



# **Self-Study 2025**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The State University of New York (SUNY) Polytechnic Institute is a university located in the Utica metro area of the Mohawk Valley region in central New York that serves approximately 2800 full and part-time students. Committed to excellence in scholarship and research, the university boasts a quality hands-on education that blends theory and practice. SUNY Poly offers 24 undergraduate and 11 master's degrees, one doctoral degree, and 7 advanced certificate programs via four colleges: Arts & Sciences, Business, Engineering, and Health Sciences. Programs include those with a technical focus such as engineering, engineering technology, cybersecurity, and computer science; professional studies including business, communication, and nursing; and programs in the liberal arts and sciences including biology, mathematics, game design, interdisciplinary studies, and the social sciences. Professional programs are accredited by ABET in engineering, by AACSB in business, and by CCNE in nursing. The average class size of 18 gives students personal attention from their faculty, and Division III athletics, intramurals and clubs provide an active campus life. Thirty percent of the students are from culturally diverse backgrounds, 40% are Pell grant eligible, and 85% of students receive some form of financial aid.

SUNY Poly's history has been one characterized by growth and change. It was originally established as an upper division college in 1966 offering undergraduate and graduate degrees with a technical focus. It grew and expanded to offering full four-year undergraduate programs in 2003, and the campus saw increases in enrollment, program diversity, and student life as the then-named SUNY Institute of Technology. In 2014, the SUNY Board of Trustees transferred the SUNY University at Albany's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) to SUNYIT. The campus was renamed as SUNY Polytechnic Institute, and the director of CNSE was appointed by the SUNY Board of Trustees as the President of SUNY Poly. The transfer resulted in an increased focus on engineering programs as well as a focal shift towards research. The Master Plan was also amended to authorize the institution to offer doctoral degrees in Engineering and Nursing. The combined institution successfully underwent a reaccreditation review by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education shortly after the transfer.

In 2016, the President was removed through legal proceedings, initiating a period of interim leadership among top administrators that extended until 2023. This also drove a reconsideration of the structure of SUNY Poly, and in December 2022, the SUNY Board of Trustees voted to transfer CNSE back to the SUNY University at Albany. This transfer was completed in August 2023 and a permanent (non-interim) president, Dr. Winston Oluwole Soboyejo, was appointed to SUNY Poly in October 2023.

These changes gave SUNY Poly the opportunity to revitalize its mission and vision, clearly identify its goals, and to create a strategic plan to achieve them. The timing of these activities matched those of the

MSCHE Self Study preparation, so SUNY Poly was able to craft the Institutional Priorities for the Self Study while actively studying its identity and direction.

## INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

The institutional priorities SUNY Poly chose as its lens in undertaking the Self Study process were the following:

1. To position SUNY Poly for a vital role in educational opportunities for the Mohawk Valley, New York State, and the nation, particularly in the STEM and Health Care sectors, by offering innovative and high-quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs along with workforce development initiatives.
2. To accelerate development of campus research, scholarship, and creative activities in a way that complements and supports the academic mission while strengthening ties to local industries and community organizations.
3. To foster a campus culture that includes strengthened student engagement in both extra- and co-curricular activities, increased intra-campus connections, a diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible environment, and improved communications across all levels.
4. To deliberately integrate SUNY Poly into the fabric of the Mohawk Valley community and to be known as a valuable, empowering, and irreplaceable asset.

These priorities were developed through an iterative process. The Steering Committee first identified several broad topic areas. This list formed the basis of a survey that engaged as many campus constituencies and stakeholders as possible, including students, faculty, staff, and the College Council, which serves as the institution's community advisory board. These were followed by community co-design days, in which more open-ended feedback and opinions were solicited from these groups and from community partners. The feedback was used to create the four priorities listed above as well as to formulate the strategic plan. One main theme that emerged was the desire of the campus community to move forward in refreshing an identity that will be tied with the region and the state in workforce development. There was a strong desire to also retain the polytechnic focus of our identity and increase research opportunities for our undergraduate and graduate students. Another powerful theme that emerged was a desire to create a stronger sense of campus community and an institutional identity that is better integrated with the larger community around us. Community partnerships with local agencies and industries were highly wanted by all involved and formed the second thread of priorities.

The Institutional Priorities map to the Middle States Standards for Accreditation is shown in the table below.

## Alignment of Institutional Priorities with MSCHE Standards

<b>MSCHE Standards</b>	<b>Priority 1</b> Strong educational programs	<b>Priority 2</b> Active research and scholarship environment	<b>Priority 3</b> Strong campus culture	<b>Priority 4</b> Be a critical community asset
I. Mission and Goals	√	√		√
II. Ethics and Integrity		√	√	
III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	√	√		
IV. Support of the Student Experience			√	√
V. Educational Electiveness Assessment	√			√
VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	√		√	
VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration			√	√

The Co-chairs, Steering Committee, and institutional leadership were in agreement that the analysis framework provided by the Standards-Based approach for organizing and conducting the self-study was most appropriate for SUNY Poly. The ability to map the Standards onto the Mission, Goals, and Strategic Plan as they developed was also a benefit of this approach.

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## ACRONYMS

A list of commonly used acronyms is provided below:

**AACSB** – Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

**ABET** – Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology

**CAHIIM** – Commission of Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management

**CAS** – College of Arts and Sciences

**CCNE** – Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

**COE** – College of Engineering

**CHP** – College of Health Sciences

**CNSE** – College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering

**COB** – College of Business

**IPEDS** – Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System

**ITS** – Information Technology Services

**MSCHE** – Middle States Commission on Higher Education

**SLOs** – Student Learning Outcomes

**SUNY** – State University of New York

## STANDARD SUMMARIES

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### STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

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SUNY Poly has entered an exciting time in its history, with a new President and a new Strategic Plan formed not by outside mandate, but through collaborative processes that brought together the campus community, local community and industry partners, and other interested stakeholders. The new mission and vision of SUNY Poly centers students and the responsibility of SUNY Poly to help them succeed through academic excellence, research, and training befitting a premier public polytechnic university. However, of equal importance is to model values of accountability, community, empathy, gratitude, inclusion, kindness, and respect. SUNY Poly's goal is to create innovators who are also ethical, caring members of society who work to increase the public good. Its strategic plan process has been robust and is now into implementation. The self-study recommendations include to maintain focus on following the strategic plan, ensure thorough assessment of activities to be in line with the mission, and to identify more checkpoints through the next five years of the plan to measure its success.

### STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

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As a state entity, SUNY Poly is governed by public employee law as well as by SUNY regulations, and the majority of its employees are members of unions whose bargaining units also circumscribe and assess policies and procedures. In part because of events in its history since the last self-study, SUNY Poly places a notably high value on ethics and integrity in all its operations aside from simply adhering to those guidelines. SUNY Poly's policies protect academic freedom and freedom of expression for employees and students, and its communications are transparent and honest. Procedures for disputes and grievances are designed to be fair and impartial, and to give the grieved individual multiple opportunities for appeal. A respectful, inclusive climate is fostered not just in policy requirements, but through events, workshops, and seminars centered on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Most importantly, the importance of ethics, integrity, and inclusion is modeled by the administrative team. SUNY Poly is proud to have this emphasis. Recommendations identified in the self-study include expanding ethics learning opportunities for students and employees, increasing the accessibility of all assessment results, and continuing to cultivate an environment wherein ethical behavior is a top value.

### STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

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To realize its goal to be New York State's premier public polytechnic university, SUNY Poly offers a range of high-quality undergraduate and graduate programs with a focus on STEM and professional fields.

Each degree program is designed to provide a cohesive course of study that encourages students to synthesize their learning. Learning within the majors is enriched through a general education experience that includes foundational skills in communication, mathematical and scientific literacy and exposure to diverse fields of knowledge, cultures, and perspectives. Programs and curriculum are designed by qualified faculty with the relevant disciplinary expertise and undergo thorough review by shared governance at the campus level and, when required, at the SUNY and state level, as well as meeting the requirements of the appropriate accrediting bodies. Educational quality and improvement is ensured through regular faculty-led assessment and accreditation processes. SUNY Poly emphasizes experiential and applied learning and enhances its degree programs with a range of campus-wide high-impact learning experiences designed to enrich the student learning experience. SUNY Poly supports its students' academic success through an array of offices and programs that provide resources, tools, and advising to enable students to track their progress to earning their degree and to access educational resources and programs aimed at removing barriers and broadening access to educational opportunities. The self-study identifies a number of recommendations to continue SUNY Poly's ongoing process of institutionalizing more predictability and consistency in various procedures and practices ranging from professional development and personnel review processes to the delivery and assessment of student learning experiences.

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#### STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

As a small campus, SUNY Poly is able to give personal, individualized attention to its students. Students begin with a comprehensive orientation that introduces them to the campus, their peers, and the support systems that they will be able to make use of while at SUNY Poly. First-year students are also enrolled in a one-credit seminar course their first semester that introduces them to best practices as a student, familiarizes them with the campus and its offices, and addresses issues with transitioning to college life. Students work with the Student Academic Success office in their first year, and the role of that office is expanding with a new initiative for overlapping advising between professional and faculty advisors. Specialty support programs such as EOP and CSTEP provide additional guidance to at-risk students, and athletes and residential students also have extra support systems. The Care Team is a group that is able to function well because of the small campus size; it connects students facing surprise challenges and issues with resources that can assist them. The transfer student experience has been improved through investment in a new full-time position for Transfer Coordination, new software to evaluate credit, and improved workflow processes to advise students more quickly. An active athletics program exists, and the campus recently switched conferences to minimize travel and out of class time for teams.

Recommendations include assessment of initiatives that have grown through pandemic and other transformational funds, increased attention to policies surrounding data protection for students as well



as to supports provided to online students, more training and mentoring for the Student Association and related faculty and staff, and more assessment of academic advisement and student orientation.

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## CHAPTER V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

Assessment has taken on much more prominence at SUNY Poly since the last self-study. Many programs at SUNY Poly carry professional accreditation, from ABET, AACSB, CAHIIM, and CCNE. The Faculty Assembly Academic Quality Committee schedules and reviews regular program assessments for nonaccredited programs, and in 2022 a General Education committee was created to formalize and improve procedures for assessing SUNY General Education courses and competencies. In 2024, a full-time Coordinator of Institutional Assessment was hired to oversee academic and non-academic assessment, create assessment guidelines, and support and educate the campus in current assessment best practices research. The majority of programs have external advisory boards, and those that do not are in varying levels of development. Recommendations include updating and expanding the assessment website to reflect program assessment cycles and results, and to formally establish a campus wide assessment committee.

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## STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Planning and budgeting procedures have been some of the most closely tracked aspects of campus operations since 2016. The interim presidents assigned to SUNY Poly had a strong focus on clarifying and building budget processes that were clearly linked to federal, state, and SUNY regulations; the state and SUNY both distribute funds to the campus and require reporting on how those funds are spent. Annual budget development provides each unit with clear guidelines on making requests and requiring those requests to tie in to the mission and strategic plan of the campus. All units submit requests at the same time, and are discussed by committee. The process for requesting resources is open and fair. Recommendations are to further increase the transparency in the budget process and to increase assessment of resource use in non-academic units.

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## STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION

As a state university in the SUNY system, SUNY Poly has leadership from the state by the Board of Regents, the New York State Education Department, the SUNY chancellor and administration, and a local College Council that is appointed by the Governor. It is also a young institution with a strong history of shared governance among the administration, employees, and students. The internal leadership of SUNY Poly has changed multiple times since 2016. This was due in part to interim administrators appointed by SUNY to stabilize and re-energize the campus following a highly disruptive presidential removal. Another factor in the leadership volatility was the transition of the CNSE college to the SUNY University at Albany in 2022-23; many of the administrative staff were members of that entity and elected to transfer back to Albany as well. By early 2024, new permanent leadership was in place throughout the upper administrative levels, including a new President. The new administration facilitated development of a new mission, vision, and strategic plan for the campus, created support positions for areas of importance to faculty and students, and has fostered an environment of respect, belonging, and empathy. It is working well with the faculty, staff, and student governance bodies on campus, and communication and feedback has increased. Recommendations identified in the self-study include increased interaction between the governance bodies and an increase in assessment of the effectiveness of governance and leadership structures.

# STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION DEFINES ITS PURPOSE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE STUDENTS IT SERVES, AND WHAT IT INTENDS TO ACCOMPLISH. THE INSTITUTION'S STATED GOALS ARE CLEARLY LINKED TO ITS MISSION AND SPECIFY HOW THE INSTITUTION FULFILLS ITS MISSION.

The State University of New York Polytechnic Institute was established in 1966 as an upper-division College designed to serve primarily the Herkimer/Utica/Rome region. It operated in existing refurbished buildings in west Utica until 1985, when it moved to its current 880-acre parcel in Marcy with newly constructed buildings. In 1988, its name was changed to SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome (SUNYIT).

In 2002, the campus's designation was changed to allow it to offer full four-year undergraduate degree programs along with the upper-division undergraduate and graduate programs already established. The scope of enrollment was modified, the geographic market was expanded, and the selectivity of students was tightened. This allowed SUNYIT to enhance quality and serve more students while maintaining a focus on its specialized mission within the SUNY system of providing primarily STEM-based technical and professionally focused degrees.

Over the next decade and a half enrollment increased, academic program offerings were modified based on both its STEM and technology mission and enrollment trends, and some programs such as the Nursing graduate program began to offer entirely online degrees. The campus infrastructure was also expanded to accommodate a more active student life, and a new field house, student center, and dormitory were added by 2011.

In 2014, the SUNY Board of Trustees expanded the campus and its mission by transferring the affiliation of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) from the SUNY University at Albany to SUNYIT (S1C1.D1). SUNYIT's name was changed to SUNY Polytechnic Institute, and Alain Kaloyeros was subsequently appointed as the president. The academic leadership, faculty/staff/student governance, unions, and College Councils of both groups were heavily engaged in shaping the parameters of the structure and operations of the combined entity, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) was closely involved in advising the transfer. The physical location of CNSE remained in Albany, but its faculty, staff, and students became part of the newly renamed SUNY Polytechnic Institute (SUNY Poly). Our most recent MSCHE reaccreditation occurred in 2016, shortly after integration of all areas was complete and a new focus on research, specifically in areas related to nanotechnology, was initiated.

### **History since the last reaccreditation**

In late 2016, Dr. Kaloyeros ceased being the president of SUNY Poly following legal issues. The Chancellor and Board of Trustees of SUNY tasked an interim leadership team with stabilizing campus planning and resources in advance of a new presidential search. This situation persisted for several years across several interim presidents. Until 2023, each of these interim leaders dedicated significant time and resources toward the successful merger of SUNY Poly's campuses in Albany and Utica, 90 miles apart. These efforts included joint leadership meetings held by distance video, a regular presence from senior leadership and relevant staff in academic and student affairs on both sites, and collaborations amongst faculty and students in programs of mutual interest. Interim administrators also led SUNY Poly through collaborative exercises intended to advance the mission of the combined entity and maintain a spirit of innovation in research and education. These exercises included the establishment of seven "Tactical Teams" by Interim President Sammakia in 2017, which set the stage for the creation of a "Framework for a Sustainable Future" finalized by Interim President Wang in 2020 (S1C1.D2). The SUNY Board of Trustees authorized two searches for a permanent SUNY Poly president over the next two years, but as neither search yielded a successful hire, the campus remained in a state of uncertainty about its long-term future.

In many ways, the extensive effort to knit the two campuses together facilitated SUNY Poly's adaptation to the challenges posed by COVID-19. Faculty at both locations had already adapted their courses to the hyflex modality that could accommodate students in classrooms at both locations as well as in additional remote locations. SUNY Poly continued to invest in distance technologies for teaching, which had the benefit of keeping faculty at the cutting edge of digital pedagogy.

During the time from 2017-2022, and across several interim leaders, the operational and economic difficulties of making the merged SUNY Poly successful became more evident. These challenges, along with a strong desire of the SUNY University at Albany to re-acquire CNSE, led the Board of Trustees to direct SUNY Poly and the University at Albany to transfer CNSE back to SUNY University at Albany. This process began in December 2022 with a resolution from the SUNY Board of Trustees (S1C1.D3). The same resolution named a new officer-in-charge of SUNY Poly, Dr. Andrew Russell, who served on leave from his position as dean of the college of arts & sciences at SUNY Poly. During the first months of 2023, Russell worked closely with his counterpart at University at Albany, Dr. Havidan Rodriguez, to fulfill the mandate of the Board of Trustees. Through extensive activity and engagement of the administration, faculty, staff, students, unions, and College Councils at both campuses, and with the support of SUNY system administration, the transfer of CNSE faculty, staff, students, and programs back to University at Albany was completed by fall 2023 (S1C1.D4).

The resolution of December 2022 also directed Dr. Russell to work with local stakeholders to lead the creation of a new strategic plan for SUNY Poly. The Trustees requested a plan that would strengthen "the future of SUNY Poly Utica as the premier public Polytech school in the state and nation without CNSE under its administrative authority, including a consideration to partner with all levels of

educational institutions and economic development partners” (S1C1.D3). This began a process to refine our mission and goals, and to create the new strategic plan.

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#### C1: CLEARLY DEFINED MISSION AND GOALS AND

#### C2: INSTITUTIONAL GOALS THAT ARE REALISTIC, APPROPRIATE TO HIGHER EDUCATION, AND CONSISTENT WITH MISSION

Dr. Russell promptly established a 3-person steering committee consisting of a key external partner (the CEO of the Griffiss Institute), the chair of the faculty assembly planning & budgeting committee, and dean of students. Starting in early 2023, the steering committee held a series of open and interactive events where key stakeholders including faculty, staff, students, external partners, and community members engaged in a facilitated co-design process that elicited the priorities and aspirations of all groups (S1C1.D5). The steering committee and a team of over two dozen volunteers followed a process of listening, recording, and then refining the ideas into a set of possibilities presented at subsequent meetings. Through these iterations, the campus was able to clearly delineate its constituents’ most important values, as well as the investments and support the campus would need to fulfill the charge from the SUNY Board of Trustees for SUNY Poly to emerge into the state and nation’s premier public polytechnic institute. The outcomes of this process included the identification of consensus themes that the community saw as essential for the next phases of SUNY Poly’s growth: human capital to nurture community and enable growth; robust external partnerships; campus infrastructure; academic programs, research, and scholarship; and the renewal of SUNY Poly’s identity. These themes and a timeline for completing the strategic plan were shared with the SUNY Poly community and SUNY Chancellor in March 2023 (S1C1.D6; S1C1.D7).

The final step in the articulation of a new mission, vision, and strategic plan for SUNY Poly also occurred as an outcome of the December 2022 resolution from the SUNY Board of Trustees, which directed the campus to search for a new president. The search committee, led by College Council Chair RoAnn Destito and supported by SUNY system administration following SUNY’s guidelines, interviewed candidates in spring and summer of 2023. The SUNY Board of Trustees named Dr. Winston Soboyejo as president on September 12, 2023 (S1C1.D8; S1C1.D9), and Dr. Soboyejo took office on October 2, 2023. Upon assuming the presidency, Dr. Soboyejo oversaw another series of open sessions and meetings to fill in and finalize the campus strategic plan, which was endorsed by all campus leadership groups and adopted in early 2024 along with the mission, vision, and values statements (S1C2.D1). The Strategic Plan and the Mission, Vision, and Values have become integrated into all messaging used at SUNY Poly. They form the backbone of our marketing, admissions materials, event publications, and reports, and are as follows (S1C2.D2).

## **Mission**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is a welcoming, inclusive place where all students, faculty, and staff are inspired by a distinctive STEAM education and social experience that prepares our graduates for the 21st century workforce and beyond. SUNY Poly applies science, technology, and innovation throughout its curriculum and is deeply committed to offering solutions to society's grand challenges and improving the health and well-being of communities in the Mohawk Valley and around the globe.

