classes towards a system that selectively identifies, collects, and rates artifacts at key points within the curriculum [CFR 2.7, 4.1]. Workload for all faculty, including adjuncts, has been considerably reduced as a result, particularly at the end of each semester. Assessment processes are more manageable and results are more meaningful. The process of selecting what to assess, when and where in the curriculum, improved understanding of program curriculum and the “developmental arc” of students in all programs [CFR2.10, 3.2, 3.3].

As of the 2016/17 academic year, all graduate programs transitioned to a portfolio assessment model (for [example](#)) in which artifacts (i.e. student work) are collected at various stages in the program – from their first year to their final projects and dissertations – and reviewed by collaborative faculty assessment groups at set dates each year [CFR2.6, 4.3, 4.4]. These groups use best practices, such as agreed upon program learning outcomes, rubrics, and norming, and develop findings and recommendations. Reports are then shared with other faculty and staff via the [University Wide Assessment Council \(UWAC\)](#) and other networks, leading to mutual learning and fruitful cross-department collaborations [CFR 2.4, 4.3, 4.4]. Previously, almost all faculty were involved in data collection throughout the year, but rarely saw reports or findings. Currently, the assessment process requires that faculty only participate in assessment related activities on one or two specially designated days per year and their participation is more meaningful as they collaboratively generate the assessment reports [CFR 3.3, 4.4]. Faculty have immediate ownership of the findings and recommendations, which they often implement immediately in their own classes and interactions with students. [UWest](#) is home to a flourishing culture of assessment from which students immediately benefit from it [CFR2.1, 4.3, 4.4].

Faculty workload concerns in the PhD in [Religious Studies](#) (see page 201), which at one point grew to over 70 students, have also been addressed. This presented a considerable work even when the faculty of Religious



Studies was fully staffed [CFR 3.2]. Over the past four years, the department has pursued a deliberate reduction in PhD students through dedicated attention to ‘senior’ students, providing them with the support they need to finally graduate, implementation of a seven year maximum time-to-degree for newer students, and a more selective admissions process that accepts only the top candidates each year [CFR 1.6, 2.10, 2.12]. As a result, enrollment in the PhD program shrunk to a more manageable size. In the meantime, the Religious Studies department has launched a [faculty search](#) to re-fill a position for a fifth full-time member and has recently pursued a [grant](#) that could enable a sixth full-time hire (the grant outcome will be known in May 2017) [CFR 2.1, 2.2].

[Chief Academic Officer, Peter M. Rojcewicz](#), shortly after joining UWest, also commissioned a [faculty chair workload study](#). This study was recently completed and identified “peaks and valleys” in chair workload. Administrators can better time meetings and projects according to the availability of the faculty chairs, thus ensuring their participation in shared governance and decision making. The university hopes to capitalize on the information provided by this project in planning the 2017/18 academic year.

Faculty research likewise influences teaching, advising, and mentoring. UWest supports faculty research by encouraging student collaboration, implementing the sabbatical policy, providing stipends for conference travel, internal grants for faculty research, and pursuing external grants [CFR 2.8, 3.3]. While we desire for our faculty to be as available as possible to students, we also desire for them to fulfill their purpose as scholars [CFR 2.8, 2.9]. Therefore, where possible, we can do both and “feed two birds with one scone,” supporting faculty-student research collaborations.

Sabbaticals also support faculty research. At the time of the EER visit, [the sabbatical policy](#) had just been penned. Since then, it has been implemented, allowing three tenured professors in two departments to use sabbaticals for research and academic travel [CFR 2.8]: [Dr. Darui Long](#) and Dr. Joshua Capitanio of [Religious Studies](#) (see p. 201) and [Dr. Bill Chen](#) of [Business Administration](#) (see p. 146). UWest also supports travel stipends for all full-time faculty. By practice, these funds have always been used for academic conferences, although the EER team’s attention on this item illuminated that our travel authorization policy, which applies to both faculty and staff, is not specific and should be updated. Likewise, [UWest](#) consistently budgets for [internal grants](#) to support faculty research, although the EER team did not find this budget item within our evidence files. Grants are distributed each year by a faculty panel.

