



VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

MISSION:

As a comprehensive institution of the University System of Georgia, Valdosta State University is a welcoming, aware, and vibrant community founded on and dedicated to serving our communities' rich and diverse heritages. Through excellence in teaching, basic and applied research, and service, VSU provides rigorous programs and opportunities that enrich our students, our university, and our region. The VSU mission consists of three interrelated parts: Student Mission, University Mission, and Regional Mission. VSU awards associate, bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. [See full [VSU Mission Statement](#).]

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA:

As a comprehensive university, VSU is charged with meeting the general and professional educational needs of its South Georgia service area, which stretches from the Atlantic Coast to Alabama, encompassing forty-one counties and 31 percent of the land area of the state.

Composition of the Student Population:

In Fall 2019, VSU is serving 11,270 students (headcount) with FTE of 9,739 of which:

- 77.8% are undergraduate students; 22.2% are graduate students
- 62.0% are female
- 71.4% enrolled full-time
- 27.1% of undergraduates lived on campus
- 55.0% are white, 33.1% are black, 2.6% are Asian
- 1,387 enrolled as beginning first-year students
- 18.0% attend fully-online programs

IMPROVEMENT PRACTICES

Overall, the changes required on our campus to improve student success and specifically, to implement the Momentum Approach, are broad and deep, involving significant cultural changes, as well as structural and procedural changes. Our efforts began with creating a separate Division of Student Success in 2017, which included a new cadre of professional academic advisors. We hired a new Executive Director of Academic Advising in January 2018 and had a full team of professional advisors in place by July 2018, at which point, we began transitioning all undergraduate students to the professional advisors. At the same time, students are also assigned a faculty mentor from their home department. Coincident with this work was a broad effort to change the conversation on campus to focus on student success. In the past two years, we have altered a whole host of practices, all focused on one goal: improving our retention and graduation rates. Completed efforts included such things as:

- Hiring permanent leadership in departments and colleges, replacing an unusually large number of interim department heads, directors and deans that were in place in 2017.
- Implementing Banner waitlists institution-wide and putting in place a process for managing the lists.
- Empowering deans and department heads to immediately open additional seats in courses when sections fill, making sure that we meet students' needs for courses in a timely fashion.
- Completely revamping VSU's summer model, allowing departments to offer as many classes as will fill and providing departments with incentives for offering those classes that will meet students' needs, instead of offering the same classes year after year.
- Moved summer registration five months earlier, so that students could register for Spring and Summer classes at the same time.
- Developed 4-year program maps for all majors and 2-year program maps for all Focus Areas and posted these to each department's website.
- Pressure-tested Academic Year 19/20 and 20/21 schedules prior to registration, to ensure that students could build schedules that reflect the program maps, eliminating scheduling conflicts wherever possible.

- Streamlined and standardized the faculty search process, to improve the efficiency of the process and our effectiveness at recruiting diverse faculty and moving searches to conclusion more quickly.
- Revised VSU’s GPA calculation/course repeat policy, bringing it in line with USG norms. The old calculations needlessly punished students for a poor performance in a course, particularly when a student repeated a course more than once
- Continued our work on Gateways to Completion (G2C) which has led to changes in practices in a number of key first year programs, including English, Math, and Chemistry
- Determined more appropriate math pathways for a variety of majors and added new math courses to area A2 of the core curriculum.