## **Vision**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is a premier research-intensive university that leads the pursuit of knowledge and innovative applications through interdisciplinary engagement and collaboration to drive economic, humanitarian, and technological advancements.

## **Values**

Accountability • Community • Empathy • Gratitude • Inclusion • Innovation • Kindness • Respect

## **Strategic Plan**

The strategic plan consists of four pillars: Student Success, Brand and External Partnerships, Campus Infrastructure, and Academic Excellence.

### **1. Student Success**

Our students are the north star that guides everything we do at SUNY Poly. Their success is supported by our ability to respond to their insights, and amplified by the institution's commitment to instill the values and skills that will allow them to achieve their aspirations at SUNY Poly and beyond.

- Elevate the student experience, including academic support and advising, experiential learning and career opportunities, athletics, well-being, and a commitment to the quality of student life.
- Ensure that our students develop an appreciation for the obligations and rewards of meaningful connections with others as they contribute to the greater good.
- Demonstrate our compassion, understanding, and cultural humility, as we strive to be a community that is fully committed to accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

### **2. Brand and External Partnerships**

SUNY Poly will engage in a comprehensive, integrated approach to elevate the visibility and awareness of SUNY Poly as a premier public polytechnic. Our investment in relationships with community, industry, and educational partners will enhance the quality of our education, support interdisciplinary research, and spur innovation.

- Launch an integrated, inclusive campaign to broaden SUNY Poly’s identity and raise the visibility and reputation of SUNY Poly.
- Build community and formalize external partnerships to develop and invest in student projects, internships and co-ops, translational and applied research, training and education, career placement, and workforce development.
- Establish strategic alliances with our partners in industry, government, academia, and civil society to develop and position SUNY Poly and the Mohawk Valley as a premier destination for education, research, entrepreneurship, and workforce development.

### **3. Campus Infrastructure**

SUNY Poly’s bright future in research and education is powered by a robust infrastructure that includes physical and digital assets as well as human capital. Thanks to New York State’s historic investment of \$44 million for semiconductor manufacturing, health sciences, robotics, and advanced manufacturing, SUNY Poly will create an environment that features world-class facilities.

- Expand multidisciplinary facilities to support campus priorities in research, education, entrepreneurship, and workforce development.
- Prioritize the people and contracts needed to provide the human resources and technological infrastructure that will support innovations in research, education, and outreach.
- Enhance, maintain, and reconfigure existing campus spaces to include academic and student co-curricular space, as well as larger flexible community space.

### **4. Academic Excellence**

SUNY Poly will elevate the impact of our faculty research and scholarship, the quality of our programs, and the achievements of our students. Investment in our core programs, people, and pedagogy will enable the growth of our cutting-edge, multidisciplinary initiatives in research and education.

- Strengthen and scale our core undergraduate and graduate programs in all colleges and develop demand-driven workforce development programs.
- Extend the funding and impact of interdisciplinary collaborations with partners in industry, government, and academia in four thematic areas:
  1. Materials, Robotics & Advanced Manufacturing
  2. Artificial Intelligence & Information Technology
  3. Smart Infrastructure & Sustainability
  4. Healthcare & Well-Being

- Support the growth and professional development of all faculty and staff, so that they are fully prepared to advance in their careers and renew SUNY Poly's commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

A summary of the timeline leading to the current SUNY Poly strategic plan is below.

Date	Event
December 14, 2022	Charge from SUNY BOT
January 27, 2023	Appointment of Strategic Planning Steering Committee (S1C1.D7).
February 10, 2023	Community Co-Design Day
February-March 2023	Listening sessions on campus and consultations with SUNY leadership, College Council, and elected officials
March 20, 2023	Update from OIC naming five themes at the core of Poly's emerging strategic framework (S1C1.D6).
March 31, 2023	Campus Town Hall
November 2023	Draft Strategic Plan published by President Soboyejo (S1C1.D7).
March 29, 2024	Publication of final Strategic Plan (S1.C2.D1).

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**C3: GOALS THAT FOCUS ON STUDENT LEARNING AND RELATED OUTCOMES AND ON INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT, ARE SUPPORTED BY ADMINISTRATIVE, EDUCATIONAL, AND STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, AND ARE CONSISTENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL MISSION**

The Strategic Plan and the Mission, Vision, and Values have become integrated into all aspects of planning at SUNY Poly. Budget requests all now include a requirement for justification based on the strategic plan, and activities are assessed in part by how they have advanced strategic plan goals. Planning for new academic programs, student events, and associated student services incorporate alignment with the strategic plan and clearly articulate how they follow the campus values and mission.

Several initiatives have already begun in support of the mission, vision, and strategic plan. On the academic side, these include the creation of research centers designed to involve our faculty and students in the latest in interdisciplinary advances and, partnerships with local industries to provide our students with internship opportunities and workplace experience. Staffing has increased to initiate more engagement with pre-collegiate students as well as continuing education for professionals, and more



resources are being directed towards enhancing student academic and wellness support on campus. Workforce development awards from the state also support the mission and strategic plan. The most significant of these thus far are listed below.

Transformation Growth Fund: Awarded \$44M in capital support from the state for health science, nursing, semiconductor processing, and robotics and advanced manufacturing research and education facilities (S1C3.D1).

Processing to Packaging Center: Awarded \$4M to establish a semiconductor processing to packaging research, education, and training center on campus in April 2024 (S1C3.D2).

Faculty Seed Grant Program: Awarded \$441k across 11 faculty projects in June 2024 (S1C3.D3).

Research Center Seed Grant Program: Awarded \$2.5M to create 10 interdisciplinary Research Centers in October 2024 (S1C3.D4).

New staff positions created: Continuing and Professional Education, Coordinator of Assessment, Pre-Collegiate Outreach, ACE (Advancing Completion through Education) director and assistant

Permanent (non-interim) leadership appointed for: Provost, VP Student Affairs, VP Finance and Administration, VP Diversity/Equity/Inclusion/Belonging (expanded title), VP Institutional Advancement, VP External Relations and Chief of Staff (expanded title), VP Human Resources, VP Research (moved to full-time position), Deans of Engineering and Health Sciences

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#### C4: PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF MISSION AND GOALS TO ENSURE THEY ARE RELEVANT AND ACHIEVABLE.

Each Strategic Plan Implementation team meets monthly to request data related to the plan's implementation, measure progress against the goals and objectives of the plan, and provide the President's Cabinet with information about areas that are meeting expectations as well as those that need greater levels of attention or investment. (S1C4.D1). These regular meetings and reports will allow for real-time analysis of activities to determine if the goals are achievable and realistic (see example for Pillar 2: S1C4.D2). As the President's Cabinet consists of the Vice Presidents across all areas of SUNY Poly, this will foster assessment involvement from all areas including Student Affairs, Facilities, Finance, Academics, Research, Diversity, and External Partnerships. A Steering Committee for the Strategic Plan was also created to oversee other issues of implementation of the strategic plan. As this is the first phase of the strategic plan implementation, long-term assessment exercises are still being developed.

#### Conclusions

SUNY Poly has undergone multiple changes in structure and leadership since the last self-study was completed. Throughout that time, however, its overall focus on offering students a hands-on education

in technical and professional fields remained consistent, as did its emphasis on meeting regional and statewide needs. The time SUNY Poly had with the CNSE division highlighted the strengths and challenges within the Utica operations, and the iterative charges given to each interim leader set in motion in-depth assessments of SUNY Poly's resources and needs. The subsequent transfer of CNSE back to SUNY Albany provided the opportunity to formulate a new mission, vision, goals, and strategic plan with that wealth of information learned during and after the time with CNSE.

The real strength of the mission and goals is therefore the depth and diversity of information that helped to formulate them. Rather than being imposed from outside, the direction of the campus has been forged from the combined inputs of state and local administrators, legislators, community and regional industry leaders, students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

A second strength is that SUNY Poly now has permanent leadership appointed across the administrative structure, and these individuals have contributed heavily to the mission, vision, values, and strategic planning process. They are fully invested in the goals of the institution, and plan to remain in place to see those goals achieved. This provides structural stability while supporting movement towards the goals.

The challenges lie in appropriately allocating resources and efforts to support the goals without overstepping the benefits of their results. The monthly check-ins are designed to keep a close watch on this, and the President and his leadership team will continue to work through a shared governance process to ensure that the annual budget process reflects the campus commitment to aligning the allocation of resources so that the goals articulated in the strategic plan remain relevant and achievable.

### **Recommendations**

- Continue the work of the implementation teams to monitor how closely the strategic plan is being followed.
- Create checkpoints and target goals through the rest of the five years of the strategic plan timeline to retain momentum.
- Expand requirements for activities and initiatives to explain how they advance the strategic plan and mission of SUNY Poly.

# STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

ETHICS AND INTEGRITY ARE CENTRAL, INDISPENSABLE, AND DEFINING HALLMARKS OF EFFECTIVE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS. IN ALL ACTIVITIES, WHETHER INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL, AN INSTITUTION MUST BE FAITHFUL TO ITS MISSION, HONOR ITS CONTRACTS AND COMMITMENTS, ADHERE TO ITS POLICIES, AND REPRESENT ITSELF TRUTHFULLY.

SUNY Poly went through a difficult period with a former President, who was removed from his office in 2016 due to several legal charges. As a result, the campus community embraced a focus on demonstrating through policies, procedures, and actions that its operations meet the highest standards of ethics and integrity. The upper-level administrative positions have had complete turnover since 2016, and a strong commitment to ethical behavior has been a requirement of all subsequently appointed administrators.

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C1: A COMMITMENT TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM, INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, AND RESPECT FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS;

The SUNY Poly policy mirrors the statement in the Policies of the Board of Trustees, Article XI, Title I: (S2C1.D1)

“It is the policy of the University to maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, teaching and research. In the exercise of this freedom, faculty members may, without limitation, discuss their own subject in the classroom; they may not, however, claim as their right the privilege of discussing in their classroom controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. The principle of academic freedom shall be accompanied by a corresponding principle of responsibility. In their role as citizens, employees have the same freedoms as other citizens. However, in their extramural utterance's employees have an obligation to indicate that they are not institutional spokespersons.”

As further defined in SUNY Poly’s Copyright and Faculty Ownership of Intellectual Property:

“Under the Federal Copyright Act, 17 USC §1.01, work-for-hire is (1) work prepared by an employee within the scope of employment, or (2) work specifically ordered or commissioned and prepared per a written contract [by an employee or non-employee], such as an instructional text, test and test answers. Under a work-for-hire contract, the parties decide who is the owner of the copyright.” (S2C1.D2)

SUNY’s copyright policy was written in 1954 when the 1909 federal copyright act was in effect. Under the 1909 copyright act, there was a common-law exception from the work-for-hire rule for faculty work. That is, despite the work-for-hire rule that would otherwise have vested in SUNY as employer ownership of copyright in faculty-employee work, copyright in faculty work vests in the faculty.

SUNY's policy incorporates the general academic common law work-for-hire exception (to the effect that faculty own the copyright in work produced in the scope of employment), but retains the ability of the University to specifically order or commission a faculty member per written contract to create work-for-hire, in which either the University or the faculty member may own the copyright, as the parties shall agree and reflect in the contract (S2C2D2, S2C2D3).

Regarding faculty materials used on the web for instruction, under the current SUNY policy, copyright ownership is treated the same as faculty materials produced for the classroom. That is, faculty own the copyright under the academic work-for-hire exception embedded in SUNY's copyright policy. Alternatively, SUNY and faculty may enter work-for-hire written agreements relating to materials produced for online use in which the parties may agree to vest copyright in either SUNY or the faculty and to provide for related licenses.

SUNY Poly also supports intellectual freedom in the development of course materials. There is a suggested syllabus template available (S2C1.D4), but the only mandatory portions of the template are the accessibility services and pregnancy support sections. Faculty are free to teach with any materials they desire as long as the student learning outcomes are maintained. Even in courses that have multiple sections of the same basic class designator, each instructor is free to personalize the materials and emphasis of their section. Academic freedom is also ensured in the state contract with United University Professions, the faculty union (S2C1.D5).

Freedom of expression is protected on campus through several means. We have an active student publication, The Factory Times, that is run entirely by students. They distribute printed versions of the publication multiple times per semester, and keep archived copies online (S2C1.D6). We have a freedom of assembly policy that outlines students' right to assemble for protests or other types of protected activity (S2C1.D7). Students are also allowed to post materials on campus (S2C1.D8). Employee freedom of expression is guaranteed in New York state labor law (S2C1.D9).

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## C2: A CLIMATE THAT FOSTERS RESPECT AMONG STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATION FROM A RANGE OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES;

SUNY Poly holds respect and inclusion as two of its core values, and the very first phrase of its mission statement declares that it is a "welcoming, inclusive place" (S2C2.D1). It has engaged in several initiatives to meet that goal. At the top of that list is the appointment of a Vice President for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (S2C2.D2). This office is responsible for programming surrounding issues of mutual respect and understanding, guidance on policies and best practices of inclusion, and also mediates and assists in individual issues that students and employees might face on campus. The description of the Vice President's position reads:

"Dr. Montgomery leads the president's committee on diversity, equity and inclusion and develops implements and provides strategic leadership for SUNY Poly's diversity plan to ensure a campus community that is welcoming, supportive, values differences and inclusion for all students, faculty and staff. He is also responsible for the development and implementation of curricular offerings in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion, and providing leadership in the cooperative creation and delivery of Institution-wide diversity, equity and cultural competency training programs. Dr. Montgomery also

works with Human Resources and provides guidance in the adoption of best practices in increasing diversity, equity and inclusion. He focuses on opportunities relating to increasing the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty, and staff. He is also focused on creating or revising policies and procedures related to advancing an inclusive climate that celebrates diversity and promotes equity and inclusion” (S2C2.D3, S2C2.D4).

SUNY Poly has programs specifically to assist veterans (S2C2.D5), students with disabilities (S2C2.D6), and students from under-represented and economically disadvantaged groups (S2C2.D7, S2C2.D8) in service of acknowledging that these groups face particular burdens, and that SUNY Poly wants to empower them to be able to fully participate in the campus.

If any person feels that they have been discriminated against, they can file to have it investigated under SUNY Poly’s Bias Report policy (S2C2.D9) or through the Title IX office (S2C2.D10).

There have also been large-scale campus events held to open discussions and foster understanding. For example, the Human Resources office held a campus-wide workshop on civility and respectful behavior in the workplace as part of a professional development week, and followed up with smaller question and answer seminars with individual departments (S2C2.D11). Civility and respect in the workplace is also a presentation given during new employee orientation (S2C2.D12). The DEIB office sponsored a full-day event promoting equity and diversity of viewpoints (S2C2.D13), and students have also held forums expressing their perspectives as members of minority groups and how they experience life at SUNY Poly (S2C2.D14).

Additionally, an adherence to ethical standards and integrity is the foundation of a climate that demonstrates respect for the campus community. From the onset of a student or employee’s engagement with SUNY Poly, standards and integrity and ethical behavior are emphasized in orientation programs, handbooks, policies, contractual agreements, and ongoing training/professional development programs.

### **Policies Regarding Ethical Standards**

Faculty and staff of the State University of New York are encouraged to foster an atmosphere of academic freedom and respect by promoting the open and timely exchange of scholarly knowledge independent of personal interests and are required to avoid conflicts of interest. In instances where potential or actual conflicts exist, faculty and staff are expected to consult with appropriate University officers and abide by the University Conflict of Interest policy (S2C2.D15). It is the responsibility of campus officials to implement this policy to identify potential or actual conflicts of interest and take appropriate steps to manage, reduce or eliminate them. Faculty and staff above a certain salary threshold and/or in the position of policymaker or advisor to policymaker are also subject to the New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government, formerly known as the Joint Committee on Public Ethics (S2C2.D16). The Commission provides training and reporting vehicles to maintain ethical standards of professional conduct including the identification and resolution of conflicts of interest and/or the appearance of such conflicts.

Faculty and staff who engage in research and programs funded through the Research Foundation of SUNY (the nonprofit corporation charged with administering externally funded grants and contracts on behalf of SUNY state operated campuses) are required to annually disclose in writing any behavior or relationships that might constitute a conflict of interest. The SUNY Poly conflict of interest policy is

published in the Faculty Handbook and represents a restatement of existing University policy and pertinent state and federal law and regulations (S2C2.D17).

Research involving human subjects is controlled by the Institutional Review Board. It is chaired by SUNY Poly faculty member(s) (S2C2.D18).

### **Accessibility and Accuracy of Materials**

Another aspect of mutual respect is to ensure that all of our information is truthful and easy to obtain. The contents of undergraduate and graduate catalogs are reviewed annually in the course of their preparation for publication by staff, faculty and administration; the catalog includes program information and academic policies. Contents of catalogs are available online and are archived in the library (S2C2.D19). The Student Handbook contains nonacademic policies and is available online and archived in the library (S2C2.D20). Computer labs are available in the academic buildings on campus for student use, with which they can access all of the materials.

Many academic programs utilize external advisory boards to gain insight from business and industry when considering program revisions. From the department, updates are presented to the undergraduate Curriculum Committee for undergraduate programs or the Graduate Council for graduate programs (S2C2.D21). Once endorsed by the appropriate body, the revisions are submitted to the provost for sign-off and then onto the Registrar for posting. Catalog revisions are posted immediately so that students always have access to the most current information.

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### **C3: A GRIEVANCE POLICY THAT IS DOCUMENTED AND DISSEMINATED TO ADDRESS COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES RAISED BY STUDENTS, FACULTY, OR STAFF. THE INSTITUTIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE FAIR AND IMPARTIAL, AND ASSURE THAT GRIEVANCES ARE ADDRESSED PROMPTLY, APPROPRIATELY, AND EQUITABLY.**

Several policies cover grievances depending on the specific situation. Students can always begin by speaking to an academic advisor, resident advisor, administrator, or Human Resources. Employees are encouraged to begin with the Human Resources Office. All policies allow for appeal requests through the chain of responses if the complainant is dissatisfied with the results.

Student academic grievance procedures are found in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs as well as the Student Handbook (S2C3.D1) If a student believes that an issue has not been resolved, the student has the right to appeal to the department dean or administrative supervisor. If further deliberation is necessary, the student may appeal to the President.

When an accommodated student feels that a faculty member has failed to properly accommodate a documented need, a student is advised to engage in an informal resolution by voicing concerns with the Student Accessibility Services staff and faculty. If there is not an agreed upon resolution, the student may make use of the academic grievance procedure. The senior-most officer in the Office of Human Resources upholds the rights of a student to secure access and accommodations in accordance with the ADA and Section 504, Title IX, and the Age Act. SUNY Polytechnic Institute maintains a philosophy of student self-advocacy and the right to pursue a grievance through the formal grievance procedure. Students in this situation will also be advised of the option to file a complaint outside of the college with the Federal or State Departments of Education.

Bargaining unit grievance procedures appear in the union contracts that each member receives, and union chapters are responsible for notifying their members of the proper individuals to contact with questions. Procedures depend on the union involved and grievance type. SUNY Poly's two largest unions are UUP and CSEA (S2C3.D2, S2C3.D3).

Separate grievance procedures exist regarding Sexual Harassment (Title IX) complaints as identified in the SUNY Poly on Sexual Harassment and can be found on the Human Resources webpage and in the HR office; there is a designated webpage devoted to Title IX with links for further information (S2C3.D4). All faculty, staff and administrators are required to attend formal training in sexual abuse prevention, Title IX, Title VI, and Ethics in the Workplace.

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#### C4: AVOIDANCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST OR THE APPEARANCE OF SUCH CONFLICT IN ALL ACTIVITIES AND AMONG ALL CONSTITUENTS.

Faculty and staff of the State University of New York are encouraged to foster an atmosphere of academic freedom by promoting the open and timely exchange of scholarly knowledge independent of personal interests and are required to avoid conflicts of interest (S2C4.D1).