	2014/15 Budget	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Budget	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Budget	2016/17 Year-to-Date	2017/18 Budget Request
<b>Faculty Research</b>	\$8,000	\$7,500	\$9,000	\$6,500	\$9,000	\$3,000	\$12,000

Finally, one new development during 2016 has been the receipt of five external grants from three foundations. As the EER visiting team rightly noted, UWest had no predictions for grant income in its budget. This is because, prior to 2016, UWest did not regularly pursue external grants. As part of the [Strategic Plan](#), UWest has targeted several foundations for grant applications, prepared a [Grant Book](#) to summarize grant opportunities for faculty and staff, and received grants totaling \$35,000. Several of these grants have or will affect faculty, graduate students, and graduate culture:

- Visiting Scholar [Dr. Pamela Ayo Yetunde](#) was able to teach and live at UWest during fall 2016, in part, thanks to a grant from the [Women in Buddhism](#) program of the [Frederick P. Lenz Foundation for](#)

[American Buddhism](#). While here, Dr. Yetunde taught and mentored numerous students in the religious studies, chaplaincy, and ministry programs, and sponsored student publications in the Sakyadhita USA newsletter "[American Buddhist Women](#)."

- "[Teaching Contemplation Across Traditions: An Inter-Religious Colloquium](#)" was held in September 2015 to bring together faculty from UWest, Claremont School of Theology (Christianity), Bayan Claremont (Islam), the Academy for Jewish Religion (Judaism), and the Indic Foundation (Hinduism) for a one day dialog, which several UWest graduate students also attended. This event was made possible by a grant from the [Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Religion and Theology](#).
- The [Interfaith Youth Core](#) has provided a grant to support [Interfaith Studies Curriculum Development](#) during the 2016/17 academic year. During fall 2016, four workshops familiarized faculty and doctoral students with teaching interfaith studies. In spring 2017, stipends were awarded to support course development in interfaith studies. One UWest doctoral student received a stipend to re-develop the course [REL300 Dimensions of Religion](#), which she is teaching in the spring semester. Another UWest graduate and adjunct faculty member, who is currently pursuing a doctorate at Claremont School of Theology, also received a stipend to develop a new [CONT100-level course called Introduction to Theories of Contemplative Practice](#).

Two further grants will impact graduate students in the near future:

- A second [Women in Buddhism](#) grant from the Lenz Foundation will support, in part, the [Sakyadhita USA conference](#) to be held at UWest on April 1, 2017. Graduate students are certain to attend.
- A third grant from the Lenz Foundation will support the development of a [podcast series](#) during the spring semester in order to increase brand awareness and marketability for UWest. These podcasts are designed to feature UWest students and their stories, including one or more graduate students.

Through support for graduate and faculty culture, UWest demonstrates its commitment to scholarship.

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## REFLECTIVE ESSAY: WHOLE-PERSON EDUCATION AT A WESTERN INSTITUTION

CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER: [PETER M. ROJCEWICZ](#), PHD

The mission of [UWest](#) is to provide a whole-person education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values in order to facilitate cultural understanding between East and West. Given the deep commitment to self-rectification, professional development, ethical behavior, compassion, and wisdom, graduate culture at UWest constitutes a vibrant ethos of thinking, talking, acting, and learning with, from, and on behalf of the welfare of self and others [CFR 1.1, 1.2].

An education directed toward wholeness of being and the common good must necessarily move beyond conventional definitions of knowledge as strictly quantitative and learning in terms of what can only be assessed by tests of strict quantification. Consequently, one goal of whole-person education at UWest is to make available to students' minds more, not less, than abstract reasoning. Our whole-person approach supports rational, experiential, social, and contemplative ways of constructing knowledge of selfhood and the world, while pointing out life's ethical and spiritual options.

By promoting diverse learning contexts and modalities, UWest neither discounts analytical and quantitative mental functioning, nor advocates abandoning the fundamental academic project to understand the world in rational terms. But as UWest is committed to educating a more complete person, our curricula and support

services intentionally enlarge that project to include qualitative, cultural, aesthetic, and contemplative learning [CFR 1.4]. We hold an integral vision of the cooperation of the senses with reason, compassion with discernment, personal transformation with intercultural understandings, and humanity with the earth.