MOMENTUM UPDATE: OBSERVATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

SECTION 3.1 EXISTING MOMENTUM WORK

PURPOSEFUL CHOICE

Strategy or activity	Implement the MyMajors Assessment
Summary of Activities	We implemented the MyMajors assessment for all new students during the summer of 2020
Outcomes/Measures of progress	More than 3000 new students completed the MyMajors assessment in Summer 2020. Ninety-seven percent of the students who started the assessment completed the enrollment survey.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	We learned to use student responses to the survey to target our response to target concerns expressed by students and focus them on the correct resource.
Changes because of COVID-19	This activity was not impacted by COVID-19

At VSU, we believe students should engage in purposeful major choice *before* attending orientation. In late fall 2019, we partnered with MyMajors to provide a major assessment to all incoming first year students. Additionally, VSU became the first institution to build a pre-enrollment survey inside the MyMajors system. By coupling our pre-enrollment survey with the MyMajors assessment, we were able to streamline our advising process for both the student and advisors. This efficiency was immensely helpful given the challenges presented to us with a fully virtual orientation experience this past summer. This summer we had 3,046 students complete the MyMajors Assessment and 97% of those students also fully completed the Pre-Enrollment survey.

For those unfamiliar with MyMajors, the assessment tool provides a set of best-fit majors based on the student’s responses to their interest, aspirations, and aptitude in academic coursework completed to date. Once the assessment is completed, a student receives a personalized report with their Top 10 majors. Since this is tailored to our campus, all majors are offered by our institution. VSU believes purposeful choice does empower students to make early, informed choices about majors and programs, and in doing so, increases their likelihood of success towards graduation.

While the Top 10 report is helpful for the student, and advisors, we were able to glean additional insights from the assessment including major confidence of students, top motivations for attending college, and major concerns that could hinder degree completion (see Appendix I). With this information, we were able to provide targeted outreach. For example, for students who had concerns about completing their degree due to food insecurity issues, our advising teams could point them to resources on campus and in the community. We have also partnered with the Office of First-Year Programs and the Academic Support Center to provide workshops to address poor study habits, motivation, and goal setting as a result of the student responses. This fall, we have begun to utilize the MyMajors assessment for students who are in their second or third year and are now undecided. The earlier we can connect students to their final major, the more likely they are to persist and graduate.

We hope to continue the work to encourage purposeful choice by implementing a new Online Readiness Indicator that all new students will be required to take, beginning with those admitted for Spring 2021. Our professional advisors are being trained in how to use this new tool effectively so they can direct students to classes/programs in the appropriate modality.

DEEPEN PURPOSEFUL CHOICE

In Spring 2018, VSU developed a set of eight Focus Areas that are aligned with our undergraduate programs of study. During the summer of 2018, we developed coding within Banner for delineating a student's chosen Focus Area and we implemented these Focus Areas for all incoming new students who were exploratory (undecided) majors. This implementation, included helping these students to better understand the choice they were making, with the help of Career Services staff. The Director of Career Opportunities and the Executive Director of Academic Advising have coordinated the implementation of a newly developed Career Guidance Survey, to be used as part of advisement during Summer 2019 orientation sessions, for all students expressing an interest in any of the established Focus Areas.

Each College's Academic Advising Center is now actively monitoring students in all majors and all focus areas within that college. The advising center for Exploratory and Honors students is actively monitoring all exploratory students and helping students to select an appropriate focus area. Advisors are also working with Career Services to assist students in making an informed, intentional choice. A first-year career plan learning module is currently under development in partnership between Career Opportunities and Student Success, for implementation with the pilot first year experience course for students in established Focus Areas.