In instances where potential or actual conflicts exist, faculty and staff are expected to consult with appropriate University officers and abide by this University policy. Campus officials charged with implementing this policy are responsible for identifying potential or actual conflicts of interest and taking appropriate steps to manage, reduce, or eliminate them.

This policy represents a restatement of existing University policy and pertinent state and federal law and regulations.

1. University faculty and staff may not engage in other employment which interferes with the performance of their professional obligation.
2. University faculty and staff are expected to comply with the New York State Public Officers Law provisions on conflict of interest and ethical conduct.
3. University faculty and staff, to the extent required by law or regulation, shall disclose at minimum whether they (and their spouses and dependent children) have employment or financial interests or hold significant offices, in external organizations that may affect, or appear to affect, the discharge of professional obligations to the University.
4. University campuses shall ensure that all faculty and staff subject to pertinent laws and regulations disclose financial interests in accordance with procedures to be established by the Chancellor or designee. Campuses shall retain the reported information as required, identify actual or apparent conflicts of interest and seek resolution of such conflicts.
5. Each campus President shall submit to the Chancellor's designee the names and title of the person or persons designated as financial disclosure designee(s) and shall further notify the chancellor's designee when a change in the assignment occurs. The chancellor's designee shall also be notified of any reports regarding conflict of interest that are forwarded to state or federal agencies.

Employees making above a certain salary threshold are also required to complete an annual financial disclosure statement with the state in accordance with the New York Public Officers Law 73 (S2C4.D2).

They must demonstrate that they have no monetary interest in any employment-based activity that they have influence or authority over; they must also demonstrate that they have not received any compensation from members of the public for any actions undertaken as a state employee.

Research-active faculty also must disclose any potential conflicts (S2C4.D3) and abide by the financial conflict of interest policy (S2C4.D4).

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## C5: FAIR AND IMPARTIAL PRACTICES IN THE HIRING, EVALUATION, PROMOTION, DISCIPLINE AND SEPARATION OF EMPLOYEES;

Employment at SUNY Poly is governed by regulations for state employees such as the Taylor Law of 1967 (S2C5.D1), as well as requirements set in each bargaining unit contract. The bargaining units have similar enough requirements that the standard policies and procedures are the same for all employees. Regular contact is kept between the Human Resources Office, the bargaining unit liaisons, and SUNY general and specialized counsel to ensure adherence to all regulations in hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation procedures.

### **Hiring**

When beginning a search for a new SUNY Poly employee, a search committee of at least three individuals is constituted prior to the job being publicly posted. The committee is vetted by Human Resources to ensure that it has at least one member from outside the position's closest reporting office, and that the committee has sufficient diversity within its membership consistent with the Affirmative Action Compliance Program (S2C5.D2). The group undergoes training in best practices in conducting a search and in interviewing before it is allowed to choose individuals for initial interviews (S2C5.D3). A list of standard interview questions is also created prior to selecting interview candidates. Upon selection of interviewees, the committee must have Human Resources check the list of candidates for possible biases in selection, and when recommending the candidate to hire, the committee must submit strengths and weaknesses of each candidate interviewed to demonstrate how the preferred candidate surpasses the others in the posted job qualifications.

### **Evaluation and promotion**

All employees undergo annual evaluations by their immediate supervisor. These are circumscribed in many ways by the bargaining unit contracts, but include information shared with the employee regarding their expected job duties and an evaluation by their supervisor of their performance over the prior year. Feedback from other individuals who work with the employee can be solicited as well. Reappointments, continuing and permanent appointments, and promotions are governed by policies unique to each bargaining unit and employee type. Multiple independent channels of evaluation are solicited in order to reduce any biases in evaluations. For example, faculty have separate peer evaluations and supervisory evaluations (S2C5.D4, S2C5.D5, S2C5.D6).



## **Discipline and separation**

The Progressive Discipline process consists of three important pieces and coaching between HR, supervisors and governing union representatives.

Verbal warning, Written Warning, Performance Improvement Plans and or Investigation/Interrogation and Legal consultation if and when necessary and affording the employee the opportunity to exercise their union rights of representation are all part of the process. The disciplinary process provides the employee with multiple attempts to remediate behaviors and understand the expected behaviors and essential functions of their jobs.

Communication/Verbal Warning is the first step. The supervisor will schedule time with the employee and explain the areas of concerns and expectations moving forward to remediate, educate and change.

In the event the issue(s) persist the conversation a written warning may be issued or consult with the governing union and or investigation/interrogation. The consultation with legal counsel and union representatives may result in a performance improvement plan, leaves of absence, alternate work assignments or termination pending the aforementioned circumstance related to the issues in question.

The goal is always to remediate and set the employee up for success to best serve our students, and to be a productive, satisfied employee of SUNY Poly.

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C6: HONESTY, AND TRUTHFULNESS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS ANNOUNCEMENTS, ADVERTISEMENTS, RECRUITING AND ADMISSIONS MATERIALS AND PRACTICES, AS WELL AS IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS;

## **Communication**

SUNY Polytechnic is committed to upholding the highest standards of honesty and truthfulness in all public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting, and admissions materials. All external communications must accurately represent the institution's programs, services, and opportunities, avoiding exaggeration or misleading claims. We seek to authentically depict academic programs and campus life so that we can ensure the experience students find when they arrive matches their expectations. We fact-check our claims and cite sources for quantifiable data in advertising. Internally, transparency is prioritized, ensuring that faculty, staff, and students are consistently provided with clear and accurate information. By adhering to these principles, SUNY Poly fosters trust and maintains its reputation for integrity in both external and internal communications.

SUNY Poly provides information to external and internal audiences via multiple media platforms, including print, email, video, the institutional website, social media platforms, and radio.

Student recruitment marketing strategies and tactics are within the purview of the Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Directors of Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions and The Director of University Marketing and Communications; the initiation, monitoring, assessment and updating of student recruitment materials, especially electronic and online vehicles, is continual (Examples: S2C6.D1, S2C6.D2, S2C6.D3, S2C6.D4, S2C6.D5, S2C6.D6).

Office of Communications and Marketing staff are responsible for the preparation of news releases and a variety of other informational material published and disseminated via the institutional website and other means, both internal and external. News releases are published and archived on the institutional website. Internal announcements displayed on a multiple-screen campus-wide monitor system and are also archived online (S2C6.D7, S2C6.D8).

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C7: AS APPROPRIATE TO ITS MISSION, SERVICES OR PROGRAMS IN PLACE; PROMOTE AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY. ENABLE STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND FUNDING SOURCES AND OPTIONS, VALUE RECEIVED FOR COST, AND METHODS TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT INCURRING DEBT;

SUNY Poly has a commitment to providing a quality education at an affordable price that is accessible. SUNY Poly follows federal and state guidelines, including reporting requirements, and regulations. SUNY Poly strictly adheres to Title IV funding regulations which governs federal aid programs such as Pell, federal direct loans, and work-study. We also comply with New York state financial aid programs such as TAP (Tuition Assistance Program).

SUNY Poly is consistently ranked by U.S. News and World Report as a top performer on Social Mobility (S2C7.D1). Our admission processes support inclusive and accessible standards by viewing students from a holistic standpoint, including standardized test optional admission practices. SUNY Poly has an active Early Opportunity Program (EOP), Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP), and Advancing Completion through Engagement Program (ACE) to support student enrollment and education by providing comprehensive support and removing financial barriers (S2C7.D2, S2C7.D3, S2C7.D4).

The federal and state guidelines along with SUNY best practices and support provide us a framework to disclose and educate our prospective and current students and supporters with the information they need to make informed decisions about their education and the associated cost. SUNY Poly and in collaboration with additional resources has thoughtfully packaged our COA (cost of attendance) process so students understand the full cost associated with their education that includes both direct and indirect costs. From our initial contact with prospective students, through the enrollment process, projecting transparency in the cost is imperative to recruit and retain students. Our financial aid office in conjunction with admissions provides both print materials and website resources to help our students have the appropriate data in a timely and accessible fashion. (S2C7.D5, S2C7.D6, S2C7.D7) The financial aid also offers a variety of advisement opportunities both virtually and in-person in both group and individual settings as needed.

C8: COMPLIANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE FEDERAL, STATE AND COMMISSION REPORTING POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS TO INCLUDE REPORTING REGARDING; THE FULL DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ON INSTITUTION-WIDE ASSESSMENTS, GRADUATION, RETENTION, CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE OR LICENSING BOARD PASS RATES; THE INSTITUTIONS COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMMISSION’S REQUIREMENTS OF AFFILIATION; SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES AFFECTING INSTITUTIONAL MISSION, GOALS, PROGRAM, OPERATIONS, SITES, AND OTHER MATERIAL ISSUES WHICH MUST BE DISCLOSED IN A TIMELY AND ACCURATE FASHION. THE INSTITUTION’S COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMMISSION’S POLICIES

The annual IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) reports that are filed by SUNY Poly contain demographic and statistical information on our graduation and retention rates (S2C8.D1, S2C8.D2, S2C8.D3, S2C8.D4, S2C8.D5 for last 5 years of data). These are publicly available online through the National Center for Education Statistics website. Reports for SUNY Poly’s programs accredited through ABET, AACSB, and CCNE, including certification and licensing board pass rates, are available through their websites.

Compliance with Requirements of Affiliation is covered within in the Self-Study standards as listed in the table below.

<b>Requirements of Affiliation</b>	<b>Standards</b>
1. The institution is authorized or licensed to operate as a postsecondary educational institution and to award postsecondary degrees; it provides written documentation demonstrating both. Authorization or licensure is from an appropriate governmental organization or agency within the Middle States region (Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands), as well as by other agencies as required by each of the jurisdictions, regions, or countries in which the institution operates.  Institutions that offer only postsecondary certificates, diplomas, or licenses are not eligible for accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.	VI, VII
2. The institution is operational, with students actively enrolled in its degree programs.	I, III
3. For institutions pursuing Candidacy or Initial Accreditation, the institution will graduate at least one class before the evaluation team visit for initial accreditation takes place, unless the institution can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Commission that the lack of graduates does not compromise its ability to demonstrate that students have achieved appropriate learning outcomes.	Not Applicable
4. The institution’s representatives communicate with the Commission in English, both orally and in writing.	All Documents

5. The institution complies with all applicable government (usually Federal and state) laws and regulations.	VI, II
6. The institution complies with applicable Commission, interregional, and inter-institutional policies. These policies can be viewed on the Commission website.	II, VI
7. The institution has a mission statement and related goals, approved by its governing board, that defines its purposes within the context of higher education.	I, VII
8. The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes.	II, IV, V
9. The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality.	III, V
10. Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.	I, V, VI
11. The institution has documented financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development, including those from any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership) adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability. The institution demonstrates a record of responsible fiscal management, has a prepared budget for the current year, and undergoes an external financial audit on an annual basis.	VI
12. The institution fully discloses its legally constituted governance structure(s) including any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership). The institution's governing body is responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for ensuring that the institution's mission is being accomplished.	VII
13. A majority of the institution's governing body's members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. The governing body adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. The institution's district/system or other chief executive officer shall not serve as the chair of the governing body.	II, VII

14. The institution and its governing body/bodies make freely available to the Commission accurate, fair, and complete information on all aspects of the institution and its operations. The governing body/bodies ensure that the institution describes itself in comparable and consistent terms to all of its accrediting and regulatory agencies, communicates any changes in accredited status, and agrees to disclose information (including levels of governing body compensation, if any) required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.	II, VI, VII
15. The institution has a core of faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution's educational programs.	III, V

SUNY Poly keeps in close contact with MSCHE regarding substantive changes; MSCHE was a close consultant in the transfer of CNSE to the SUNY University at Albany. Our most recent communication regarding substantive changes involves the closing of branch locations (S2C8.D6)

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#### C9: PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF ETHICS AND INTEGRITY AS EVIDENCED IN INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES, PROCESSES, PRACTICES, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH THESE ARE IMPLEMENTED.

Compliance checking and assessment of ethics and integrity are carried out by several offices across SUNY Poly, including the Office of DEIB, the Title IX Office, and Human Resources (S2C9.D1, S2C9.D2, S2C9.D3, S2C9.D4). For specialized policies and situations, SUNY Poly has a general counsel assigned to it by the SUNY system, and can also consult with specialized attorneys provided by SUNY. Consultation and evaluation also take place through discussions with bargaining unit representatives.

#### **Conclusions**

SUNY Poly's current administration is a passionate, empathetic, progressive team that is committed to excellence and ethical practices. The new administration understands and respects the significance of these efforts. It is woven into SUNY Poly's values, strategic plan and in every decision that is made universally prior to implementation and in consultation with our internal partners.

Several levels of oversight from internal to the state level ensure compliance with all required standards, and assistance is available from legal and ethics experts when needed for guidance in developing and assessing policies and procedures. This does not entirely cover the essence of a dedication to ethics and integrity, however. That comes from leadership that is attentive to campus needs and conditions.

The SUNY Poly administration, faculty, and staff acutely aware of the organizational trauma that was experienced with a previous administration's transgressions and the impact it had on the campus culture. This has made the SUNY Poly administration particularly sensitive to issues of ethics and integrity. Following New York State Ethics laws, adhering to financial disclosures, participating in ethics

training, etc. have been essential steps in our success in rebuilding integrity in all areas of our work. The commitment to these efforts, coupled with policy review, policy updates, training and implementation and monitoring the impact of all this is at the cornerstone of our change management initiatives. Actions such as investing in staffing, stabilizing operations and finances, filling significant coverage gaps such as creating a Coordinator of Assessment, and hosting regular Town Halls, has demonstrated thoughtful planning and commitment to integrity from the top level down.

### **Recommendations**

- Increase accessibility of assessment data in publications and on the SUNY Poly website.
- Continue to cultivate an environment wherein integrity is a central value.
- Expand co-curricular workshops, trainings, and seminars that emphasize the importance of integrity and ethical behavior.

# STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

AN INSTITUTION PROVIDES STUDENTS WITH LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT ARE CHARACTERIZED BY RIGOR AND COHERENCE AT ALL PROGRAM, CERTIFICATE, AND DEGREE LEVELS, REGARDLESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MODALITY. ALL LEARNING EXPERIENCES, REGARDLESS OF MODALITY, PROGRAM PACE/SCHEDULE, LEVEL, AND SETTING ARE CONSISTENT WITH HIGHER EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS.

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C1: CERTIFICATE, UNDERGRADUATE, GRADUATE, AND/OR PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS LEADING TO A DEGREE OR OTHER RECOGNIZED HIGHER EDUCATION CREDENTIAL, OF A LENGTH APPROPRIATE TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE DEGREE OR OTHER CREDENTIAL, DESIGNED TO FOSTER A COHERENT STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND TO PROMOTE SYNTHESIS OF LEARNING

## **Overview of Programs**

SUNY Poly's mission is to "[provide] an affordable, comprehensive, and integrated range of undergraduate and graduate educational and research programs of the highest quality." The institution offers 32 undergraduate degree programs and 22 graduate degrees through its five colleges. It also partners with the St. Elizabeth College of Nursing to offer a 1+2+1 B.S. in Nursing. The institution's program mix focuses on STEM and professional programs. In addition, SUNY Poly offers degrees in selected liberal arts areas, enabling the institution to serve a broader range of regional educational needs, provide options for students who want to change from their previous program, and support a broader range of intellectually engaging courses, including within the general education curriculum. In addition to degree programs, the institution offers 38 academic minors that provide undergraduate students ways to supplement their major focus. It also offers six certificate of advanced study programs. New program growth has targeted high-demand areas, with the most recent additions including a B.S. in Interactive Media and Game Design and an M.S. in Data Science and Analytics.

## **Coherent learning experience**

SUNY Poly's programs are intentionally designed to foster a coherent learning experience. The institution's mission emphasizes "[providing] students with a well-rounded education" and "demonstrating the interconnectedness of knowledge and cultures" through the pursuit of and application of knowledge. Degree programs adhere to NYSED requirements regarding credit requirements and, for undergraduate programs, for liberal arts content as well as complying with SUNY requirements for general education (S3C1.D1; S3C1.D2).

The coherence of the university's degree programs and associated learning experiences are ensured through a variety of methods. Programs and associated curriculum are intentionally designed and overseen with this goal in mind by faculty with expertise in the relevant field. Twenty-three programs (16 undergraduate, 7 graduate) are accredited by external accrediting bodies and adhere to the standards and expectations for programs in those programs. Other programs, while not accredited, follow guidelines of their respective professional organizations, such as the B.S. in Applied Mathematics which follows the standards of the American Mathematical Society. Moreover, where applicable undergraduate programs align with SUNY transfer paths which establish curricular standards to facilitate transfer between SUNY institutions (S3C1.3). A number of programs, especially in professionally aligned fields, also draw upon input from advisory boards that provide feedback from employers and industry. A variety of methods are utilized by programs to create curricular coherence as appropriate to the field and discipline; these include course and pre-requisite sequencing, defining required program cores that build the common and necessary disciplinary knowledge, and creating specialized concentrations or tracks that organize curricular options into coherent focuses. Finally, programs ensure coherence through regular program assessment, including mapping program learning goals to curriculum and course-level SLOs (S3C1.D4) (cross-ref: S5C4).

### **Promote synthesis of learning**

While the overall coherence of the student learning experience focuses on program and curricular design, promoting the synthesis of learning happens at the level of student learning. Most undergraduate programs have senior capstone projects in which students synthesize key content and skills learned throughout the program. These capstones vary in implementation depending on the expectations of the discipline or field; these range from individual or collaborative projects, and focus on conceptual integration and/or application of theoretical knowledge to practical application (S3C1.D4). At the graduate level, the majority of programs require a capstone or thesis (see S3C6). Programs that do not have senior capstones employ other methods to promote synthesis; for example, the Communication and Media Design program requires students develop portfolios throughout their course of study, with individual courses each containing one or more projects intended to contribute to that portfolio (S3C1.D5). Programs report drawing on a variety of additional practices to encourage synthesis of learning; examples include senior seminars and the use of reflective essays and other types of assignments encouraging metacognition (S3C1.D6). Given the strong focus on applied programs, a wide variety of applied learning activities play a significant role in most programs; this was identified as a priority by SUNY which in 2015 asked all campuses to develop an inventory of applied learning opportunities available to students (see S3C4).

To support the synthesis of learning that takes place within individual degree programs, SUNY Poly organizes a variety of campus-wide learning experiences that encourage students to situate their academics within wider contexts and to orient their work towards broader audiences, among other goals. The longest-running event is the SUNY Poly Student Showcase, an annual one-day conference held at the end of the academic year that provides students the opportunity to present research, course projects, and creative works to the campus community. Students present their work as a poster, demonstration, or 10-minute oral presentation as appropriate for the project and discipline. Participation ranges from 40-70+ student and multi-student projects per year (S3C1.D7). The ten-week Summer Undergraduate Research Program provides students with opportunities to participate in



research under the mentorship of a faculty member (S3C1.D10). Innovation Challenge New York is a faculty-developed immersive two-day design challenge in which students collaborate to develop solutions to a complex problem or opportunity. Since 2014, eight challenges have been organized on topics ranging from housing to entrepreneurship in outer space (S3C1.D11). Since 2022, the College of Business has hosted the Mohawk Valley regional of the New York Business Plan Competition, a statewide student entrepreneurship competition; prior to becoming the host institute, SUNY Poly collaborated with the previous host Utica College (S3C1.D13). Faculty in the colleges of Arts and Sciences and Business organized the Mohawk Valley Mini Maker Faire in 2016, 2018, and 2019, an interactive, hands-on arts and technology festival connecting students with the broader community of makers, creators, inventors, and artists (S3C1.D14). The SUNY Poly Wellness Center organizes an annual Wellness Fair that provides opportunities for students and community members to enhance their knowledge of health and wellness behaviors. Several faculty have participated in the SUNY Collaborative Online International Learning program which enables instructors to collaborate with faculty at other institutions to integrate components of their courses together, providing a virtual exchange experience for students in those courses and exposing them to diverse perspectives by participating in an international learning community. Examples include collaborations to create a shared module in a criminology course at the Universidad de Sonora a biology course at SUNY Poly on “Forensic Sciences and Cultural Influences on Crime Investigations” in (2022-23) and a module on identifying misinformation for the research methods course in psychology at SUNY Poly and at the Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos) in São Leopoldo, Brazil (S3C1.D15; S3C1.D16).