Graduate culture at UWest aims to foster independent thinkers who critically evaluate and understand the world's accumulated knowledge, but also seek their own insights, asking questions of not only what they read, but also of the social conditions around them. Through our degree programs, service learning, practicums, and internships, we support and encourage our students to be professional first-responders to the needs of others, able to provide heart-to-heart resuscitation where it's needed, locally and globally [CFR 1.2].

The intellectual and social community of graduate students is largely intangible, even as attention most frequently is focused on concrete elements like qualifying exams, language placement tests, or curricula [CFR 2.2, 2.2b, 2.12]. The ramifications of intangible qualities, however, are meaningful, as students who do not find a sense of belonging are at greater risk of dropping out. Graduate education, like learning at all levels, is as much a social and cultural experience as it is a cognitive and intellectual one [CFR 1.4, 3.1]. Campus and departmental rituals and cultural practices engaged collectively with students and faculty engender professional transformations and identity shifts that lie at the center of authentic learning.

A sense of kinship and belonging is heightened via contemplative practice in and outside of class, arts activities embedded in the curriculum of the [Buddhist Chaplaincy program](#), the Dialogs on Thought and Dialogs on Compassion series, annual week-long community-enhancing activities referred to as Common Ground and [International and Inter-faith Week](#), as well as the UWest Student Government, Inc., and numerous student clubs. UWest continues to develop a vibrant graduate culture that is knowledge-based and relationship-rich to enrich interior/exterior and personal/collective student domains [CFR 2.8, 2.11]. The graduate programs – [Psychology](#), [Chaplaincy](#), [Religious Studies](#), [Business Administration](#) - have a common vision and shared purposes: to assist students in their personal and professional development, contributing to creation of knowledge and upholding high standards of ethical behavior and professionalism on behalf of self and the common good.

As part of its mission to realize understandings between East-West perspectives, UWest welcomes students from [diverse countries](#), including, but not limited to, Taiwan, China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, and Korea. Some graduate students are monastics from the various Buddhist traditions around the world. While international students come with considerable abilities and contribute greatly to the graduate and overall campus culture, the graduate academic units have recognized the need to more deeply acculturate them to Western academic norms of higher education.

Faculty are now enhancing with greater focus the training of international, returning, and monastic students as how to think critically, so that "critique" or professional criticism is viewed not as a practice of denigration, exclusion, or rejection, but rather as the manner in which one treats all academic subjects/objects worthy of study as a form of analysis [CFR 2.1]. For all students this means acquiring certain understandings:

- Appropriate citation methods and graduate level academic research standards
- Classical Western model of rhetoric, logical fallacies, and forms of criticism valued and privileged by each discipline
- Grasping and deftly utilizing thesis driven writing and Western classical rhetoric across the curricula

For monastic students this often means distinguishing giving a "dharma talk" (often spontaneous and based upon first-person experience) from exercising "critique" as a professional examination of a sacred text as a

“text” worthy of historical, philological, clinical, or other forms of analysis common to academic disciplines. For East-Asian and Southeast-Asian students this often means learning the values and practices of the Western academy, such as positioning a narrowly focused thesis at the top of writing assignments to be supported and explored within the context of each text – versus a more “Eastern,” high context style that tends to hint at or obliquely refer to and gradually arrive at the central point(s) of a text.

At the same time and as UWest has stated in previous accreditation reports, the university greatly desires to honor its Asian roots – to become a place where East meets West, not where East becomes West. UWest combines the best of Western academic rigor with Eastern ways of knowing, seeing, doing, and being to create a vibrant hybrid culture for graduate students and all members of the UWest community.



*Graduate student in Religious Studies practices calligraphy*

## CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The process of achieving and maintaining accreditation has been invaluable to UWest. First, it has empowered us to professionalize, standardize, and better articulate our own practices, processes, and policies. The WSCUC standards set clear goals that we have risen to meet. WSCUC documents outline expectations and best practices that we strive to achieve. Moreover, being an accredited university has linked us to a community of like-minded institutions through conferences and workshops. We have taken advantage of these opportunities to learn from our peers and return to our campus energized and empowered to create positive change. The self-reflection necessary for regular reporting to WSCUC and preparation for accreditation visits has inculcated a culture of communication, transparency, and accountability throughout all levels of this institution. This culture informs how UWest does business, including how we develop and implement our strategic plans, how we track and use student success data, and how we ensure a culture of scholarship and camaraderie among graduate and undergraduate students alike. Our reports to WSCUC and the reports of subsequent visiting teams show a clear trajectory of ongoing improvement in a tough higher education marketplace.