- A new Pre-Enrollment Survey asks for major AND future career interests. When advisors see incongruence between the two, we are calling the student prior to arrival at orientation to discuss, helping the student to make a more informed decision.
- Students meet with faculty and the academic deans during their orientation, to hear about their selected major. During convocation in the fall, students also spend time with the faculty, which allows for a more in-depth exploration of the major, along with ways to get involved on campus to help confirm the major decision.
- Advisor meetings, from the point of orientation until graduation include:
 - Guiding students in appropriate academic planning by providing 4-year maps.
 - Creating individualized plans in DegreeWorks.
 - Encouraging 9 credit hours of major/career choices within the first year.
 - Discussing pre-requisite courses and sequencing.
 - Covering program admission requirements for undergraduate programs with secondary admit and/or for graduate school.
 - Connecting students with clubs and organizations related to their major to help them engage with their campus community.
 - Ensuring that students who are considering schedule changes understand the impact those changes might have on their time to degree completion.
 - Referring students to campus partners such as Career Services and the Counseling Center.
- For our exploratory students:
 - An Academic Focus Area sheet (attached) is provided to all students at orientation and students have a one-on-one conversation about focus areas and course selection.
 - At Fall Convocation, exploratory students meet with the COHNEX Advising Team and Career Services. As part of this meet up, each student takes the Focus 2 Career assessment. As students move through the fall semester, they also often take the Jung Typology test and Meyer's Briggs to further understand themselves and discover possible majors.
 - Throughout the fall semester, Academic Focus Area students are highlighted on a weekly basis. For instance, if the focus of the week is Mass Media, a student will receive a major infographic (attached), a text invitation from a student or faculty member to attend a major-related event happening within the next two weeks, and an email from the major Advising Center with an invitation to come in to get more information.
- For students participating in the First Year Learning Communities in the fall, PERS 2160 – Perspectives on Leadership, provides students an opportunity to reflect on their major and career selection, after taking Focus 2, StrengthsQuest, or True Colors assessments. For students who do not perform well in the Fall semester, VSU 1101 is offered in the Spring and requires completion of Focus 2. Students entering over the summer term as part of Summer Ignite (summer admission program for special admit students) also take VSU 1101.
- As we move forward, we plan to continue to add enhancements to assist students with purposeful choice. A few examples include:

- When a student signs up for first year orientation, he/she will be provided with information to take the Focus 2. This request will go out before we begin sending Pre-Enrollment Surveys. Advisors will then use the Focus 2, and PreEnrollment Surveys to build fall schedules prior to the student arriving at on campus for orientation. As of the writing of this plan, we have begun initial conversations with MyMajors, an online tool designed to improve student degree selection, advising, and completion. This tool has been adopted by a couple of USG institutions previously and has yielded positive results.

TRANSPARENT PATHWAYS

Strategy or activity	Maintaining Clear Academic Pathways
Summary of Activities	Every undergraduate major degree program and Focus Area developed four-year plans and posted these on their websites.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	We have audited the four-year plans for every major and Focus Area to ensure that the courses in the four-year plans are offered when students need to take them.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	We discovered that plans would often become stale, when departments changed their courses or sequencing of course offerings and then failed to change their four-year plans to match. This was particularly an issue when the courses were offered in another department. We determined that we need to regularly audit four-year plans for currency. We also learned that required courses conflicted with other required courses (sometimes even in the same department). This led to our process of regularly “pressure-testing” our schedules to ensure that courses in four-year plans were offered when needed and did not conflict with one another.
Changes because of COVID-19	None of this was directed impacted by the COVID crisis. However, with the multiple scheduling changes needed to cope with the pandemic, additional care needed to be taken to ensure that conflicts were avoided.

ACADEMIC PATHWAYS

A critical component to momentum efforts includes the development of clear and accurate academic roadmaps. In 2018, through much effort between the Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Success, we were able to post accurate program maps into DegreeWorks and onto Departmental websites. In addition, we created Academic Focus Areas (see Appendix II) for students to begin more targeted exploration if they are undecided at the start of college. The program maps do include 15 hours of coursework each semester, place English and the most appropriate Math course based on major into the first year, and include 9 hours of focused major work.

As part of the creation of the academic program maps, we pressure-tested the proposed schedules inside of our Visual Schedule Builder (VSB) tool. In doing so, we were able to identify and remedy pressure points and course scheduling conflicts prior to registration resulting in fewer time conflicts during open registration.

While the creation of the academic program maps was an important first step, we have continued to tweak and customize programs for students as they arrive at the door, often with numerous college credits. Advisors update the plans and ensure the student knows how to access the plans. VSU utilizes VSB for registration, which allows for DegreeWorks plans to be pulled in directly to the platform for easy registration. This feature is frequently utilized by our students during open registration and helps to ensure students stay on path.