The diverse range of integrative learning experiences described above demonstrates a campus-wide commitment to designing high-impact experiential learning practices. At the same time, a review of these initiatives reveals challenges faced in sustaining some of these activities as regular events. Several initiatives are organized by small teams of faculty and made possible through a combination of volunteer effort and, in some instances, modest amounts of release time. Even for the institute’s signature SUNY Poly Student Showcase, the responsibility for organizing this event has migrated from the Library to the Provost’s Office to faculty governance’s Committee on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work. Feedback by faculty involved in organizing these events identifies the lack of logistical support as a major barrier for sustaining these events, with faculty assuming responsibility for event coordination in addition to having primary roles for developing the intellectual content and pedagogical frameworks for these learning experiences. This issue is the result of the elimination of the campus and community events position around 2017 which shifted event logistics to the faculty organizing these events.

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#### C8: PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS PROVIDING STUDENT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

SUNY Poly does not have a formal institution-wide evaluation process for campus-wide learning opportunities. This reflects, in part, the grass-roots origins of many of these programs which are the initiatives of small groups of faculty or individual offices. Accordingly, evaluations of these learning programs are undertaken by the organizing faculty, college, or office which determines the purpose, goals, and criteria of the assessment process. For example, the lead faculty who organizes Innovation

Challenge New York conducts pre- and post-event assessment to gauge the impact of the learning experience on a range of measures such as entrepreneurial capacity and civic engagement (S3C8.D1). The Wellness Center, which organizes the Wellness Fair, conducts qualitative surveys of student participants and vendors to gauge satisfaction with the event (S3C8.D2; S3C8.D3; S3C8.D4). The data captured by the Wellness Center's assessment of the College and Community Wellness Fair is used to determine the appropriateness of design, capture participants knowledge gain/positive behavior change intent, and to evaluate the exhibitors list to continue to meet the needs of the college community, community at large and local agency participants.

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**S3.C2: STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT ARE DESIGNED, DELIVERED, AND ASSESSED BY FACULTY (FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME) AND/OR OTHER APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE:**

**A. RIGOROUS AND EFFECTIVE IN TEACHING, ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING, SCHOLARLY INQUIRY, AND SERVICE, AS APPROPRIATE TO THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION, GOALS, AND POLICIES**

All curriculum undergoes a multi-level review for all additions, changes, and deletions to programs and courses. Curriculum actions are initiated by faculty in the appropriate discipline or field and first undergo peer review by the program or departmental faculty. Curriculum is then reviewed and approved by the dean of the college; if the proposal involves or impacts curriculum in another college, then it is also reviewed by the respective dean(s). Proposals are next reviewed by the faculty governance's Curriculum Committee (for undergraduate actions) or Graduate Council (for graduate actions) which vote on each action. Finally, approved proposals are reviewed by the Provost for approval or disapproval (S3C2.D1; S3C2.D2). New program proposals are also reviewed by the faculty governance Planning and Budgeting Committee to examine the fiscal impact and mission fit of the proposed program. If the proposal involves adding, deactivating, or making substantial changes to a registered program, proposals are next sent to SUNY System and then the New York State Department of Education for review and approval (S3C2.D3).

In 2021, SUNY devolved authority for approving courses designed to meet SUNY's new General Education Framework to local campuses (S3C2.D4). To exercise this responsibility, faculty governance created a General Education Committee to conduct an additional level of review for courses proposed to meet SUNY GE requirements (S3C2.D5; S3C2.D6).

Faculty have key responsibilities for course and program level assessment. To support assessment efforts, the colleges of Business, Engineering, and Health Sciences provide stipends and/or release time to a faculty to coordinate assessment and accreditation activities. Additionally, support for faculty is provided by the Coordinator for Assessment and Student Learning Outcomes (S3C2.D7). Similarly, the Coordinator of General Education provides support for faculty in the assessment of General Education (S3C2.D8, S3C2.D9). These latter two positions have not been consistently resourced and staffed in the past which has impacted the regularity of assessment practices.

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## B. QUALIFIED FOR THE POSITIONS THEY HOLD AND THE WORK THEY DO;

Qualifications of faculty are established by faculty in the discipline who follow the standards set by the respective accrediting body in the case of accredited programs. In general, tenure-track faculty are expected to hold a doctorate in their field; non-tenure track faculty are required to have a Masters in the appropriate field. Within accredited programs, the faculty qualifications are dictated by the accrediting body. They may comment on faculty minimum requirements in the aggregate and/or for teaching specific courses. For example, in the FNP program the accrediting agency dictates that 80% of faculty teaching the clinical courses must be nationally certified in clinical practice.

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## C. SUFFICIENT IN NUMBER;

As a relatively small campus with an emphasis on applied and hands-on learning, SUNY Poly recognizes the importance of direct faculty-to-student interactions as a vital component of the educational experience. The standard full-time faculty teaching expectation is 12 credit-hours per semester which typically converts to three four-credit hour courses at the undergraduate level or three credit-hour courses at the graduate level. In addition, a few undergraduate programs, specifically in engineering, make use of three credit-hour courses (S3C2.D10; S3C2.D11). The institution has maintained a consistent 13-1 faculty-to-student ratio over the past five years (S3C2.D12). Appropriate class sizes are generally determined at the program and department levels and take into account factors such as level, subject, and modes of instruction. Over the past four years (AY2020-21 to AY 2023-24) two-thirds of all undergraduate courses have had a size of twenty students or fewer (S3C2.D13). That said, over the same period, the ratio of credit-hours taught by full-time faculty (tenured/tenure-track and non-tenured) to part-time faculty has decreased from 73/27% in AY2020-21 to 63/37% in AY2023-24 (S3C2.D14). Overall, between 2019-2023 faculty headcount has seen modest growth of tenure-track faculty (105 to 110) and a decline in full-time lecturers (30 to 26) (S3.C2.D15).

### Student-to-Faculty Ratio (2019-2023)

Term	Student-to- Faculty Ratio
Fall 2019	13.8
Fall 2020	14.3
Fall 2021	13.7
Fall 2022	12.8
Fall 2023	13.6

Conversely, the staff-to-student ratio has increased over the same period of time.

### Student-to-Staff Ratio (2019-2023)

Term	Student-to-Staff Ratio
Fall 2019	8.6
Fall 2020	9.9
Fall 2021	10.2
Fall 2022	10.5
Fall 2023	11.7

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### D. PROVIDED WITH AND UTILIZE SUFFICIENT OPPORTUNITIES, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND INNOVATION

Opportunities and support for faculty and staff professional development is provided by a range of offices and entities. Each college allocates travel funds of between \$1000-\$2000 per faculty to enable them to attend professional conferences and engage in professional development relevant to their areas of responsibility. The Office of the Provost, in collaboration with other offices, organizes a series of workshops prior to the start of classes in the fall semester, with activities for new and returning faculty and staff. Sessions provide training and a refresher for services provided campus-wide, Banner, Degreeworks and D2L Brightspace LMS (S3C2.D16). Recent initiatives to augment faculty development opportunities include the Open Classroom Initiative that enables new faculty to observe faculty with recognized excellence in teaching (S3C2.D17). The SUNY Poly Office of Distance Learning also provides in-house workshops related to technology vendors. One-on-one training sessions and daily drop-in sessions are also available for any topic. Other offices, including the Office of the CDO and the Office of Student Affairs, periodically provide professional development workshops in areas of their concern.

Professional development opportunities are also available from sources external to the campus. SUNY System allocates CPD points that SUNY Poly faculty and staff can use to participate in workshops and conferences using SUNY CPD (continuing professional development) points. A total of 1,250 CPD points are allocated to the campus and additional points, or direct payment, can be authorized by the campus once the allotted CPD points are exhausted. SUNY Polytechnic has membership in the SUNY Online Learning Consortium which hosts online workshops. These workshops are offered at a range of costs.

A main source of supplemental funding is provided through the UUP Individual Development Awards (IDA) Program which is overseen by the Professional Development Committee at SUNY Polytechnic Institute (S3C2.D18). A faculty-led initiative led to the creation of the Visiting Scholar Seminar Series in 2012 which enables collaboration with scholars from outside institutions by inviting them to campus for 2-3 days. In addition to scholarly interaction with faculty, the visiting scholar delivers a lecture about a topic related to their expertise to the campus community. This grant covers \$800-\$1000 toward travel and accommodation (S3C2.D19). However, funding for this program has been intermittent and is symptomatic of the *ad hoc* nature of professional development opportunities. The need for a more integrated approach to faculty development was recognized during the institution's strategic planning process in 2023; as a result, the strategic plan commits to "support[ing] the growth and professional

development of all faculty and staff, so that they are fully prepared to advance in their careers and renew SUNY Poly's commitment to excellence in teaching and learning" as a key goal (S3C2.D20)

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E. REVIEWED REGULARLY AND EQUITABLY BASED ON WRITTEN, DISSEMINATED, CLEAR, AND FAIR CRITERIA, EXPECTATIONS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES;

Criteria utilized to review faculty for reappointment and tenure are defined by the SUNY Board of Trustees (S3C2.D21). SUNY Poly has a two-stream review process to review full-time faculty. Peer review begins within individual programs or departments, with each department establishing its own processes and procedures which can differ for tenure-track faculty and full-time, non-tenure-track faculty. Generally, peer review is conducted by a committee of faculty appointed from the department; in some departments the committee's recommendation is then voted on by the full department. For tenure-track faculty, the recommendation of the committee or department is then forwarded to the faculty governance Academic Personnel Committee (APC) which votes on the recommendation. Concurrently, the recommendation coming out of the department is sent to the college Dean who conducts a separate, independent review. The recommendations of both the APC and Dean is then forwarded to the Provost, who provides their recommendation to the President. The President makes the final decision on faculty personnel decisions.

Along with the SUNY BOT criteria, SUNY Poly provides faculty with detailed guidance for preparing their portfolios as well as for conducting peer classroom observations (S3C2.D22; S3C2.D23; S3C2.D24). Accredited programs have additional criteria established by external accrediting bodies that must be taken into account.

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C3: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS OF STUDY THAT ARE CLEARLY AND ACCURATELY DESCRIBED IN OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE INSTITUTION IN A WAY THAT STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND AND FOLLOW DEGREE AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTED TIME TO COMPLETION.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute outlines degree requirements in multiple areas accessible to students and advisors. The undergraduate catalog clearly describes program requirements for each major and is available on the SUNY Poly website (S3C3.D1). The program descriptions include a description of the program and an outline of the requirements for degree completion. SUNY Poly also provides four-year plans of study (S3C3.D2) for each undergraduate major to assist students in planning their schedules to graduate within four years. Undergraduate students are eligible for their degree if they successfully complete a minimum of 124-129 credits, depending on their specific program requirements include General Education courses, liberal arts credits, and the major core. All undergraduate degree requirements also include completion of a minimum number of in-residence credits, a minimum number of upper-division credits, a minimum GPA of 2.0, a science with a laboratory, and an upper division writing course. Students and their advisors have access to review the student's Degree Works degree audit which displays how their completed and registered courses apply to their degree requirements and clearly identifies the student's remaining requirements (S3.C3.D3). The link to degree works is

available on our website and in our self-service SIS, Banner. Access to Degree Works allows students to track their progress toward degree completion in real time. Degree works will also show requirements for second majors and minors if applicable. In our Program Trends evidence, we demonstrate number of credits and years to degree completion by program (S3.C3.D4). Below you can see that our first-year students are finishing in 4.11 years and students transferring into SUNY Poly are completing their bachelor’s degrees are completing in 2.74 years at Poly

2022-2023 Degree Earners*	Average Yrs to Complete
Freshmen	4.11
Transfer	2.74

*\*SUNY BI*

SUNY Poly also offers the following graduate degrees: advanced certificates, Master of Science, Master of Business Management, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice. These programs are clearly outlined in our graduate catalog available on the SUNY Poly website. Students can also track their progress toward degree completion using their Degree Works degree audits which outline each requirement and applies completed and registered courses (S3C3.D3). Credits and time to complete vary by program and rate of study. Access to degree works is available on our website and in our self-service SIS, Banner. (S3C3.D1)

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C4: SUFFICIENT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT BOTH THE INSTITUTION’S PROGRAMS OF STUDY AND STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC PROGRESS.

SUNY Poly works hard to provide support to our students through specified program opportunities as well as general support for all students.

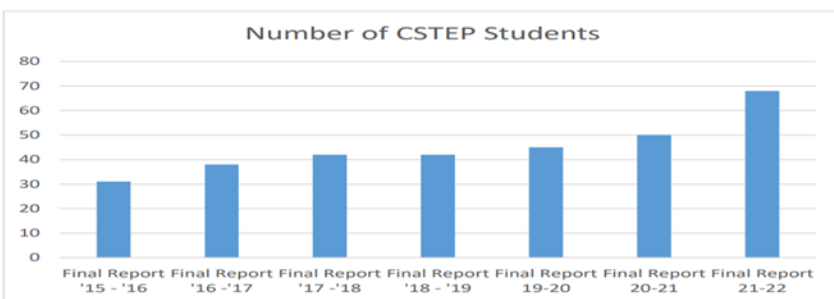
While the institution does not currently provide ESL or Career and Technical Training programs, it is actively expanding its educational portfolio. Key developments include the re-establishment of the Continuing and Professional Education department in 2024. Also, through collaboration with Herkimer County Community College and local correctional facilities, SUNY Poly aims to build structured pathways for incarcerated students to earn their bachelor’s degree upon completion of their associate’s degree at Herkimer County Community College. Students will start participating in spring 2025. This would be the revival of a program last offered in 1994.

To address the evolving needs of industry and continuous learners, as well as align with SUNY and our SUNY peers, the Continuing Professional Education Office is focusing on the development of micro-credentials. These compact academic certifications are designed to be completed in a shorter period of time, enabling participants to acquire specific skills or use the credentials to begin a degree program. A handful of micro-credential offerings are currently under development, reflecting the institution’s commitment to workforce alignment and academic innovation.

## **Opportunity programs**

Opportunity programs at SUNY Poly are critical in reducing barriers and advancing academic progress. The institution offers targeted initiatives designed to support students at various stages of their academic journey. Key programs include the College Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP), the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), and SUNY's Advancing Completion through Engagement (ACE) program. These initiatives provide a combination of academic, financial, and personal support to ensure student success.

The College Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) assists underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students in STEM majors or programs that will result in NYS licensure. Between 2015 and 2021, CSTEP participation on campus doubled (see graph below). Benefits of the program include book stipends, professional development opportunities, tutoring, and special programming (S3C4.D6).



The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) supports economically disadvantaged students by offering personal advisors, tutoring, financial resources, and workshops for college success. The state-funded initiative reports a 72% retention rate and a 67% graduation rate, with two-thirds of participants holding leadership roles on campus (i.e., SGU, Res. Life Aides, Peer Mentors, Club Officers, Work Study students, and EOP Ambassadors at the state level), demonstrating its broader impact (S3C4.D1).

The Advancing Completion through Engagement (ACE) program, introduced in 2023, is modeled on the highly successful City University of New York (CUNY) Accelerated Study in Associates Programs (ASAP) and the baccalaureate program Accelerate, Complete, and Engage (ACE) program. The CUNY programs demonstrated an increase in completion rates, narrowed opportunity gaps, and cost efficiencies and benefits. At SUNY Poly, ACE currently supports 150 students annually with targeted advising, over \$1,000 in additional funding, priority class registration, and programming to remove barriers to full-time study. Its design enhances belonging and supports timely graduation.

## **Applied Learning and Student Success**

SUNY Poly has adopted applied learning as a key strategy to improve student outcomes and align with SUNY-wide initiatives launched in 2015. Applied learning focuses on hands-on activities, research, and practical projects that connect academic concepts to real-world applications.



In the past five years, SUNY Poly has expanded applied learning opportunities at both undergraduate and graduate levels, incorporating internships, cooperative education, and service learning into its programs. Data from 2018 to 2023 (as seen in the chart below) shows steady growth in student participation, demonstrating its impact on enhancing education and preparing students for careers (S3C4.D2).

This approach ensures students gain practical skills alongside academic knowledge, making applied learning an essential part of SUNY Poly's efforts to support student success and career readiness.

**SUNY POLY APPLIED LEARNING - UNDERGRADUATE**

	Unduplicated Students in Applied Learning	Unduplicated Applied Learning Sections	Other Applied Learning Approved Unduplicated Students	Other Applied Learning Approved Sections	Internship – Approved AL Unduplicated Students	Internship – Approved AL Sections	Co-operative Education Unduplicated Students	Co-operative Education Sections	Service Learning Unduplicated Students	Service Learning Sections	Field Study Unduplicated Students	Field Study Sections	Entrepreneurship Unduplicated Students	Entrepreneurship Sections
2018-2019	1,408	203	0	0	11	8	4	3	9	1	0	0	43	5
2019-2020	1,554	255	0	0	8	7	7	4	28	2	0	0	84	7
2020-2021	1,490	251	2	1	1	1	3	2	31	3	0	0	104	7
2021-2022	1,459	237	7	5	5	2	4	3	33	2	0	0	91	5
2022-2023	1,438	231	8	5	1	1	7	4	25	2	0	0	98	6

**SUNY POLY APPLIED LEARNING - GRADUATE**

	Unduplicated Students in Applied Learning	Unduplicated Applied Learning Sections	Other Applied Learning Approved Unduplicated Students	Other Applied Learning Approved Sections	Internship – Approved AL Unduplicated Students	Internship – Approved AL Sections	Co-operative Education Unduplicated Students	Co-operative Education Sections	Service Learning Unduplicated Students	Service Learning Sections	Field Study Unduplicated Students	Field Study Sections	Entrepreneurship Unduplicated Students	Entrepreneurship Sections
2018-2019	561	172	0	0	13	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	56	3
2019-2020	657	237	3	1	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	68	5
2020-2021	687	214	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77	4
2021-2022	629	222	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69	4
2022-2023	666	240	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	58	4

Student success is further supported by SUNY Poly's Cayan Library, the Office of Distance Learning, and the Center for Student Academic Success. Each focus on delivering targeted services to meet institutional goals for accessibility, instructional effectiveness, and skill development. The Cayan Library aims to provide quality resources, user-centered services, and stimulating spaces to support academic programs, research, and educational needs of the students, faculty and staff. It offers in-person and online support through email, chat, phone, and scheduled appointments. SUNY Poly added a Student Success Librarian in spring 2024 to focus on assessing needs and designing library instruction, programming, and services that support student learning, success, and retention at all levels. This underscores the library's role in improving retention by aligning services with student needs (S3C4.D3).

The Office of Distance Learning (ODL) focuses on improving online and hybrid instruction by providing tools such as production studios, a SmartBoard-equipped classroom, and technical assistance for Brightspace LMS and course design. Its collaboration with the SUNY Poly Help Desk ensures timely resolution of technical issues related to online, HyFlex, hybrid, and face-to-face courses. Students and faculty use ODL's resources for creating and delivering course content, while regular workshops and drop-in sessions further support instructional improvement. ODL also works with the Student Accessibility Services Office to ensure course materials meet ADA standards and they assist with researching tools that meet individual needs. The director of ODL is the campus Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) Officer and works with the various offices across campus to meet accessibility standards (S3C4.D4).