Second, the process of achieving and maintaining accreditation has required us to deeply reflect on our identity as an institution and clearly articulate who we are, not only to subsequent visiting teams, but also to our own stakeholders and constituents. This has created a deeper understanding of our mission, vision, and values, and a renewed pride in our heritage as a Buddhist-founded institution. As expressed in the three reflective essays within this report, UWest is deeply committed to its mission. That mission permeates all aspects of our planning and operations, drives our vision for the future, and filters down to our institutional values and learning outcomes. Our intent is for our mission to touch every person who comes on campus or makes contact with any member of our students, faculty, or staff. We have become better at living our mission thanks, in part, to our ongoing accreditation efforts.

We now perceive a renewed call for our mission in the world. Humanistic Buddhism's goal is to do good in the world for the greatest number. UWest meets this challenge by serving students who may not otherwise have access to a college education, and we do so in a unique way. Our strategic plan calls on us to capitalize on our unique identity to bring East and West together, to build connections rather than divisions between and among as many students as possible. To do that, we have a responsibility to understand our students, our context, and our opportunities. We hope that our students, transformed by our mission, will graduate and go out into the world as professionals – business people, caregivers, and academics – prepared to carry the mission with them. It is our sincere hope that they will continue to build connections and contribute to the good of the world for their entire lives and into subsequent generations. For a small university, we have big hope.

## APPENDIX: EVIDENCE CATALOG

### [LEGEND]

- **FOLDER**
- **FILE**

### ➤ **Graduate Culture**

- Common Ground Week Schedule 2016
- Faculty Chair Workload Map
- Graduate Assistantships Policy 2013
- International Interfaith Week Schedule 2016
- Policy on Faculty Appointments, Reappointments, Sabbatical Leave, Tenure, Promotion
- UWest Grant Book [5.0]
- **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT**
  - **B CORP AT CROSS CAMPUS NOVEMBER 2016**
  - **FLYERS**
  - **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PACIFIC RIM MANAGEMENT**
  - **MINORITY AND SMALL BUSINESS REPORT**
  - **SYLLABI**
  - **VITA**
- **CHAPLAINCY DEPARTMENT**
  - Chaplaincy Spiritual Formation & Values
  - Lenz Women in Buddhism Grant
  - **CHAPLAINCY CLUB**
    - Chaplaincy Club Contact List
    - **2010**
    - **2011**
    - **2012**
    - **2013**
    - **2014**
    - **2015**
    - **2016**
    - **2017**
    - **CHAPLAINCY CLUB MEETING MINUTES**
    - **UNDATED**
  - **CHAPLAINCY DEPARTMENT EVENT PICTURES**
    - **2009**
    - **2010**
    - **2011**
    - **2012**
    - **2013**
    - **2014**
    - **2015**
    - **2016**
  - **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**
    - **2014**
    - **2015**
    - **2016**
  - **SERVICE LEARNING 2008-2012**
- **EXTERNAL GRANTS**
  - Interfaith Youth Core

- Lenz Foundation
- Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning Religion & Theology
- **FACULTY CVS**
  - **BUSINESS DEPARTMENT CVS**
    - Bill Chen CV 2012
    - Chi Sheh CV 2013
  - **CHAPLAINCY DEPARTMENT CVS**
    - Dephna McKnight CV
    - Nathan Wods CV
    - Pamela Ayo Yetunde CV
    - Tina Jitsoju Gauthier CV
    - Valerie Richard CV
    - Victor Gabriel CV
  - **PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT CVS**
    - Hiroshi Sasaki CV 2017
  - **RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT CVS**
    - Dauri Long CV 2014
    - Jane Iwamura CV
    - Miroj Shakya CV
    - William Chu CV
- **FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP**
  - Research and Publications, Chi Sheh
  - Scholarly Activity of Chaplaincy Faculty
- **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**
  - Job Description: Chair, Department of Business Administration, Tenure-Track Position (2016)
  - Job Description: Chair, Religious Studies (2011)
  - Job Description: Faculty, Buddhist Chaplaincy (2014)
  - Job Description: Faculty of Business Administration (2009)
  - Job Description: Faculty of Psychology (2016)
  - Job Description: Faculty, Buddhist Chaplaincy (2014)
  - Job Description: Faculty, Religious Studies (2008)
- **LIBRARY**
- **PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**
  - Introduction to ACT
- **PUBLICATIONS**
- **STUDENT ESSAYS**
- **RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT**
  - FGBuddhist Dictionary Project
  - UWest August 2016 Monthly Report
- **LECTURES**
- **PALI SOCIETY CLUB**
- **PHD TEACHING PROGRAM**
  - REL PhD Teaching Program (PTP) Announcement
  - REL690 Teaching Practicum Syllabus
- **APPLICATIONS**
- **EVALUATIONS**
- **RESEARCH COMMITTEE**
  - Email Announcement of Faculty Research Award
  - Faculty Research Criteria
  - Research Committee Policies and Guidelines 2015
  - Research Committee Letters of Award
  - Application Spring 2015