We are on schedule to update DegreeWorks in a few weeks; our advisors have extensively tested the updated software, which should help students more clearly see their pathway.

ACADEMIC MINDSET

For Academic Mindset, much of your work may be focused on the USG “Getting to know our students” mindset survey and engagement with the System initiative. Please provide details on your work on that project along with any other Mindset activities your campus has engaged in, if any.

Strategy or activity	Increasing Student Participation in the Mindset Survey
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Summary of Activities	We had planned to implement the Mindset Surveys in first year English courses
Outcomes/Measures of progress	This year has been a difficult one to adopt this year.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	We do plan to implement this in the near future, but need time to adjust the surveys and to work with faculty.
Changes because of COVID-19	With the changes in class schedule and format due to the pandemic, the focus on academic mindset has shifted to helping students be successful in new types of classes.

When we pivoted to online classes in March, it was an all-hands-on-deck moment, when we implemented massive changes in a very brief time. To make this successful, we developed a wide range of tools to help students (and faculty) be successful in this new modality. In addition, VSU implemented a “concierge coaching” model to assist students as they negotiated these new challenges. We hope to be able to look more carefully at academic mindset once our schedules normalize.

GENERAL OVERVIEW AND OBSERVATIONS

Completion of English and Math in First Year

Over the past two years, we have worked to identify a three-year trend for the completion of a student’s first English and Math course by end of the first year of study. We looked at successful completers with a grade of C as well as a grade of D. For some majors a D in Math/English is a successful completion. The completion percentages for those who earned a C or higher are: 65.8% (F17), 68.3% (F18), and 70.8% (F19). The completion percentages for those who earned a D or higher are: 78.5% (F17), 79.4% (F18), and 79.9% (F19).

We have realized a positive trend in the number of students completing ENGL and MATH. Over the past three years, we have increased by 5% in the past three years with students completing both ENGL and MATH with a C or higher. Both these efforts were assisted by significant departmental efforts. The Department of English hired a new First Year Writing Coordinator to assist with a comprehensive and consistent approach to our Area A1 courses while the Department of Math provided a wider variety of math offerings to allow students greater latitude in selecting an appropriate math course for their major. For students completing both ENGL and MATH with a D or higher, we have seen a modest gain of 1.4%. Knowing the benefit to student retention our advising teams will continue to stress the importance of registering for, and completing, both ENGL and MATH by the end of year one.

9 Hours in an Academic Focus Area

Through the creation of Academic Focus Areas (Appendix III) and Academic Program Maps, we have embedded this momentum component into guided pathways for all students. As noted earlier, advisors must provide further personalization for students and do so inside DegreeWorks. The academic plans that are created in DegreeWorks are able to be pulled directly into Visual Schedule Builder (VSB) by the student during registration. A simplified registration process has helped our advising teams keep students on pathway.

30 Hours of a Clear Pathway in First Year

Much like the 9 hours of academic focus area above, our Focus Areas and Academic Program Maps clearly outline a 30-credit pathway in year one. With the implementation of professional advising, we anticipate a direct impact with the number of students registering for, and completing, 30 credits per year. In this past year, we saw a small increase of .7% in the number of students completing 30 credits. Given the impacts of the pandemic, we see this increase as a step in the correct direction and will continue to focus our students on completing 30 credits.

Related to this goal, we are pleased to report that the total number of credits at graduation has decreased by two credits from an average of 136.5 credits in academic year 17/18 to 134.1 credits in academic year 19/20.

Equity Efforts Through Success Identification

We are also making important gains in retention, along with 4 and 6-year graduation rates, for our underrepresented students on campus. We are encouraged by these numbers, yet remain dedicated to see continuous improvement. Our goal is to get rid of the equity gap on our campus.