The Center for Student Academic Success, established in 2016, provides tutoring, advisement, and accommodations to support retention and academic progress. Professional and peer tutors assist with course content and study skills, while advisors help students navigate degree requirements. Testing accommodations are available for students requiring specialized environments. The Center's advisement services help students review academic program requirements and general education requirements to plan for degree completion. Since the Center for Student Academic Success opened, they have tracked tutoring visits and satisfaction as shown below. The numbers declined during COVID but were rising in the 2021-2022 academic year. The Center includes a staff of four professionals as well as professional and peer tutors. Plans to hire additional professional advisors are being reviewed under our new director.

Semester	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022
# of Unique Students	229	212	287	237	301	227	260	191	160	131	183	184
Percentage Helpful & Very Helpful				91%	97%	97%	95%	98%	Tutoring all online – students unable to leave feedback	Only 29 in-person appt; shared computer not used for sign in due to COVID	100%	99%

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C5: AT INSTITUTIONS THAT OFFER UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION, A GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, FREE STANDING OR INTEGRATED INTO ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES, THAT:

A. OFFERS A SUFFICIENT SCOPE TO DRAW STUDENTS INTO NEW AREAS OF INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCE, EXPANDING THEIR CULTURAL AND GLOBAL AWARENESS AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY, AND PREPARING THEM TO MAKE WELL-REASONED JUDGMENTS OUTSIDE AS WELL AS WITHIN THEIR ACADEMIC FIELD;

B. OFFERS A CURRICULUM DESIGNED SO THAT STUDENTS ACQUIRE AND DEMONSTRATE ESSENTIAL SKILLS INCLUDING AT LEAST ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION, SCIENTIFIC AND QUANTITATIVE REASONING, CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND REASONING, TECHNOLOGICAL COMPETENCY, AND INFORMATION LITERACY. CONSISTENT WITH MISSION, THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM ALSO INCLUDES THE STUDY OF VALUES, ETHICS, AND DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES; AND

SUNY Poly's general education program follows the SUNY GE Framework that is mandated for all SUNY campuses (S3C2.D4). This framework, which was implemented locally in Fall 2023, made substantive changes to the previous SUNY GER framework implemented in 2012 (S3C5.D1). SUNY Poly's GE program requires all undergraduate students to complete a minimum of 30 credit-hours of coursework across ten General Education Knowledge and Skill areas. Four of these areas are required of all students: Communication: Written and Oral; Mathematics (and quantitative reasoning); Natural Sciences (and scientific reasoning); Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice. In addition to meeting the four required areas, students must take coursework in at least three of the other six knowledge and skill areas, enabling students to explore fields beyond their major. Furthermore, all students must meet the two required SUNY General Education Competencies in Critical Thinking and Reasoning, and Information Literacy. These competencies are infused across the curriculum (S3C5.D2; S3C5.D3). Building and extending upon the SUNY GE framework, SUNY Poly requires all undergraduate students to meet the SUNY Poly Upper Division Writing Requirement as part of their degree requirements.

## Map of MSCHE General Education expectations to SUNY Poly General Education Program

MSCHE Expectation for General Education (C5a, b)	SUNY Poly General Education Requirements (required and optional)
Oral and Written Communication	Communication: Written and Oral (req.) Upper Division Writing Requirement (req.)
Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning	Natural Sciences (and quantitative reasoning) (req.) Social Sciences (opt.)
Critical Analysis and Reasoning	Critical Thinking and Reasoning (competency, req.)
Technological Competency	Information Literacy (competency, req.)
Information Literacy	Information Literacy (competency, req.)
Cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity	Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (req) World History and Global Awareness (opt.)
Values, ethics, and diverse perspectives	Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (req., SLO 1, 2, 3) Humanities (opt., SLO 2) U.S. History and Civic Engagement (opt., SLO 1, 2) World History and Global Awareness (opt., SLO 1, 2) World Languages (opt., SLO2)

Each educational program takes responsibility for incorporating general education requirements and additional recommendations within the plans of study. Department level decisions about curriculum are driven by accreditation standards, and professional standards. There are some discipline-specific general education required courses. For example, within the College of Health Sciences (CHS), Community Behavioral Health (CBH) majors and nursing majors are required to take Introduction to Psychology as a social science course. This course provides a foundation for clinical practice for CBH and nursing majors. Another example is requiring STA 100 (Statistics) to meet the General Education Mathematics Requirement. Various programs such as Biology, Psychology, NCS and Nursing incorporate the stats requirement to help students prepare to understand statistics they encounter in research articles (S3C5.D3).

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C6: IN INSTITUTIONS THAT OFFER GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION, OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND INDEPENDENT THINKING, PROVIDED BY FACULTY AND/OR OTHER PROFESSIONALS WITH CREDENTIALS APPROPRIATE TO GRADUATE-LEVEL CURRICULA; // LOI6: HOW DO GRADUATE PROGRAMS DETERMINE, DEFINE, AND DEVELOP THEIR CULMINATING ACTIVITY AND PROJECTS SO THAT THEY FACILITATE RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND INDEPENDENT THINKING?

NYSED clearly articulates the requirements for graduate study including the expectations for a culminating activity for each program which consists of either a project, a comprehensive exam, or independent research activity (S3C6.D1)

Faculty within each graduate program at SUNY Poly determine the most appropriate culminating activity for that discipline-specific program. The development of these activities rests with the affiliated faculty within that program's team, in collaboration with faculty teaching the culminating courses. These culminating activities are designed to facilitate readiness for professional engagement, participation in research, and as preparation for advanced education. The driving forces behind these decisions include state standards, professional expectations, industry standards and accreditation standards for accredited programs. Typically, programs align this activity with program outcomes correlated to the plan of study. In some programs such as the Nursing Masters Nurse Practitioner programs, students only have one option of completing a comprehensive culminating exam. These exams are designed to prepare the student to sit for a certification exam at the completion of the program, often a requirement for professional practice. In other graduate programs, such as Data and Science Analytics, and Information Design and Technology, students are given the option to engage in research or to complete a project and then present it to their peers as part of their culminating activity to demonstrate their subject mastery (S3C6.D2).

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C7: ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL ON ANY STUDENT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES DESIGNED, DELIVERED, OR ASSESSED BY THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

There is an array of third-party educational products used by faculty within the institution. The specific products used are department and course specific. Department faculty select products for multiple reasons. For example, in Accounting, Cost Accounting software facilitates student learning and greater access to assessment materials. Another example is within Health information Management, Electronic Health Records (EHR) simulation promotes students' abilities to analyze health records for accuracy and or deficiency of healthcare documentation. In Data Network Design, Cisco software provides learners with realistic simulation for network analysis and design. Tools used in the Nursing department, such as Typhon provides learners with a means to document their success in meeting course outcomes in their practicum experiences. Finally, other tools are used to assess learner concept mastery, such as AHIMA V-lab and Barkley Exams used in the CHS, facilitate student tracking of practicum hours, or serve as assessment tools. Individual faculty, faculty teams and departments take responsibility for reviewing and

analyzing these tools (S3C7.D1). See Document S3C7D1 for a comprehensive list of third-party tools used by faculty. Although there is an institutional policy on contracting third-party tools,, there is no institutional-level systematic review of third-party products (S3C7.D2)

### **Recommendations**

- Develop a more cohesive, institute-wide approach to faculty and professional development that includes enhancing a campus culture of encouraging, supporting, and recognizing professional development and continuing growth. (C2)
- Establish more consistency and predictability in faculty personnel review procedures, including the peer-review process, while recognizing and accommodating differences across disciplines and colleges. (C2)
- Build upon SUNY Poly’s commitment to experiential and applied learning experiences by enhancing infrastructure and support for high-impact learning experiences, particularly campus-wide events and experiences. In particular, restore the position for Campus Events (C2, C3, C8)
- Provide consistency of support for positions that directly support faculty and institute efforts to consistently deliver and improve upon high-quality curriculum and supporting learning experiences, including the Director of Assessment and Coordinator for General Education. (C2)

# STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION DEFINES ITS PURPOSE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE STUDENTS IT SERVES, AND WHAT IT INTENDS TO ACCOMPLISH. THE INSTITUTION'S STATED GOALS ARE CLEARLY LINKED TO ITS MISSION AND SPECIFY HOW THE INSTITUTION FULFILLS ITS MISSION.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is effectively providing ethical policies, processes and programs that allow students to succeed. While there was frequent turnover in senior level of leadership at SUNY Poly, students benefitted from strong long-time stability in the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, as well as in the leadership of both the student affairs and enrollment management teams. This led to consistency and a stable, shared commitment to advisement of the whole student, particularly evident during COVID19 challenges and changes.

The size of SUNY Polytechnic Institute is conducive to ensuring that students do not “slip through the cracks” and that individual students are noticed and supported if they are struggling in or out of the classroom. Similarly, the small size of the campus allows SUNY Poly faculty and staff, including student mentors like resident advisors and orientation staff, to connect with each student and determine how they can construct a SUNY Poly experience that is unique and positive. Faculty and staff are committed to the wholistic development of students and providing services and support appropriate to where students are in their development and needs.

SUNY Poly's focus on meeting students where they are, maximizing what it means to be small in scale but strong in education, is where standard IV connects fully where institutional priority 3 “strong campus culture” intersects with our institutional mission to “demonstrate a dynamic, diverse and interconnected learning environment.” SUNY Poly aims to be a place where students can be seen in all the best ways, be encouraged to cultivate their unique interests and a place where any community member in need is noticed and fully supported.

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C1: CLEARLY STATED, ETHICAL POLICIES AND PROCESSES TO ADMIT, RETAIN, AND FACILITATE THE SUCCESS OF STUDENTS WHOSE INTERESTS, ABILITIES, EXPERIENCES, AND GOALS PROVIDE A REASONABLE EXPECTATION FOR SUCCESS AND ARE COMPATIBLE WITH INSTITUTIONAL MISSION, INCLUDING:

A. ACCURATE AND COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION REGARDING EXPENSES, FINANCIAL AID, SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, LOANS, REPAYMENT, AND REFUNDS;

B. A PROCESS BY WHICH STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT ADEQUATELY PREPARED FOR STUDY AT THE LEVEL FOR WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ADMITTED ARE IDENTIFIED, PLACED, AND SUPPORTED IN ATTAINING APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL GOALS;

C. ORIENTATION, ADVISEMENT, AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS TO ENHANCE RETENTION AND GUIDE STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE;

D. PROCESSES DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THE SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL GOALS INCLUDING CERTIFICATE AND DEGREE COMPLETION, TRANSFER TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS, AND POST-COMPLETION PLACEMENT;

Information regarding relevant student support offices is readily available on the institutional website and within the student handbook, undergraduate catalog and graduate catalog (S4C1.D1, S4C1.D2, S4C1.D3). Information regarding campus services and programs is offered to students and their families from campus visit to orientation. Efforts are made to stay connected to students via email updates, publications and social media. From the start of COVID19 and throughout, programs that addressed the needs of students and facilitated positive outcomes in their retention, progression and completion of degree were shifted to online, no contact and low contact formats. Through the pandemic and upon return to in-person learning and services, SUNY Poly published clear and supportively enforced policies and processes to maintain student health (S4C1.D4). SUNY Poly was one of the few institutions to experience no substantial outbreaks of COVID19 and maintained enrollment throughout the pandemic. SUNY Poly successfully returned to on campus operations but also maintained some of the best outcomes of online services like tele-health, tele-counseling, orientation, and advising as part of on-going outstanding accessibility for students and their support systems. Staff in student support offices, when interviewed regarding this standard, mentioned enthusiasm for the return to in-person services. Some challenges were expressed regarding maintenance and execution of expanded remote services developed during COVID that continue to be valued by online students, while returning to full in person services with no increase in staff to support excellence in both online and in-person student services.

## **Orientation**

All new students at SUNY Poly experience a comprehensive Orientation program (S4C1.D5). First-year students at SUNY Poly are all registered in in-person programs and must attend a three-day Orientation program at the start of their fall semester. The hallmark of the first-year Orientation program is a commitment to small learning sessions, with faculty and staff committed to offering their topic areas many times over two days to ensure this small-group setting can occur. Students participating in Orientation experience required programs that include: Care Services, Online Learning Platform Training, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Involvement and Career Services. They are also offered the opportunity to participate in sessions and receptions with affinity groups that include student clubs and organizations.

The response rate to first year orientation surveys in Fall 2024 was strong (S4C1.D6). Individual sessions are well rated by students, with responses of good and excellent dominating all of the required sessions. In response to the orientation survey question, “The information sessions helped me understand the expectations SUNY Polytechnic Institute has for me,” just three of 315 respondents replied to this statement as false. On this statement alone, the orientation has some high level of success, as a key goal for orientation programs is for students to complete them understanding the expectations of their new community. The majority of respondents rated the orientation program as good or excellent overall.

SUNY Poly offers a relatively short Orientation, with the first day serving as move in and days 2 and 3 for content and information. The students rated the program heavily toward fair and poor in response to survey questions about length of Orientation. The comment section reveals length complaints were directed to two days being too long. In preparation for Fall 2025, the committee will need to consider if the individual days create a sense of the program being too long, therefore requiring shift to more days but with less content and more social time, or if the content can be reduced without negatively affecting students’ understanding of expectations and readiness for their first weeks of coursework and residency.

Parents and families are offered virtual Orientation sessions in the 60 days prior to the opening of the semester, to assist them in supporting their students’ transition. Also, early morning and late evening virtual sessions with parents and families continue after the semester has begun to give family members an opportunity to ask questions and seek support for their students as they transition. We did not collect feedback on these individual sessions but will add that to future family and support initiatives.

Transfer students experience both online and in person Orientation, with fully online transfer students strongly encouraged to join the on-campus Orientation. The on-campus orientation for transfer students was highly rated, with no students responding with a false in response to, “The information sessions helped me understand the expectations SUNY Polytechnic Institute has for me” (S4C1.D7). Despite the program being only about a half day, this program was also rated most heavily as “too long.” The committee will review the comments and determine if this program would benefit students and lessen the feeling that it is too long if it was broken up over two half days. Online transfer orientation is much shorter, held over a few nights via Zoom and less data was gathered about satisfaction. Orientation has been staffed by one person since well before COVID, and completing both in person and online



orientation under the auspices of one person results in the emphasis of time on meeting needs of in person students. Further discussion on online student needs and staffing in Orientation as a result of this self-study is addressed in recommendations.

Graduate students receive a comprehensive online training that was initially hosted within Blackboard, and shifted to the Admission platform Slate when the campus shifted to a new online learning platform (S4C1.D8).

International Students arrive to campus one week before the start of classes to participate in orientation programs that enhance their knowledge of campus services and resources, visas and travel, off campus living, and transition to life in the United States and the state of New York, as well as local opportunities and experiences (S4C1.D9).

### **Evolution of First Year Seminar**

All incoming first year students are enrolled in first year seminar, a 15-week one-credit letter graded course intended to assist with the transition to college. The course is taught by faculty and staff who choose to participate and are therefore enthusiastic about engaging with first year students and supporting their first semester of college. In the fall of 2020, when in person contact was limited or not permitted, the in-first year seminar was paused, with topics offered via Zoom throughout the semester. The first-year seminar instructors also used this time to consider a new approach to first year seminar. Increasing feedback from first year students via surveys and from faculty directly was that the “one format and set of topics for all” approach to first year seminar was not always effective or engaging. Professional staff equipped to teach specific topics such as college finances, career services, Title IX, study skills, academic success and health and wellness were often traveling to 20 sections of FYS to expertly present their special topic.

In the fall of 2021, SUNY Poly allowed students to “choose their own adventure” by selecting topics as they were interested in them throughout the semester, taught by staff best equipped to present the topics. As a result, most first-year students delayed attendance in sessions until the semester had almost concluded, and in the final weeks of the semester the program was forced to present to 100s of students in large setting to meet the seminar requirements. This was contradictory to the SUNY Poly commitment to reach students in small, engaging sessions.

However, each first-year student was required to meet at least twice for 50 minutes with a campus first year seminar coach. This component of the format was intended to mimic the connection and resource students would have experienced if they had been able to meet in first year seminar classes and had classroom access to a first-year seminar instructor. Students were positive about this component of the course in their evaluations, and first year seminar coaches also reported strong affinity for the approach and advocated for maintaining one on one time with the instructor as a hallmark of the course, regardless of future format.

In the Fall of 2022, the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs tasked the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs to convene an interdisciplinary group of faculty to complete a campus wide review of first year seminar and to introduce a new, more diverse format for the program in Fall of 2023.

Following faculty and student focus groups and a review of FYS best practices, in the fall of 2023 first year students were offered the opportunity to select from varying types of small (19 students or less) seminars. Some seminars were “traditional” in nature, with 14 weeks of transitional topics covered in an equivalent manner across sections, or from courses that are academic topic or skill topic in nature. Examples of FYS sessions offered in fall of 2023 that expanded beyond the traditional format were sections for nursing majors, a section dedicated EOP students and taught by their program director, a leadership and personal development section, career growth and development sections and various academic sections taught by Arts and Sciences faculty members in their area of expertise.

All of the instructors of first year seminar for Fall 2023 gathered at the conclusion of the semester to participate in a half-day retreat to discuss the successes and challenges of the new format and to review course surveys (S4C1.D10). Overwhelmingly, the students, as understood via surveys of the course, and instructors as indicated in the post course retreat, were pleased with new formats for the course. The instructors re-established course outcomes to be more concise and reflective of what can be accomplished in a one credit course. In the Spring of 2024, the FYS planning team successfully achieved permanent approval of the new FYS formats via the curriculum committee.

### **Advisement**

The Center for Student Academic Success assists with degree audits, class scheduling, selecting or switching a major, advisor information, time management, GPA calculating, grade tracking, and study skills (S4C1.D11). The Center also provides free tutoring support. There are both peer tutors, students trained to help others with mastering course material, as well as professional tutors with advanced degrees in their fields. Tutors are available in writing, mathematics, physics, statistics, computer science, and other subject areas depending on the need and the availability of qualified tutors. Students are able to schedule their tutoring appointments for themselves online.

Faculty are encouraged to enter early alert messages for receipt by Student Academic Success and the alerts are also reviewed by the Care Team. The early alert system allows student success advisors to outreach to students and offer both academic and out of class support. Early alerts are cultivated at multiple points and the start of each semester. At mid-term, faculty members are expected to enter mid-term grades for all first-year students in their courses and strongly encouraged to enter grades for all students regardless of year. Poor mid-term grades prompt outreach to students from the staff in Student Academic Success. If other concerns or referrals are in existence for students with low mid-term grades, the Care Team may also extend support to the student.

Students are assigned a faculty member in their major for the purpose of academic advisement. The Academic Success and Advisement page offers that “Administrative and academic support for students and faculty is provided through SUNY Poly's colleges” (S4C1.D12). Accordingly, the colleges facilitate student academic advising, help students prepare petitions and other academic requests, and respond to faculty requests concerning classes, students, and professional activities.

Academic student advisement structures vary among the colleges, as does students’ satisfaction with advisement from faculty by program. SUNY Poly experienced high engagement from students in the strategic planning process. In both in-person discussions and captured answers to inquiries at the

strategic planning sessions, students expressed the need to enhance advisement from faculty, frequently mentioning response times and care for the whole person. The staff in academic student success are, at times, guiding students through classroom selection in the absence of response or an availability from a faculty advisor. As an outcome of the strategic planning process, elevation of the student experience, particularly as it relates to student advisement, is a key component of pillar one of the SUNY Poly Strategic Plan. In year one of the plan, each college is tasked with creating an intentional and effective advisement structure. Additionally, the Center for Academic Student Success has proposed expanded staff and additional resources to best assist with wholistic student success. In the fall of 2024, the Director of the Center for Academic Student Success will also begin to supervise the ACE Program, SUNY Poly's Accelerating Completion through Engagement (ACE) program (S4C1.D13). The program aims to help students gain and maintain momentum to complete their degree in four years. It is part of the SUNY replication of the City University of New York (CUNY) Accelerate, Complete, and Engage Program. The program has two staff members, a program director and an ACE advisor. Program participants receive financial support in tuition assistance, textbook stipends, and a travel stipend. In addition to an academic advisor, they attend bi-monthly advisement sessions with an ACE advisor who offers support and guidance to overcome challenges they face in the path to complete their degree. Additionally, they have access to career counseling, enrichment programming, priority registration, and financial support for summer courses.