- Application Spring 2016
- Applications 2014-2015
- Applications 2015-2016
- Awards 2014
- Disbursement Requests
- Follow up Reports 2013-2014
- Meeting Agendas
- **STAFF CVS**
  - Amy Chong CV 2017
  - Maria Ayon Cv
  - Michael Oertel CV
  - Monica Sanford CV 2016
  - Peter M Rojcewicz CV
  - Vanessa Karam CV 2017
- **STUDENT WORKSHOP MATERIALS**

### ➤ **Miscellaneous**

- 2015-16 Academic Catalog
- UWest EER Report 2014 Narrative
- **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**
  - Job Description, Chief Academic Officer, 2015
  - Job Description, Chief Analyst & Director of Institutional Research, 2015
  - Job Description, Controller, 2015
  - Job Description, Dean of Enrollment, 2014
  - Job Description, Dean of Student Affairs, 2016
  - Job Description, Institutional Planning, 2015
  - Job Description, President, 2009
  - Job Description, Director of Student Development & Wellness (Academic Advisor), 2015
  - Job Description, Resident Life Desk Attendant, 2016
- **UWEST ACADEMIC CATALOG 2016-2017**
  - Academic Calendar
  - Academic Policies and Procedures
  - Admissions
  - Around Campus
  - Buddhist Chaplaincy
  - Business Administration
  - College Directory
  - Course Descriptions
  - English as a Second Language
  - English
  - Financial Aid
  - General Education
  - International Students
  - Introduction
  - Liberal Arts
  - Living on Campus
  - Presidents Message
  - Program of Study
  - Psychology
  - Registration and Records
  - Religious Studies

- Student Services
- Tuition and Fees

### ➤ **Strategic Planning**

- Environmental Scan
- Strategic Plan 2016 Update
- Strategic Plan Final 3.0
- Strategic Plan Process
- Strategic Plan Update E-Team Retreat 2016
- Strategic Planning Priorities for Fiscal Year 2016
- UWest Values Statement 2015
- **25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**
- **AUDIT REPORTS**
- **BEAUTIFICATION & FACILITIES COMMITTEE**
  - Capital Budget & Allocation FY 16-17
  - Capital Budget Allocation 2016-2017
  - Capital Improvement Project Evaluation Matrix
  - Capital Budget FY 2016-2017
  - Classroom Assessment Recommendations (2)
  - Facility Management Projects
  - Facility Committee Project Matrix Results
  - International Week Interfaith calendar 2015
  - Space Allocation Policy CBFC-100
  - Strategic Plan
  - Survey Monkey Analyze – Beautification and Facilities Committee Evaluation
  - Total matrix
- **AGENDAS**
- **MINUTES**
- **BOT UPDATES**
  - **BOT AGENDAS**
  - **BOT INFORMATION**
    - **BOT BIOS**
      - Board Committee Roster 2016-2017
      - BOT Conflict of Interest Questionnaire 2016-2017
      - Trustee Committee Duties
      - Trustee Responsibilities
      - UWest, ByLaws
  - **BOT MINUTES**
  - **BOT MONTHLY UPDATES**
- **BUDGETS**
  - **FY 2015-16 Original Budget**
    - Adjusted Budget Fiscal Year 2015-16
    - Budget Adjustment Plan and Timeline
    - Budget Timeline 2015-16
    - Capital Budget & Allocations FY16-17
    - Five Year Budget
    - FY 2016-2017 Budget Plan
    - FY 2017-2018 Budget Plan
    - Institutional Effectiveness FY 2016-17 Budget
    - Tuition Discount Rate Comparison 2010-2016
    - UWest FY 2016-2017 Budget – Second