Our Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) has also been leading the way with equity efforts with our faculty. For example, this fall, two faculty learning communities have been devoted to Digital Campus

Counterspaces for educators interested in improving the experience of Black and Latinx students at VSU during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. CELT also offered a webinar: “Facilitating Difficult Conversations in the Classroom about Racial Injustice.” Similarly, our Conflict Management and Restorative Practices Committee, made up for faculty and staff, have been conducting listening sessions on social injustice.

To further aid in these efforts, we have recently partnered with Civitas on a propensity matching software geared to the identification of practices which most positively impact persistence. In the near future, we will be running our data through this tool to determine areas where we are seeing good success, and to identify areas of opportunity.

Where we find positive success metrics, we will work to engage more students in those activities. Advisors will be at the forefront of this process to ensure students are steered towards high impact practices and programs on our campus that have a known positive persistence indicator.

Where we find opportunities, we plan to explore the data and determine what steps need to be made in order to enhance success. The feedback from advising will become a critical component of our ability to turn opportunities into strength.

Since the inception of the Division of Student Success in 2017, we have been aggressive and creative in our work to ensure student success. As a campus, we anticipate this tool to provide clarity on what success efforts have the potential to most positively impact all of our students.

Early Alerts

Gone are the days when advisors waited until midterm to determine student performance. Academic advisors now receive daily early alerts from faculty through our VSU Student Success Portal. These alerts come directly to the student’s assigned advisor and typically provide insight into the student’s academic performance, course participation, or wellness concerns. Action is taken within three business days, often much faster, and the record of outreach is captured for future conversations. In Fall 2019, 4,570 early alerts were entered into our system. Through Week 10 of Fall 2020, we have already received 6,824 early alert notifications.

In addition to our early alert system, the advising teams have built excellent relationships with the faculty in their Colleges. Many faculty members now reach directly out to the Advising Center Director and/or the advising center liaisons through phone, in-person, or via email. Fostering this professional relationship has afforded a quick response when students are struggling and the advising teams are able to quickly mobilize.

An additional benefit of our advising structure is that many faculty and staff members report student concerns directly to the Executive Director for Advising. Having a clearly delineated person responsible for advising on campus has afforded staff and faculty a place to share concerns when they are not certain exactly who needs to be looped in to care for a student. Once these concerns reach the Executive Director for Advising, the appropriate offices and people are connected to support the student.

Small Grants, At the Right Time, Equal More Graduates

Economic barriers, often small financial holds, can significantly impede a student’s path to graduation. In advising, we connect students to campus partners who can provide small grants to cover books, course materials, and other unexpected costs. In addition, the VSU Finisher Scholarships have helped pay for credits in a student’s final semester to assist the student in getting across the graduation stage. During Spring 2020, as we moved to fully online instruction, we were able to connect students to the VSU Cares Foundation, which was able to provide WiFi devices and laptops/iPads for students to complete their courses.

Academic Advisors also assist students in making connections to the Financial Aid Office. When advisor sees a hold bursary/financial hold, students are put in connection with Financial Aid to take care of what is needed so a hold can be removed and registration can move forward with any impediments.

Learning Support Placements

While VSU has traditionally had few students participating in Learning Support (LS) courses, this past academic year saw a large increase of LS students as ACT/SAT scores were not required for admissions and the GPA requirement was lowered to a 2.3. A quick partnership between the Registrar, Information Technology, Admissions, and Advising resulted in a LS codes becoming available to academic advisors inside of our VSU Student Success

Portal. Having this information at the fingertips of advisors allowed them to accurately place students into the appropriate courses at registration. While this effort did not come without some obstacles, the teams adapted quickly and our students were registered appropriately.