SUNY Poly utilizes DegreeWorks to assist students and their advisors in understanding progress toward degree completion. DegreeWorks provides students with a clear picture of their academic progress, listing completed, in-progress, and outstanding courses required for graduation. The "what-if" feature allows students to see how their progress would change if they switched majors, added a minor, or made other academic changes. Advisors working with students to plan for scheduling can help students make informed decisions about course selection, program changes, and graduation planning. It makes academic planning more transparent and can substantially reduce errors or missteps that might delay graduation.

### **Additional Wholistic Student Support**

The Educational Opportunity Program provides access, academic support and financial assistance to first-time, full-time students who show promise to succeed in college but may need additional support (S4C1.D14). EOP helps to strengthen personal development and assists in building academic skills as students acclimate to the academic, professional, social, and cultural environment that make up college life.

The Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) is a New York State Department of Education funded program developed to increase the amount of under-represented and economically disadvantaged students who are pursuing professional licensure and careers in science, technology, engineering, math, and health related fields (S4C1.D15). CSTEP provides structured services which contribute to the academic and professional success of STEM students.

SUNY Poly Student Athletes also benefit from wholistic advisement that encourages their focus and success as both athletics and students. Athletic staff members provide education on compliance and eligibility for the student athletes, and the associate athletic director serves as a liaison between the student athletes and faculty (S4C1.D16). Athletics maintains a missed class policy, tracks student athlete progression and provides support for academic concerns. The team also works with a faculty athletic representative to provide assistance and academic support to student athletes.

The staff in the Office of Residential Life have utilized community organizing and one to one relationship building as their residential education model for more than a decade. As the foundation of this model, all Resident Advisors are trained in one-on-one relational meetings, and intentional and structured processes for engagement with their assigned residents. Within this approach, Resident Advisors are required to meet with every resident for at least 30 minutes, with a goal of one hour, within the first four weeks of the semester to determine what each resident hopes to accomplish and how they can best succeed at SUNY Poly. Resident satisfaction scores tied to this technique are consistently high (S4C1.D17, S4C1.D18). In Fall of 2020, when the team had to accomplish these meetings with social distancing, student support in this manner was still met with 84% of residential students reporting back that this contact happened (S4C1.D19). Within our first-year residence hall in the fall of 2020, 99% of students reported their Resident Advisors spent this time with them in the first five weeks of classes. Satisfaction scores related to this approach remain strong, with 90% of all residential students affirming their one on one with an RA happened and 96% percent of those respondents indicating they agreed those conversations were meaningful to them.

SUNY Poly students who experience unexpected challenges and hurdles in college are supported by the Care Team (S4C1.D20). The team provides a variety of protective factors to support student well-being, including academic guidance, assistance with behavioral or mental health concerns, meeting basic needs for housing and food and encouragement to register disabilities, whether short or long term, with accessibility services.

The Care Team is comprised of a diverse cross section of staff and faculty, and a subgroup of the team identified as Case Management also meets weekly to provide ongoing support to students who are working collaboratively with accessibility, wellness staff and the Care Team Case Manager. A full time Care Team Case Manager was added to the SUNY Poly staff in the summer of 2022. The Care Team is well publicized throughout campus, has a comprehensive webpage and a complete operations manual. Communication and high professional competency between Care, Academic Student Success, Wellness Services and Accessibility Services results in seamless support for students. Care Team has supported students in all majors, residential and commuter, fully online and in person, undergraduate and graduate.

The Care Team is introduced at visit days and accepted student days as central to the SUNY Poly commitment to meet students where they are in their experience and to ensure that no student “slips through the cracks.” All first-year students meet in small groups of 40 or less with the Chair of the Care Team/Assistant Dean of Students in a session aimed at identifying not only how the team can support

the student as they arrive to SUNY Poly, but also to identify future experiences students may face in which they will need support.

Faculty, staff, family and virtually all constituents are encouraged to refer students in need of support to the Care team via any communication mechanism with which they are the most comfortable, including a secure form that allows for anonymous submission, email, phone call or in person visit (S4C1.D21, S4C1.D22). The Care Team maintains a positive reputation of support in the campus community, so much so that there has been consistent growth in students who self-refer to the Care Team for support. The SUNY Poly Care Team is considered to be a national model for marketing and retention of students by the International Alliance of Care and Threat Teams.

All families, students, faculty and staff are routinely offered training on Care Team resources, including what to refer and what to report as it pertains to behavioral concerns, life changes for students, disruptive behavior and dangerous behavior. Resident Advisors, Orientation Advisors and student leaders are trained in these topics. Care Team also provides training to staff and faculty on identifying and responding to disruptive behavior in residence halls, offices and classrooms.

SUNY Poly students benefit from a Wellness Center that includes fully integrated counseling, medical and health promotion services. The Wellness Center, located on the second floor of Campus Center, has two full-time Mental Health Counselors, Registered Nurses, a Nurse Practitioner, Medical Assistants, a Wellness Promotion Coordinator and part-time Physician. Telehealth and tele-counseling appointments with Wellness Center staff are another option offered. SUNY Poly also has a partnership with Upstate Medical University called the SUNY Telepsychiatry Network (STPN). This program provides remote assessments, short term psychotherapy, medication management and telepsychiatry interventions.

Within the Wellness Center, students can also utilize a relaxation room that offers a massage chair, meditation area, mindful breathing lamp, light therapy, place to journal, color, etc. or schedule a Therapeutic Massage

In an effort to increase retention, in the Fall of 2019, a team of SUNY Poly staff and faculty were established to consider new and clear processes for students to pursue withdrawal, medical withdrawal and leave of absence (S4C1.D23). The process was implemented in Fall 2021 as we returned to in-person work and classes. All students who request withdrawal are now first required to meet with staff from Student Academic Success to ensure that they know all implications and processes for withdrawal, as well as to better understand the student's purpose for withdrawal and to understand intent for return. Students who request medical withdrawal are required to meet with a trained member of the Care Team who assists them in navigating medical withdrawal requirements and serving as a point of contact during withdrawal, as well as to ease return from a medical withdrawal. Leaves of absence, previously only available from a dean, were made more accessible to students and tracked for follow up and encouragement to return, became available by meeting with a member from Student Academic Success or the Care Team. A comprehensive checklist for withdrawal, leave of absence and return were created and consistently utilized with students.

A key component of the new checklist for withdrawal was in the priority of assisting students in understanding the financial implications of their withdrawal. Upon submission of the withdrawal form, the student receives an email from financial aid that either affirms the withdrawal will have no financial implication or details of the implications on refund, return of aid and/or opportunity for future aid based upon the withdrawal impacts on satisfactory academic progress. In complex situations, the staff member from academic success or the care team will join the student to meet with financial aid to ensure that all consequences of withdrawal on financial status are fully understood. The new withdrawal process and the transparency of the checklist was met with positive regard from students and their families and support members.

SUNY Poly faculty and staff continue to work together to improve policies and processes that improve retention. In the fall of 2023, the same team that reviewed leave of absence began reviewing medical withdrawal more specifically, with a goal to reconsider merits of partial medical withdrawal, which is not currently permissible under policy. Also, the team will consider best practices and trends across campuses for voluntary withdrawal dates that support return and retention of students over the long term. This team also executed an exit survey for all students who fail to register for their next semester and will continue to refine the survey and review data to understand the reasons students transfer, stop out or discontinue their education and determine if changes can be made to review these decisions.

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## C2: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING EVALUATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSFER CREDITS, AND CREDITS AWARDED THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING, PRIOR NON-ACADEMIC LEARNING, COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE LEARNING APPROACHES;

SUNY Polytechnic Institute accepts transfer credits that directly fulfill the student's degree requirements. The acceptability of credits can vary by program due to differences in academic rigor and program demand. The total transfer credits allowed are capped at 76 lower-division credits and an additional 18 upper-division credits, including credit earned by examination (e.g. high school Advanced Placement, the College Board's CLEP exams) (S4C2.D1). It's important to note that only transfer credits are accepted; grades and quality points from transfer courses are not factored into the student's GPA.

Transfer credit equivalencies are established through various methods, including SUNY Transfer Paths agreements, articulation agreements such as Dual Admissions and Path to Poly agreements with partner institutions, and program-specific articulation agreements (S4C2.D2). Admissions works closely with academic departments to establish course-by-course equivalencies. These agreements and pathways provide detailed and comprehensive instructions for progressing from an associate's degree program to the completion of a bachelor's degree at SUNY Poly.

An admitted student can expect to receive a degree evaluation within 30 days of acceptance. The transfer credit evaluation process has significantly improved with the introduction of the "Transfer Articulation Coordinator" role in the undergraduate admissions office. This position focuses on prioritizing credit evaluations, ensuring a rapid and efficient turnaround for students. The coordinator

acts as a key liaison between departments, expediting the review and approval of new course equivalencies.

Transfer Evaluation System (TES) offers a centralized repository for course descriptions and allows faculty to be assigned to specific courses for future reviews (S4C2.D3). This system makes the evaluation of transfer credit process more efficient and accurate.

Communication with students about credit evaluations has been enhanced through Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software, Slate. Obtaining the necessary information is simple and convenient for students. Direct emails granting access to Degree Works (DW), accompanied by a helpful video and PDF guide to aid in navigating the system (S4C2.D4). Students can access articulation agreements through the campus website, ensuring all essential resources are readily available.

The introduction of the Transfer Articulation Coordinator role, the implementation of the Transfer Evaluation System (TES), and improved communication via Slate have all contributed to a notable improvement in turnaround time and quicker credit evaluations. The staff can now complete evaluations promptly and even prioritize them based on specific requests, ensuring a more efficient and responsive process. This enhanced efficiency extends beyond credit evaluations to other areas of student support.

Slate has been instrumental in organizing advisement sessions for newly admitted transfer students. Students can conveniently schedule a virtual one-on-one session with an academic advisor through the enrollment portal. These sessions are complemented by automated communications, such as reminders and summaries, ensuring that students are well-informed and supported throughout the process. Slate's reporting capabilities enable the staff to effectively track and monitor student activity, facilitating continuous improvement in student services.



### **Transfer of Graduate Credit**

Students seeking transfer credit at the time of admission must provide official transcripts to the Graduate Admissions Office at SUNY Poly. Only graduate courses with a grade of B or higher and completed in most cases less than seven years prior to matriculation are transferable. Individual programs may have specific guidance to adhere to regarding eligible transfer coursework. Transfer credit will not be included in the computation of a graduate student's grade point average at SUNY Poly. Graduate students must complete at least 27 semester hours of graduate credit in residence at SUNY Poly. This requirement will limit the amount of transfer credits allowed per program based upon degree requirements. Requirements may vary by program.

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### **C3: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE SAFE AND SECURE MAINTENANCE AND APPROPRIATE RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION AND RECORDS;**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute's policies and procedures pertaining to protection of student information and records can be found in easy to access locations and compliance is ensured through robust procedures and support from various campus offices. The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC § 1232g) and several security policies allow for the safekeeping of student information and data (S4C3.D1). The information pertaining to SUNY Polytechnic Institute's compliance with FERPA is readily accessible on the SUNY Poly website, under the Financial Aid Policies section of the Admissions Office page. This website details the institution's compliance and provides a link to the federal policy language and a link to a FERPA release form where students can grant access to information for a third party (S4C3.D2). The website links to the Student Handbook, where pages 58-62 describe in detail the ways SUNY Poly ensures that educational records may only be reviewed by students upon written request from the student which identifies the document(s) they wish to review, and only school officials who have a legitimate educational interest may review student records (S4C3.D3).

Several departments on campus, such as the Accessibility Services Office, the Wellness Center, the Office of Community Standards, and Residential Life & Housing, hold student information and adhere to FERPA regulations, ensuring compliance through internal processes. Pages 13 and 14 of the Student Handbook provide information regarding the safekeeping of student information within the Accessibility Services Office. All information regarding disabilities and services being offered is kept confidential, requiring students to disclose information to third parties themselves, unless a Release of Information form is on file. The dedicated website page for the Wellness Center describes how services provided are confidential and that students must provide written consent to share any information. The link to this webpage and much of the information can also be found on page 9 of the Student Handbook.

The Office of Community Standards utilizes a third-party case management system known as Maxient for the record-keeping of the student conduct process. SUNY Poly exercises complete control over the data it stores. Maxient never shares any institutional data with any third parties or otherwise uses the data for any purpose, other than that which is specified under the service agreement. All data in a Maxient system is encrypted both in transit and at rest. At the campus level only those with explicit need to be in the system are granted access, controlled by the single sign on feature through SUNY and Microsoft to ensure identity.



The Office of Residential Life & Housing utilizes a third-party data management system called The Housing Director (THD) for billing, dining and housing management, as well as residential life record retention. SUNY Poly exercises complete control over the data THD stores. The campus dictates the inputs and exports through a data transfer process or Data Interface Module (DIM) action. All data in THD is encrypted both in transit and at rest. Access is controlled by two campus administrators, the VP for Student Affairs and the Associate Dean of Students. Access is only provided to specific staff with an educational interest or need to access the case management system and those students who serve as para-professional resident advisors.

Upon hire, employees are required to sign the Acknowledgement and Compliance Statement found on the Information Technology Services Policies page (S4C3.D4). By signing the statement, employees are acknowledging that they agree to adhere to the confidentiality requirements set by federal and state laws as well as SUNY Polytechnic Institute and will take all measures to safeguard student information that they have access to. Employees are then educated in FERPA guidelines and must sign this agreement upon hire, but there is no periodic FERPA training. SUNY Polytechnic Institute can benefit from annual FERPA training for all faculty and staff.

While the various offices around campus protect student information with FERPA and security of student information as the guiding factors, institutional data and students' digital information and activity is also protected through internal policies and procedures. SUNY Poly outlines their appropriate use of information technology policies under the Policies section of The Information Technology Services webpage (S4C3.D5). The policies apply to all users who use any of the IT systems and are established to ensure integrity and reliability of the systems, as well as to make sure that all systems are used for their intended purpose. A few of the ways that SUNY Poly ensures integrity and appropriate use of the network is by requiring unique user IDs to login to network services, requiring password changes every six months, managing personnel-access privileges which are granted in accordance with job responsibilities, making sure administration of the server is local or encrypted, limiting server access, backing up servers routinely, and updating and maintaining software, operating systems, and applications as necessary. SUNY Poly monitors the systems and network, can audit system usage, and can revoke privileges at any time. The Access to Institutional Data section of the SUNY Poly Information Technology Services webpage outlines different SUNY, State, and Federal Laws that govern SUNY Poly's policies, and which Poly must abide by to secure access and maintain data quality (S4C3.D6).

In the Fall of 2024, the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs appointed a Data Ethics Task Force to review policies and procedures as it relates to requests for data to be retrieved from Banner and deposited for access into third party systems such as Slate, housing software, Maxient and Engage. The task force will also make recommendations for policies related to this data use, who is permitted to access it, who is vetted to serve as administrator on these and similar platforms and how data remains secure in these platforms during and after staffing changes.

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C4: IF OFFERED, ATHLETIC, STUDENT LIFE, AND OTHER EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES THAT ARE REGULATED BY THE SAME ACADEMIC, FISCAL, AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES THAT GOVERN ALL OTHER PROGRAMS;

### **Athletics**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute's athletics department is committed to the student-athlete experience and continues to provide an atmosphere that is welcoming to all students who express an interest in participating on an intercollegiate team. With 13 different varsity teams, 6 men's, 6 women's, and 1 mixed team, students have an assortment of options. Being a NCAA Division III member affords SUNY Poly the ability to place the focus on the "whole" student-athlete.

Over the past few years, SUNY Poly has undergone a change in its presidency, accompanied by the appointment of a new director of athletics. This transition period naturally presented various challenges and adjustments, particularly within the athletics department, which serves as an integral component of the campus community.

The appointment of a new president brought about a period of adjustment and realignment of institutional priorities. During this transition, maintaining stability and continuity within the athletics department became a top priority. With a President of SUNY Poly who is routinely and vocally supportive of the important role of athletic and recreational experiences, the commitment to and growth of the SUNY Poly athletic program are expected and welcomed.

Following the retirement of an athletic director who served in the role for twenty years, a new athletic director was hired who remained in the role just over one year. An interim director served during the search for a new Athletic Director, who was hired in January 2024. This resulted in a period of rapid and unrealized change in the athletic department. The new athletic director will lead a period of comprehensive onboarding and re-alignment to the institution's culture, values, and strategic goals. This transition has required effective communication and collaboration between the athletics department and other administrative units to ensure alignment with the broader institutional mission.

Amidst the leadership transition, preserving the student-athlete experience remains paramount. The athletics department worked diligently to ensure that student-athletes continued to receive the support, resources, and opportunities necessary for academic and athletic success (S4C4.D1). This included ongoing academic support services, coaching continuity, and access to facilities and training programs.

Like many institutions, SUNY Poly faced financial challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The athletics department had to adapt to budgetary constraints while striving to maintain the quality and integrity of athletic programs. Strategic resource allocation and creative fundraising initiatives were implemented to mitigate financial pressures and sustain essential athletic operations. The athletic budget is supported by the student athletic fee and operates under policies and procedures for student fees set by SUNY. The budget is developed annually, reviewed by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice President for Finance and Administration. Three athletic directors in a quick succession, each

with their own style of allocation to teams and operations, have resulted in some frustration for coaches and administrative staff. Transparency and stability in budgeting offered by the athletic director will be welcomed. Most teams participate in fundraising and hosting summer camps that assist with team expenses.

As the pandemic was occurring, SUNY Poly was in the first year of joining a new athletic conference, the NAC (North Atlantic Conference). Twelve of the thirteen teams became members of this conference, with Men's Volleyball becoming a member of the NEVC (New England Volleyball Conference).

Throughout the transition, the athletics department remained committed to upholding the highest standards of compliance and governance in collegiate athletics. This included adherence to NCAA regulations, Title IX compliance, and fostering a culture of integrity, transparency, and accountability within athletic programs.

As part of the institutional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the athletics department prioritized initiatives aimed at fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all student-athletes, coaches, and staff. This included diversity training, equity-focused recruitment efforts, and initiatives to address systemic barriers to participation and advancement in athletics.

Despite the transitions and challenges outlined, SUNY Poly athletics has demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and a steadfast commitment to the institution's mission and values. Through collaborative leadership, strategic planning, and a shared dedication to excellence, athletics is confident in the ability to navigate these transitions and emerge stronger as an integral part of SUNY Polytechnic Institute.

In another sweeping change, SUNY Poly joined the Empire 8 Athletic Conference in Fall 2024. SUNY Poly sought to join the conference both for its prestige and to counter the extended travel that joining the NAC in 2020 caused for students and coaches (S4C4.D2).

### **Student Life and Extracurricular Activities**

Funding generated from the SUNY Poly "student activity fee" offers activities and services to include student-run clubs, organizations, and promotional materials. These fees are managed and allocated by the Student Association. The SUNY Polytechnic Institute Student Association is a NY not-for-profit corporation. During the two-campus structure of SUNY Polytechnic Institute, the Student Association was the umbrella corporation to three student government bodies noted in the governing documents as "Committees," The Student Government at Utica (SGU), The Undergraduate Student Government at Albany (USGA) and the Graduate Student Government at Albany (GSGA.)