- **CABINET MINUTES**
  - 2016 09 12 Cabinet Meeting Minutes
  - 2016 Oct 17 Cabinet Meeting Minutes
  - FY 2017-2018 revenue from tuition and fees
  - Title IX @ Cabinet
  - UWest Committee & Decision Structure Proposal
- **ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**
  - Fall 2016 Enrollment Report
  - Fall 2016 Population
  - Spring 2015 Enrollment Report
  - Spring 2017 Enrollment Report
- **FOUR PILLARS INVENTORIES**
- **ILO RETREAT & REVISIONS**
- **LEARNING COMMUNITY TASK FORCE**
- **SERVICE DAY 2016**
- **STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUP SESSION OUTCOMES**
- **SUBSIDIARY PLANS**
  - Business Strategic Plan 2016b
  - Chaplaincy Strategic Plan 2016
  - English strategic Plan 2016
  - Enrollment Division strategic Plan 1.0
  - General Education Strategic Plan 2016
  - Library Strategic Plan 2016
  - Psychology Strategic Plan 2016
  - Registrar Strategic Plan 2016
  - Religious Studies Strategic Plan 2016
  - Retention Plan 2016-2019
  - Student Affairs Strategic Plan 2016 DRAFT

### ➤ **Student Success Data**

- Focus Group 2014 Presentation Packet
- Internal Self-Study
- Reported Reasons for Leaving by Academic Status and Academic Program
- Summary of Themes for Spring 2016 Student Success
- U-News with Honor Cafe
- **BRIDGE 2 UNIVERSITY**
- **CONDUCT POLICIES**
- **COURSE EVALUATION**
- **ENROLLMENT REPORT**
  - Department Headcount as a Percentage of Total Headcount
  - Enrollment by Age
  - Enrollment by Citizen Status
  - Enrollment by Country of Origin
  - Enrollment by Nationality
  - Enrollment by Student Ethnicity
  - Enrollment Initial Report – Fall 2016
  - Enrollment Initial Report – Spring 2017
- **GRADUATION RATES**
  - BA in Business – Graduation Rates
  - BA in English – Graduation Rates
  - BA in General Studies – Graduation Rates

- Business Administration – Graduation Rates
- Master of Arts in Religious Studies, PhD in Religious Studies - Graduation Rates
- MBA Department – Graduation Rates
- MDIV – Graduation Rates
- Psychology Department - Graduation Rates
- **LEARNING OUTCOME ASSESSMENT**
  - **ASSESSMENT PLANS**
  - **ASSESSMENT REPORTS**
- **MENTORSHIP**
  - Business Department, Pradeep Panhaur to Chi Sheh (9.15.2016)
  - Chaplaincy Department, Phuoc Nguyen to Victor Gabriel
  - Psychology Department, Jessical Driscoll to Hiroshi Sasaki
  - Religious Studies Department, Fiona Dougherty to Jane Iwamura
- **RETENTION COMMITTEE MINUTES & DATA**
  - FALL FRESHMEN COHORT RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE RATE
  - FALL-SPRING RETENTION DATA FOR FIRST-TIME, DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS
  - RETENTION METHODOLOGY & DATA
  - RETENTION RATES FALL 2016
  - **FALL 2015**
  - **FALL 2016**
  - **FOCUS GROUP FALL 2014**
  - **SPRING 2015**
  - **SPRING 2016**
  - **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**
- **RETENTION LITERATURE**
- **SATISFACTION SURVEYS**
  - Employee Satisfaction Survey Spring 2015
  - Resident Hall Survey\_FA2016
  - Room and Board Survey Fall 2014
  - Student Satisfaction Survey Spring 2015
- **STUDENT EARLY ALERT SYSTEM**
  - 4th Week Reports Request Feb 2017
  - Student Early Alert System Reports Overview
  - Student Success Center (5 Year Trend)
- **UWAC MINUTES & DATA**
  - UWAC Guiding Principles
  - **2015 NOTES**
  - **2016 NOTES**