Registration Holds

Any barrier to registration provides an opportunity for students to stop out. In advising meetings, our advising teams have access to any holds that may be on a student account. As part of the advising session, advisors ensure students know how to take appropriate next steps to remove these registration holds. Examples of common holds at our institution include: immunization, parking/transportation, bursary holds, discipline, housing, library, High School or final college transcript. Early identification of these holds, along with steps to remove the hold, allows another barrier to be removed and moves the student closer to a successful registration experience.

Visual Schedule Builder (VSB)

The implementation of Visual Schedule Builder (VSB) on campus has greatly simplified the advising process. Before VSB, students reported the registration process could take up to a couple of hours to complete. Now, DegreeWorks Planners are pulled directly into VSB and students are able to quickly determine their desired schedule.

Students are able to go in and save multiple schedule options and can share those with their academic advisor. Advisors, also can create a schedule for students and save the schedule for the student to pull up at registration time.

Engagement Data

In early 2019, the Division of Student Success partnered with a math faculty member to create our very own retention formula. As a result of this process, we were able to determine the importance of active student engagement as it relates to persistence. On our campus, a student who attends 10 or more events in the fall semester is 17% more likely to be enrolled in the following fall semester, than those students with minimal engagement. We are able to track our student's engagement via swipe access at campus events. This data is made available to advisors through our VSU Student Success Portal. Academic advisors are then able to converse with students who have not yet participated in campus events. The relationships advisors build affords them a chance to help a student get connected to a club or organization on campus, which we all know increases a student's sense of belonging to campus.

Feedback Loops to College Executive Committees

Earlier in this document, we outlined the unique structure of our advising organization. A major positive to our setup is we have far fewer people involved in the advising process. While this helps with hiring and training advisors, we have also realized the added benefit of identifying barriers inside of Colleges, and at the University level. With advising loads between 325 – 375 students per advisor, it is much easier to identify trends occurring in a major and to provide that feedback directly to College Executive Teams.

A great example of this is related to prerequisite structures within majors. Since we have moved to the professional advising structure, we have been able to work with departments to help clean up unnecessary prerequisites in courses that were causing registration problems for students. Additionally, we have been able to provide quick feedback to department heads and deans related to course conflicts occurring with required courses from other disciplines, which has resulted in an optimization process to ensure students are able to access appropriate course sequences to continue progression in the major.

Athletic Advising Committee

Within the past year, we have launched our Athletic Advising Committee to better support the needs of our student-athletes. This committee is chaired by our Director from the College of Honors and Exploratory Advising and has representation from every advising center. The focus of this group is to ensure early advising sessions take place, student-athletes register during early registration, and that student schedules are appropriate based on practice schedules. This committee is also in frequent communication with the Athletic Department to ensure we meet the NCAA eligibility requirements for athletes.

Office of First-Year Programs Partnership

During the last two years our advising teams have worked alongside our Office of First-Year Programs (OFYP) to connect students to success programming. OFYP offers a variety of events to assist students with making a successful transition including the find your classes event, a syllabus planning party, and registration help sessions

held in the library labs. As advisors chat with students, and receive early alerts, they are able to encourage students to participate in these valuable events.

Last fall, the OFYP, created a commuter success program to match upper-class mentors with first year students who are not living on campus. The aim of this mentorship program is to help commuter students make a connection to VSU. Through this program, commuter success coaches are encouraging their students to reach out to their assigned advisors as questions arise.

Leveraging Concierge Coaching

In response to the pandemic, VSU launched a concierge coaching program in Spring 2020. This program utilized 293 staff and graduate assistants, representing all divisions on campus, serving just over 6,000 undergraduate students. From mid-March to early May the coaches entered in 13,615 notes into the VSU Student Success Portal.

The primary goal of the concierge coaching program was to help mitigate student concerns in the transition to a fully online experience, while providing an additional resource to connect students to the appropriate office/individual on campus. Notes from the concierge coaches were viewable by the academic advisor of record and numerous connections to academic advisors were made via the concierge coaches. The program was a success and has continued forward.