All fee-paying students are eligible to participate in clubs, organizations and activities that are funded by fees collected and allocated to the Student Association. Clubs and organization activated under the committees are responsible for maintaining the following: six current students; four out of six students must fulfill an executive board position; club advisor (faculty or staff member); constitution; policies & procedures. Social programming is offered throughout the year and hosted by various campus partners, clubs, and organizations (S4C4.D3). These types of engagements offer the student body additional opportunities to embody school spirit, socialization, and campus connection.

Each committee under the Student Association was responsible for maintaining and adhering to its own bylaws. Upon separation from the CNSE Albany campus, the Student Association became umbrella to just one remaining committee, the Student Government at Utica. In the Fall of 2024, the advisor to the Student Government at Utica will explore with the executive team and their fiscal agent, Auxiliary Services Corporation, the need to revisit their constitution, bylaws and corporation with committee structure.

The Student Association utilizes Engage software to organize and manage their budgets and events. All event proposals, marketing and finances are tracked and approved by officers and advisors within Engage.

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**C5: IF APPLICABLE, ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES DESIGNED, DELIVERED, OR ASSESSED BY THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS; AND**

Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation serving as the fiscal agent to the Student Association. The Student Association is also subject to an annual audit by an external accounting firm, contracted on their behalf by the ASC.

The **ASC** is located on the campus of SUNY Poly. (S4C5.D) The ASC is contracted with SUNY Poly to provide auxiliary services such as campus dining (Wildcat Hospitality), the online bookstore, as well as laundry facilities, vending machines, ATM's, and campus IDs. The ASC's mission is to establish, operate, manage, promote, and cultivate educational activities and relationships between and among students and faculty.

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**C6: PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS SUPPORTING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE.**

SUNY Poly participates in the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) for first year students by the Higher Education Research Institute housed at UCLA. The principal purpose of CIRP is to assess the opinions and interests of first-year college students. Each fall, CIRP is presented as part of the first-year orientation program so that eligible student participation is maximized. The Director of Institutional Research presents these findings to assist faculty and staff in understanding the pre-collegiate behaviors and values of new first year students are understood and considered in teaching and programming.

SUNY Poly also participates in the SUNY wide student satisfaction survey. formerly the student opinion survey, every three years. This survey assesses student satisfaction with a wide array of student services and experiences, and benchmarks across all SUNY campuses. The campus received the most recent campus results of the SUNY Satisfaction Survey in January 2025 and will use them to review and affirm student success initiatives for the next academic year (S4C6.D1).

Compliance related programs including athletics, EOP and CSTEP did exceptionally well at continuing to meet NCAA and Research Foundation expectations for reporting, even during the pandemic.

Campus departments submit and execute annual assessment plans. The pandemic disrupted many assessment plans as programs needed to shift and resources were redirected to safety and educational platforms that were necessitated to continue to operate during COVID19. With the hire of the Director of Assessment, offices were required to re-establish and submit assessment plans to a central repository in her office, and in her role, she seeks to assist offices and programs that have not been doing assessment to begin doing so.

#### **Opportunities for Growth in Standard IV**

With the hire of Director of Assessment, individual programmatic units within Student Affairs, Enrollment Management and Student Services can continue to refine long standing surveys to ensure they assess criteria relevant to improving student success. Additionally, offices benefiting from incremental and transformation funds that grew mental health support, pantry offerings, accessibility services and interfaith space must assess their effectiveness to justify ongoing funding and associated continuation.

Fast growth of third-party software and expanding the use of existing software programs that utilize student data has decentralized protected information from the confines of the Banner student database. These new, yet important supportive technology programs allowed integration to swell more quickly than documentation, best practice and training. The Vice President for Student Affairs and Provost, in review with Directors, noted the need for consistent policy and procedure and increased oversight of data requests, and jointly established The Data Ethics Task Force in Fall of 2024. The task force will begin the important process of ensuring consistent security and protection of student information, with an early priority to establish policy and procedure related to third party software.

While Engage club and organization software is helpful, and financial oversight exists to oversee administration of student fees, student government has not been consistently advised and directed to assess student interests in programs and spending of their student fees. While Engage does provide opportunities for students to assess programs they attend, the function is not fully utilized, and there does not seem to be evidence that the Student Association as a corporation is using data or survey feedback to govern allocation of student fees or the development of new student organizations. Increased training for professional staff and faculty serving as advisors is needed. Student Involvement, under the leadership of a new Assistant Dean of Students position established in summer of 2024, will develop a model for leadership and participation that improves employability and leadership skills. It is recommended that Student Government be expected to annually assess the needs and interests of constituents as a requirement of their use of student activities fees.

As mentioned, SUNY Poly needs to re-imagine and establish proactive and responsive academic advisement, centered in programs and colleges. Students depend on full time faculty with deep knowledge of their academic programs to ensure their timely graduation and need faculty direction and guidance in meeting educational goals and professional growth and recommendations. This priority is central to elevating the student experience as outlined in the Strategic Plan and calls for development of strong professional advisement in Student Academic Success, as well as excellence in academic advisement provided by full time faculty.

With the First Year Seminar program revamped and now steadied for a consistent execution and evaluation, it is an appropriate time to evaluate and consider options to improve all forms of Orientation including; first time first year students, transfer, online transfer, and graduate programs. Focus groups with current students to continue to evaluate the balance between ensuring students receive all of the content they need to be successful and avoiding a feeling for participants that program feels too lengthy is needed. There were also comments in the orientation surveys that reflected students' impressions that orientation was not executed as well as it could have been, which is not surprising considering the Director role in Student Involvement was vacant and the programs largely managed by one person. To maximize the attention needed for SUNY Poly Orientation programs, in the Fall of 2024 Orientation was shifted out of the Student Involvement into the program responsibilities of the Associate Dean of Students. The Associate Dean will continue to have the support of the Director of Student Involvement, the Assistant Dean of Student Involvement and the Assistant Director of the First Year Residential Experience, as all three of these positions are assigned Orientation responsibilities in their performance programs. This expands SUNY Poly's dedicated professional orientation staff to four, the largest ever, demonstrating Student Affairs commitment to refining Orientation programs into the most effective formats and content possible.

The continued emphasis on growth in online learning requires that student services, advisement, orientation, and support grow in the online environment. In the process of conducting this self-study, it was evident that offices desire to continue online practices established during COVID that the online population still desire to access and enthusiasm to develop further best practices in support services for fully online students. Currently, there are no staff dedicated to online learning support services, which requires a skilled focus and unique view of the experience of fully online learners. SUNY Poly is facing immediate need to expand staff, particularly in enrollment management, student affairs and advisement who serve online learners. Professionals hired in these roles should be equipped with knowledge and training regarding the unique needs of online learners, have access software that creates excellent online platforms and who can be immediately responsive to online students within their educational platforms and portals.

# STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT DEMONSTRATES THAT THE INSTITUTION'S STUDENTS HAVE ACCOMPLISHED EDUCATIONAL GOALS CONSISTENT WITH THEIR PROGRAM OF STUDY, DEGREE LEVEL, THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION, AND APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

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C1: CLEARLY STATED EDUCATIONAL GOALS AT THE INSTITUTION AND DEGREE/PROGRAM LEVELS, WHICH ARE INTERRELATED WITH ONE ANOTHER, WITH RELEVANT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES, AND WITH THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION;

The SUNY Poly Mission states, "SUNY Polytechnic Institute is a welcoming, inclusive place where all students, faculty, and staff are inspired by a distinctive STEAM education and social experience that prepares our graduates for the 21st century workforce and beyond. SUNY Poly applies science, technology, and innovation throughout its curriculum and is deeply committed to offering solutions to society's grand challenges and improving the health and well-being of communities in the Mohawk Valley and around the globe."

Pillar 4, Academic Excellence, of the Strategic Plan notes, "SUNY Poly will elevate the impact of our faculty research and scholarship, the quality of our programs, and the achievements of our students. Investment in our core programs, people, and pedagogy will enable the growth of our cutting-edge, multidisciplinary initiatives in research and education."

These goals from both the mission statement and Pillar 4 are reflected in the range of academic programs, degrees and minors offered at SUNY Poly and that are detailed in both the undergraduate and graduate catalogs (S5C1.D2-S5C1.D36), (S5C1.D37-S5C1.54), respectively. Specifically, the "About SUNY Poly" statement within the 2024 undergraduate catalog states, "SUNY Polytechnic Institute, New York's premier public polytechnic, provides an innovative and affordable higher education for students interested in science, engineering, technology, business, healthcare, and other liberal arts offerings for a well-rounded approach to experiential learning. Our commitment to a hands-on education situates students with both the academic structure customary of undergraduate study and unique opportunities for training and cutting-edge research, ultimately providing learners an unmatched education targeted for success in our fast-changing world. SUNY Poly students enjoy public school tuition with benefits that many small private institutions boast, including small class sizes, individualized learning experiences, and a tight-knit community."



A review of the academic programs and degree descriptions within the four colleges — College of Business, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Engineering and College of Health Sciences — shows a broad portfolio of opportunities for students to have an educational experience with hands-on laboratory and experiential learning opportunities that align with careers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce.

These criteria encompass course and program assessment to ensure the alignment with educational goals and institutional mission. This closely ties to the criteria of Standard V. At SUNY Polytechnic Institute, course and program assessments are structured to ensure alignment with the institution's educational goals and mission. One key element is the focus on learning outcomes, which are defined and assessed at both the course and program levels which overlaps with (S5C2). Faculty are required to specify measurable learning outcomes for each course, which are linked to broader program outcomes (S5C2.D93 through S5C2.D98 for mappings within all colleges and programs, supporting documents S5C4.D1 through S5C4.D3 for specific program example). These program outcomes reflect the institution's mission and are regularly reviewed to ensure they support the goals and mission (S5C2.D1-S5C2.68) for yearly program assessment reports, course assessments within S5C2.D69-S5C2.D92, and S5C3.D1-S5C3.D24 for industrial advisory board meeting minutes and related documents). This ensures that the educational goals at the program levels are aligned with the institution's mission to help satisfy (S5C1) and (S5C2).

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## C2: ORGANIZED AND SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENTS, CONDUCTED BY FACULTY AND/OR APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONALS, EVALUATING THE EXTENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL AND DEGREE/PROGRAM GOALS.

SUNY Polytechnic prioritizes assessment for continuous improvement in each college. In addition to the guidelines set by regional accreditation, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the various colleges have accrediting bodies directly related to their fields of study, including AACSB, ABET, CAHIM, and CCNE. Program assessment plans are followed within the colleges, guided by their learning objectives and assessment plans.

**The College of Arts and Sciences**, which offers majors such as biology, interactive media and game design, mathematics, psychology, and sociology, follows the SUNY General Education Framework, along with the General Education Learning outcomes, which mirrors the framework mandated by SUNY. The current framework can be linked to the SUNY General Education Framework from the evidence (S5C2.D100) in which the Pre-Fall 2023 framework can also be found for reference. In addition, there is a template that program coordinators are completing for their Competencies SLOs mappings to the programs as well (S5C2.D101). Academic programs outside of general education follow guidelines set by regional accreditation, Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

**The College of Business**, accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), provides competency goals and learning objectives, directly tied to required courses for their undergraduate and graduate programs. This incorporates curriculum mappings for each major, undergraduate and graduate, which demonstrates how learning objectives are implemented without



courses even outside of those that are directly measured within the academic assessment plan (S5C2.D3-S5C2.D6). The majors included are the undergraduate Accounting, Finance and Business programs, with curriculum mapping to individual courses as direct measures for assessment, as well as the Masters of Business Administration in Technology Management and the Masters of Science in Accounting, with individual curriculum mapping for each graduate program, tied to individual courses as direct measures for assessment. The College of Business has a standardized benchmark system which includes the scoring, as well as performance interpretation ranging from unacceptable, needs remediation, acceptable, very good to exemplary. Close the loop meetings are held to analyze the assessment results and plans.

**The College of Engineering**, accredited by the EAC/ABET, include the following programs: Civil engineering, electrical & computer engineering, and mechanical engineering, civil engineering technology, mechanical engineering technology and electrical and computer engineering technology. As an example of the electrical and computer engineering (ECE) program follows their student outcomes, along with curriculum mappings for the outcomes within the required program courses mapped to the student outcomes (S5C2.D102) The civil engineering technology program has for example their Fall 2023 semester report which includes student learning outcomes for individual programs and the matrix that show the relationship between the student outcomes to program educational objectives and the course map to student outcomes of the required courses, including communication, math and science and engineering technology (S5C2.D29) The computer science (CS) program follows an assessment plan, with detailed assessment by course, including student outcomes within the CS program and detailed information on course mappings with the method of assessment within the individual courses, as well as course outcomes (S5C2.D36-S5C2.D39 & S5C2.D111). The Department of Cybersecurity follows program learning outcomes (PLOs) with set course and activities tied to the learning outcomes.

**The College of Health Sciences'** educational programs in health information management are accredited by the commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIM), the bachelor's degree programs in nursing are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The community and behavioral health (CBH) program provide learning objectives, with course mappings for each learning objective, as well as program goals and curriculum mappings for their - CBH program (S5C2.D3). The undergraduate nursing curriculum presents program student learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, which relate to AACN essentials and overall assessment methods, tied to courses within the program, presented in the undergraduate Nursing Curriculum Map (S5C2.D96). The MS in Nursing program provides a curriculum map at the program level, including nursing framework constructs, professional standards # and domain # competency, interpretive concepts for constructs/standards/domains, program learning outcomes, course outcomes and activity (S5C2.D97). The DNP-PMHNP program follows the AACN Essential CODE of Ethics Provisions, aligning this with PMHNP competencies, student learning program outcomes, tied to the courses and learning assessment activity (S5C2.D99).

This Criterion also speaks to preparation of students in a manner consistent with the SUNY Poly mission statement. Within Pillar 1 of the Strategic Plan (S5C1.D1) the Student Experience includes the following

priority, “Demonstrate our compassion, understanding, and cultural humility, as we strive to be a community that is fully committed to accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.” The advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice (DEISJ) within academic programs, in alignment with institutional mission and priorities includes compliance with SUNY GER/GE requirements, transition documents, and the campus strategic plan.

To foster a DEISJ environment the institution appointed a Chief Diversity Officer in June 2020, who has since been promoted to VP for Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging. The decision to hire a Chief Diversity Officer reflects SUNY Poly's recognition of the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education and its commitment to creating a campus culture where all individuals feel valued, respected, and supported. The campus has recently unveiled a strategic plan with four pillars, the first emphasizing student success (S5C1.D1). Adhering to SUNY guidelines, the campus transitioned to General Education (GE), mandating two undergraduate DEISJ courses for each student.

The SUNY Board of Trustees has undertaken significant initiatives to integrate DEISJ (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Social Justice) courses into the curriculum across SUNY. These efforts reflect a commitment to providing students with a comprehensive education that addresses critical issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. In November 2021, it is relation established the need of an updated SUNY general education framework (S5C2.D103). In December 2022, SUNY Poly established the general education committee on campus to make the transition happen from GER to GE (S5C2.D104). The GE committee consisted of members from colleges of arts and sciences, nanoscience and engineering, business, engineering, health sciences, and chair of academic quality committee campuses (S5C2.D104). The GE committee met four times to finalize the process and developed an outline to incorporate the new changes (S5C2.D105-S5C2.D108). The committee reported back to faculty assembly in May 2023 (S5C2.D109). By integrating these important topics into academic programs and supporting faculty and student engagement, SUNY Poly is advancing its mission of providing accessible, high-quality education that promotes social responsibility and equity.

SUNY Poly prides itself on its inclusive community of faculty and students. According to Fall 2023 data, the percent of international faculty was 22%, compared to just 7% in 2016. This evident increase over the span of 7 years underscores the institution's commitment to fostering a diverse faculty, nearly tripling its international faculty population (S5C2.D110).

In line with this trend, the student body has also seen notable improvements in diversity. In Fall 2016, the student population was predominantly Caucasian, constituting 74.9%, with minorities making up 19.5%. By Fall 2023, these proportions shifted to 62.9% for Caucasian students and 30.3% for minorities, showcasing a considerable increase in minority enrollment over the 7-year period (S5C2.D110). This upward trajectory, surpassing the 10% mark, reflects the campus's proactive efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion within its student body.

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### C3: ORGANIZED AND SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENTS, CONDUCTED BY FACULTY AND/OR APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONALS, EVALUATING THE EXTENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL AND DEGREE/PROGRAM GOALS.

This criterion includes the use of assessment to improve both the quality and effectiveness of our educational programs. This was demonstrated in each of our colleges by aligning our academic programs with learning outcomes and assessment plans. The continuous improvement plan includes reviewing and updating on a regular basis to ensure course and program assessment aligns with educational goals and institutional mission as shown in criteria 1 and 3.

In addition, faculty curriculum committees play a significant role in reviewing course and program proposals to ensure they meet educational objectives and align with the institution's mission. Any new program or significant program change is also subject to approval at the SUNY system level, which further ensures alignment with state-level educational priorities.

Depending on the disciplines, the various colleges have accrediting bodies directly related to their fields of study, including AACSB, ABET, CAHIM, and CCNE, which adds another layer of oversight. These agencies require that programs meet rigorous standards, including demonstrating that they continuously assess and improve based on student performance and outcomes. The Institutional Research and Assessment Office at SUNY Poly gathers and analyzes data on student learning and program performance, ensuring that assessment results are used to guide decision making and improve educational outcomes at all levels. In general, programs undergo a formal periodic program review (S5C2.D1-S5C2.D68), typically every five to seven years, following their accreditation cycles to evaluate their effectiveness and alignment with institutional goals aligning with (S5C3). These reviews include input from external reviewers who provide objective assessments.

Student feedback is an important part of the assessment process, with course evaluations providing insight into instructional effectiveness and course content. Additionally, alumni and employer surveys help assess how well programs are preparing students for professional success, ensuring alignment with both career and educational goals. Finally, all assessment efforts are integrated with SUNY Poly's strategic plan, ensuring that the courses and programs contribute to the institution's mission. These procedures create a feedback loop that continuously improves educational quality and maintains strong alignment with the institution's mission and goals.

This criterion connects educational effectiveness and resource allocations as well as how resource allocations impact educational quality and effectiveness. Resource allocation is dependent on the budget process at SUNY Poly. SUNY Poly is part of the SUNY system and generates revenue funds through tuition, as well as receiving funding as direct state aid administered through SUNY. Each year the campus is responsible for developing a budget based on the estimated revenue and commitment of direct state aid. This budget is developed through the process of issuing a call letter to the appropriate Vice President/Provost of each area, who then works with programs, departments, and colleges to develop a request appropriate for their respective areas. The respective colleges, through the Deans,

work with the individual academic programs to determine allocation needs as determined through the assessment of educational effectiveness. These annual activities are in support of (S5C3) as assessment activities and educational effectiveness are connected to the planning and budgeting for the academic programs. Historically, assessment results have informed resource allocation in some key areas at SUNY Poly. The hiring of additional staff within Career Services (S5C3.D25), a new Student Success Librarian (S5C3.D26), and an increase in the number of scholarships through the Development Office (S5C3.D27) are all the result of assessment analysis within the departments. In academic programs, the applied mathematics program reported hiring four new faculty members in support of its work (S5C3.D28). The same is true of the family nurse practitioner program (S5C3.D29). Assessment has been utilized to support additional equipment and support staff in the civil engineering technology (S5C2.D29). The computer science program identified a need for additional lecturers as well as updated laboratory spaces, which SUNY Poly administration supported for continuous improvement (S5C3.D37-S5C2.D39). Organized and systematic assessments include the consideration of how learning outcomes are decided, and by what means these outcomes are assessed. The evidence includes undergraduate and graduate catalogs (past and present) (S5C1.D2-S5C1.D36, S5C1.D37-S5C2.D54), advisory board meeting minutes S5C3.D1-S5C3.D24, and departmental/program/course assessment documents S5C2.D1-S5C2.68 & S5C2.D69-S5C2.D92.)