Text Campaign Efforts

As we continue to find ways to effectively reach our students, text campaigns have become an important component of our communication plan. While we have done numerous campaigns, we would like to share one example below.

At the conclusion of the first week of the semester, we send out a campaign to ask students how they are doing with one week in the books. The student response options include:

- Excellent. I am off to a great start.
- Good. I am getting the hang of it.
- Not well. If I am honest, I am struggling a bit.

While advising teams can reach out to all responders, we have focused on getting a quick response out to the students who have marked that they are struggling. We invite them to come in for an appointment in the second week of classes and help to address any concerns. We have had an excellent response, with a little above 80% of students, connecting with advising centers for appointments in week 2. You may view the text campaign outline in Appendix III.

SECTION 3.2 FOLLOW UP FROM MOMENTUM SUMMIT III - “CAMPUS-WIDE” MOMENTUM APPROACH ACTIVITIES (BEYOND THE CLASSROOM)

PURPOSE

Priority Work	Implemented MyMajors
Description of Activities	Students were helped with making a purposeful choice
Activity status and plans for 2020	New incoming students were reviewed for previous courses, aptitude and interest level in those courses and their performance in those courses, to ensure that they make a purposeful choice and get them in the right path from the start.
Lessons Learned	More than 3,000 students completed the MyMajors assessment during Summer 2020. Ninety-seven percent of the students who started the MyMajors assessment completed the enrollment survey. We learned to use student responses to the survey to target our response to their concerns and focus them on the correct resource.

MINDSET

Priority Work	Increasing Student Participation in Mindset Surveys
Description of Activities	Identify mechanisms that yield greater student responses for survey

Activity status and plans for 2020	We had planned to implement a number of actions designed to increase student participation in Mindset surveys, by working with faculty in ENGL 1101, as well as designing and implementing a shorter Mindset survey for returning students.
Lessons Learned	Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we were unable to develop a shorter survey. In addition, with our 10% increase in first year student enrollment in Fall 2020, we hired a large number of temporary faculty specifically to teach ENGL 1101. Our energies were thus focused on managing the many sections of ENGL 1101 and not on implementing a new component of the course.

PATHWAYS

Priority Work	Ensuring a clear academic pathway
Description of Activities	Regular reviews to ensure that curricula and posted pathways are consistent with course schedules
Activity status and plans for 2020	Several years ago, we began a process of regular reviews of curricula and schedules, to ensure that students had a clear pathway along their chosen discipline. We have continued this “pressure testing” of schedules, to ensure that students can get the courses they need when they need them. This involves a review of draft schedules using Visual Schedule Builder, to ensure that the courses in the posted pathways are being offered and do not conflict. We then adjust schedules as needed before students register. This has become a routine process in every college, with the associate deans tasked to conduct the reviews and work with department heads to make any needed changes.
Lessons Learned	Prior to implementing this “pressure testing”, we discovered that many program maps had become obsolete or that department heads were not using these for scheduling or that there were significant conflicts among required courses, even in the same department. We have addressed this problem in a significant way.

Priority Work	QEP development
Description of Activities	Use our upcoming QEP as a means to embed and assess experiential learning activities into courses across CORE
Activity status and plans for 2020	The QEP Committee has developed this and submitted a draft to SACSCOC. We are expecting to implement this after approval by SACSCOC in December 2021.
Lessons Learned	Not yet implemented; still in planning and approval stages.

Priority Work	Peer Mentors
Description of Activities	Implement peer mentors in Science and Mathematics
Activity status and plans for 2020	Recruit and prepare a group of experienced students (CoSM GUIDES) to serve as peer mentors to new incoming Science and Mathematics majors. Implement the program in Fall 2020.
Lessons Learned	Despite the pandemic, we implemented this program in Fall 2020, with a small group of new students and peer mentors and hope to expand this in 2021 – 2022.

STUDENT SUCCESS AND COMPLETION TEAM

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