Within (S5C3), improvement of pedagogy and curriculum as well as developing learning outcomes are realized in conjunction with each program of study. New programs and changes to existing programs start from each department and propagate through an approval process of the appropriate dean, relevant committees (to wit: curriculum committee or graduate council), the provost, and (in the case of new programs) SUNY and NY State Board of Education. The history of catalogs (S5C1.D2-S5C1.D36, S5C1.D37-S5C2.D54) documents the progress and development of the many programs offered here at SUNY Polytechnic.

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#### C4: IF APPLICABLE, ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ASSESSMENT SERVICES DESIGNED, DELIVERED, OR ASSESSED BY THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

One major source of changes in programs and learning outcomes is course and program assessment. Departments regularly conduct course level and program level assessments and discuss the results to see if changes are necessary. As indicated by the catalogs programs have evolved in ways that are reasonable and address specific needs and issues as they occur. Learning outcomes and course mappings are officially or unofficially based on pre-existing standards and organizations (e.g., ABET) (S4C4.D1-S4C4.D4). SUNY Poly does not use third party assessment services.

An assessment challenge is programmatic variation in approach and documentation methods. Different programs will record their findings in varying ways. Our digital storage systems switched from a Google to Microsoft ecosystem over the past few years, so keeping a consistent centralized storage for assessment documents has proved challenging. However, SUNY Poly is fortunate to have a new

Coordinator of Assessment & Student Learning Outcomes as of Spring of 2024, and this has helped solidify and centralize our continuing assessment efforts.

A second major source of modifications is through advisory board meetings. These consists of alumni, academics, and/or industry professionals in the appropriate fields, and allows for departments to garner feedback from outside the university on the effectiveness of our current methods and possible future directions to pursue. Consequently, many departments have advisory boards for their programs to ensure that their respective degrees and courses address the needs of their constituents in both industry and academic arenas. While not all departments and programs have advisory boards yet, many of those that do not have immediate plans to start or restart one.

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#### C5: PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES UTILIZED BY THE INSTITUTION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute demonstrates a commitment to the periodic evaluation of its assessment processes to enhance educational effectiveness. This is evidenced by the implementation of standardized assessment tools, alignment with student learning outcomes, regular data collection and analysis, active faculty and staff involvement, and external review and accreditation processes. Key documentation includes a 2022 motion to establish a General Education Committee and the SUNY General Education Faculty Curricular Review Process (S5C5.D1), along with General Education Committee meeting minutes (S5C5.D2, S5C5.D3, S5C5.D4, S5C5.D5), annual reviews of General Education courses (S5C5.D6 -S5C5.D8), and Faculty Senate Academic Quality Committee meeting minutes (S5C5.D9 – D24). Together, these materials show an ongoing, systematic approach to evaluating and improving assessment practices, ensuring alignment with institutional goals for continuous improvement.

The SUNY Poly General Education Committee — established in late 2022 — provides centralized oversight of regular assessment cycles, ensuring systematic data collection, analysis, and application across all programs. By promoting interdisciplinary faculty collaboration, the committee supports a comprehensive and inclusive assessment process, leading to well-informed improvements in student learning and curriculum development. Additionally, the committee aligns general education outcomes with broader institutional goals, and its documented discussions and decisions offer concrete evidence for accreditation purposes. This structured approach is essential in demonstrating that assessments at SUNY Poly are ongoing, systematic, and aimed at continuous improvement.

SUNY Poly General Education Committee meeting minutes (S5C5.D2, S5C5.D3, S5C5.D4, S5C5.D5) play a key role in reinforcing Criterion #5 of Standard V by providing concrete evidence that assessment is systematic across general education. Meeting minutes from the General Education Committee are a key tool for documenting and demonstrating how assessment activities are conducted systematically, how decisions are made based on data, and how the institution is continuously improving educational effectiveness. More specifically, the minutes serve as a formal record of discussions on assessment

activities, help track the progress of assessment cycles, capture specific decisions made based on assessment results, show that the assessment process is collaborative, provide a recorded history of the institution's efforts to use assessment data for continuous improvement, and reflect how the general education assessment aligns with broader institutional learning goals.

Annual General Education course reviews at SUNY Poly are critical in supporting Criterion #5 of Standard 5 (S5C5.D6 & S5C5.D7) because they ensure that the assessment of general education outcomes is systematic, regular, and data driven. These reviews provide an organized opportunity to evaluate how well courses are meeting established learning outcomes, allowing faculty to analyze assessment data and identify areas for improvement. By conducting these reviews annually, SUNY Poly initiates a continuous feedback loop where changes can be made in response to assessment results, demonstrating the use of data to enhance teaching and learning. This process also promotes accountability, ensuring that general education courses remain aligned with institutional goals and accreditation standards.

The SUNY Poly Faculty Assembly Academic Quality Committee meeting minutes (S5C5.D9 – D24) provide documented evidence of a periodic review of the effectiveness of assessment processes. These minutes detail systematic, data-driven evaluations of academic programs, showing that faculty regularly analyze assessment data, review program effectiveness, and make recommendations for teaching and learning improvements. By capturing these discussions, the minutes illustrate how assessment results inform decisions and foster academic quality. Additionally, this documentation enhances transparency by demonstrating alignment among assessment practices, institutional goals, and standards, emphasizing SUNY Poly's commitment to periodic evaluation of assessment processes.

Standardization of assessment language and practices as they apply to SUNY Poly can be accessed via the SUNY Polytechnic Assessment Handbook (S5C5.D25). This document, created for the fall 2024 semester, is reviewed annually by the Academic Quality Committee and the forthcoming assessment committee for accuracy, best practices, and consistency. This document endeavors to unify and codify the common language of assessment as it is used on the SUNY Poly campus and provides resources to faculty and staff in the design and execution of their assessment strategies; it is also expected to grow over time as a result of soliciting feedback from the college community to continue to act as a reflection of the importance of effective, consistent assessment at SUNY Poly. Templates for academic course (S5C5.D28 and S5C5.D29) and program level assessment (S5C5.D26 and S5C5.D27) as well as non-academic support units (S5C5.D30 and S5C5.D31) are included in the handbook and are available to faculty and staff.

## **Conclusions**

SUNY Poly is committed to rigorous academic standards and continuous improvement within its academic programs. This is evidenced within the mission statement and in Pillar 4 of the strategic plan. The variety of programs, courses, and degree offerings are testament to SUNY Poly's commitment to preparing students for a rigorous 21<sup>st</sup>-century workforce. Faculty-driven assessment with institutional support assures continuous improvement and alignment to the institution's educational goals and

missions. Course- and program-level student learning objectives are aligned to curriculum maps, institutional, and national accrediting standards (including ABET, CAHIIM, CCNE, and AACSB) as applicable. Educational efficacy is periodically reviewed at the programmatic- and course-level with faculty and staff demonstrating a commitment to a professional collaborative education community that is focused on values driven, data supported best practices.

### **Recommendations**

- Update the assessment website to reflect current rubrics, documents, calendars, links, committees, and language. This update is expected to occur as part of the overall website redesign.
- Formally establish the SUNY Poly Assessment Committee in collaboration with the Academic Quality Committee.



# STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

THE INSTITUTION'S PLANNING PROCESSES, RESOURCES, AND STRUCTURES ARE ALIGNED WITH EACH OTHER AND ARE SUFFICIENT TO FULFILL ITS MISSION AND GOALS, TO CONTINUOUSLY ASSESS AND IMPROVE ITS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, AND TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES.

## **Overview**

Standard VI highlights that SUNY Polytechnic has well-organized plans, resources, and structures that all work together to help achieve its mission and goals. This means the institution regularly evaluates its programs and services, makes improvements based on what it learns, and adjusts to new challenges or opportunities. The goals set at both the institutional and departmental levels are clear, regularly measured, and directly tied to the overall mission. The results from these evaluations are used to make informed decisions, ensuring that SUNY Polytechnic continues to grow and succeed in achieving its objectives. These fundamental processes and budgeting guidelines further the institution's elevation to be New York's Premier Public Polytechnic. SUNY Poly's recent accolades include several top ranked programs, world renowned research by both faculty and students, and its continued ability to leverage our financial resources to further expand opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff.

C1. Institutional objectives, both institution wide and for individual units, that are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation. SUNY Polytechnic has successfully navigated many challenges over the last eight years including the December 2022 resolution by the SUNY Board of Trustees directing the reintegration of the College of Nanoscale Engineering (CNSE) into the University at Albany (UAlbany). SUNY Poly was further "authorized and directed to begin the process of creating a robust strategic plan along with local stakeholders strengthening the future of SUNY Poly Utica as the premier public Polytechnic school in the state and nation without CNSE under its administrative authority, including a consideration to partner with all levels of educational institutions and economic development partners..." (S6C1.D1).

This change in mission and goals gave SUNY Poly the opportunity to focus on building objectives that are clearly linked to the new mission and goals, as well as the elements of the Strategic Plan that was developed from 2023-2024. This has resulted in resource allocation that is closely linked to overall planning and mission.

Each unit now has its own statement of purpose indicating its primary area of responsibility and objectives on its web page. Budgetary allocation requests from each unit are required to link their



requests to mission and goal achievement (S6C1.D2), and new line items, must indicate which pillar of the strategic plan is being supported with the request and what the results are expected to be. SUNY Poly created a full-time Coordinator of Institutional Assessment in 2023 and hired into the position in 2024; that person spent their first year working with academic units on assessment and will be spending the next year working with the non-academic units on coordinated assessment plans.

One example of resource allocation following institutional objectives is the expansion of the Student Academic Success (SAS) office to increase first-year retention (S6C1.D3). In summer 2023, the director of the SAS left for another job opportunity. At the time, first-year students were given pre-made schedules for their first semester by the SAS office, but were then transferred completely to faculty academic advisors for their second semester registration. The new director proposed a new framework for advisement that would combine faculty advising with longer-term professional advising and wraparound services to be more holistic and proactive. This proposal was supported by the President and Provost to contribute to the institutional goal of increasing first year retention rates. Two outcomes came from the proposal. One was to support the hire of two professional student success advisors for the SAS office, and the other was to opt into the SUNY system ACE program specific for retention of at-risk students, which required the hire of a director and counselor (S6C1.D4). The ACE program is nearing the end of its first year and will be assessed at that time; one success advisor was hired in December 2024 and the second will be hired in June 2025.

A non-academic example of resources following objectives is the creation of the position of Case Manager for the Care Team. One of SUNY Poly's priorities is retention and persistence of students, and the campus Care Team assists students who are in crisis situations that could cause them to fail or drop out of their courses. Operation of the Care team was a function of the Assistant VP of Student Affairs, but the case load became larger and more complex over time. The number of active cases grew to the point that the group had to almost double their meeting time per week; this was both because of an increase in number of students needing support and because students needed longer-term support than in previous years. It also took up a disproportionate amount of time for the Assistant VP to follow up on all cases. The Student Affairs Office requested a full-time Case Manager based on the number of students served, the length of time students remained as active cases, and the positive results that had come from the team interventions; the position was advertised and filled in 2022. The caseload has been able to increase due to the presence of the Case Manager (S6C1.D5), and assessment is currently underway to compare all aspects of Care Team support compared to what was provided by the team prior to the manager position.

Academic units at SUNY Poly are divided into four colleges, which each have their own budgets and goals. The programs in each college are listed in the following table.

College	Programs
Arts and Sciences	Biology, Mathematics, Psychology, Sociology, Communications and Media Design, Interactive Media and Game Design, Information Design and Technology, Data Science and Analytics
Business	Accounting, Business Administration Finance, Technology Management
Health Sciences	Community & Behavioral Health  Health Informatics, Health Information Management, Nursing Education  Nursing, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner
Engineering	Computer Science, Information Systems, Applied Computing, Cybersecurity  Civil Engineering, Civil Engineering Technology  Electrical Engineering Technology, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering

New academic programs are created after a careful planning process that examines student demand, faculty resources, and mission fit. Program proposals originate in the appropriate academic department, and are reviewed by the appropriate Dean, the Provost, the appropriate faculty governance committees (the Curriculum Committee for undergraduate programs, the Graduate Council for graduate programs, both the Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Council for joint baccalaureate/master's programs) and the Planning and Budgeting Committee. Proposals for graduate programs are also considered by external reviewers selected in consultation with System Administration and the State Education Department. All program proposals are subsequently reviewed by the SUNY Provost's Office and by the New York State Education Department. Approval of programs in totally new areas, or award of a degree for which SUNY Poly does not yet have authorization, involves a master plan

amendment which must be approved by the SUNY Board of Trustees and by the State Education Department Board of Regents. The multiple levels of review ensure programmatic integrity and quality, sufficient institutional resources, and fit with the institutional mission.

In addition to new academic programs, significant revision to existing programs, and program discontinuance also must be reviewed and approved by the New York State Education Department. Proposals for program revision follow the same approval process used for new programs. Regular program reviews and subsequent proposals for new programs and program revisions, and decisions to discontinue programs ensure that academic programs remain current and congruent with the institution's mission. Since 2018 the following new programs and program revisions have been approved by the New York State Education Department and appear in NYSED's Inventory of Registered Programs, as shown below:

Program Title	Award	Last NYSED Action Date
Accountancy	MS	4/2023
Accounting	BS	7/2020
Accounting	MS	10/2022
Advanced Technology	MS	8/2022
Business Administration	BS	4/2020
Communication & Info Design	BS	11/2021
Comm Info Design/Info Des Tech	BS/MS	10/2022
Comm Media Design	BS	11/2021
Computer Science	BS	10/2022
Computer Science	MS	10/2022
Computer Science	BS/MS	10/2022
Data Science & Analytics	MS	2/2023
Finance	BS	10/2021
Forensic Accounting	Adv Cert	10/2019
Health Informatics	MS/BS	4/2023
Health Informatics	MS	2/2021
Information Design Tech	MS	10/2022
Nursing	BS	4/2018
Nursing Education	Adv Cert	4/2018

Nursing Education	MS	4/2018
Psychiatric Mental Health NP	DNP	10/2020
Psychology	BA	1/2020
Transformational Leadership Nursing	Adv Cert	7/2020 Discontinued
Transformational Leadership Nursing	MS	7/2020 Discontinued

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## C2: CLEARLY DOCUMENTED AND COMMUNICATED PLANNING AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES THAT PROVIDE FOR CONSTITUENT PARTICIPATION, AND INCORPORATE THE USE OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS.

Part of the December 2022 SUNY Board of Trustees resolution directed SUNY Poly to: “begin the process of creating a robust strategic plan along with local stakeholders strengthening the future of SUNY Poly Utica as the premier public Polytech school in the state and nation.” We began that initiative by establishing a Strategic Plan Steering Committee. We then engaged the entire campus community – students, faculty, and staff – as well as a number of our valued community partners, in the process of identifying our institutional priorities and the paths to achieve them. In February 2023, SUNY Poly held community co-design days that featured workshops designed to elicit feedback to enable us to assess community values, strategic priorities, and specific objectives to be reflected in the Strategic plan. The Steering Committee then synthesized the input received and created a first draft of the strategic plan. This draft was shared with SUNY and elected officials. Once approved by the SUNY Chancellor, it was ready for our newly hired President.

Once our new President was hired, the inclusive strategic plan process continued. The strategic plan was drafted around four pillars (S6C2.D1): Pillar 1: Support Our Students and Their Success; Pillar 2: Grow Our Brand and External Partnerships; Pillar 3: Improve Our Campus Infrastructure; Pillar 4: Invest in Academic Excellence. An implementation Team consisting of eight individuals was created for each pillar. The implementation teams began monthly meetings in September 2024. At each meeting, the implementation teams review action items from the last meeting, review tactics and key issues, assign accountability for tasks and follow up conversations. There are half-day quarterly planning meetings that consist of the steering committee, and all four pillar implementation teams. At the quarterly meeting, each pillar reports out to the group. The report includes reviewing their action items, review goals and objectives and any concerns or challenges, and determine if funding or management attention needs to be allocated to initiatives. So, throughout the whole strategic plan, all constituents of the institution, faculty, staff, students, and community members are involved in developing and implementing the strategic plan. Each quarter, the plan and the pillar objects are assessed and changed as needed.

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C3: A FINANCIAL PLANNING AND BUDGETING PROCESS THAT IS ALIGNED WITH THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION AND GOALS, EVIDENCE-BASED, AND CLEARLY LINKED TO THE INSTITUTIONS AND UNITS' STRATEGIC PLANS/OBJECTIVES.

### **Fiscal Resources**

As a state-operated campus, SUNY Poly has several different revenue sources that each have specific regulations on spending, and funds are not generally transferrable between accounts. This sets strict parameters on many aspects of budget planning. Sources include primarily state and SUNY appropriations, but also other fees such as services, grant activity, and donations. The funding sources are listed below.

#### **SUNY Revenue Offset Fund**

Appropriated direct state tax support is provided as a transfer from the State's General Fund to the SUNY Revenue Offset Fund. The SUNY Revenue Offset Fund supports the core instructional mission of the campus. The SUNY revenue offset fund includes all direct state tax transfers, tuition revenue, Other University Income (Pooled Offset Collections), Interest, the College Fee (paid by students), and miscellaneous other revenue items and adjustments.

#### **General Income Fund Reimbursable (General IFR)**

Supported by revenues generated for services provided by the campus, such as student fees, conferences, training, facilities rentals, and certain cost recoveries from sponsored grants and activity.

#### **State University Tuition Reimbursable Account (SUTRA)**

Supported by tuition revenue collected from summer session, contract courses, overseas academic programs, and tuition revenue beyond that allocated for in the core operations budget.

#### **Stabilization Fund**

Supported by unspent prior year Core Instructional revenues.

#### **Dormitory Income Fund Reimbursable (DIFR)**

Supported by room rental fees and charges.

### **Capital Projects**

Supported by annual appropriations in the Capital Budget and funded by bond proceeds.

### **Sponsored Programs**

Research, public service, and training activities funded from a variety of external sources and administered by The Research Foundation of the State of New York.

### **SUNY Polytechnic Institute Foundation**

Funded by endowments, gifts, and annual giving.

### **SUNY Polytechnic Institute Auxiliary Services Corporation**

Provides campus services, such as food service, bookstore services, scholarships, and campus support. They are funded by payment for services and purchases.

### **SUNY Budget Development**

Development of SUNY's budget is an inclusive process involving the SUNY Board of Trustees, the Chancellor, System Administration and input from the campuses through conversations with campus Presidents, as well as budgeting tools such as Revenue Projections, Financial Plan, Form 1, and Financial Management Strategies (FMS).

### **SUNY Budget**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is a state-operated institution within the State University of New York's system. The primary source of revenue is direct state tax support for operations; indirect state tax support for fringe benefits, debt service, and limited other items; student revenue from tuition, fees, and dormitory operations. Tuition rates are set by the SUNY Board of Trustees. Appropriation authority, passed in annual budget bills, are required for all spending activities. All transactions are processed by the New York State Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Employees are NYS employees and salary agreements are negotiated by the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) and require Legislative approval.

Fiscal Year 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 together represent the largest 2-year infusion of Direct State Tax Support in SUNY in at least five decades. The 2023-2024 New York State enacted budget invested \$163 million in SUNY campuses. The 2024-2025 New York State enacted budget invested an additional \$114 million.

The 2023-2024 SUNY budget resulted in double-digit percentage increase in Direct State Tax support at every State-Operated campus. \$10 million was invested toward mental health services, \$10 million in support for students with disabilities, \$10 million to enhance student internship experiences, \$10 million toward expanding research, \$1 million to help address food insecurity, and \$3 million toward reducing mandatory fees for graduate student workers. Of these amounts, SUNY Poly received \$1,281K in additional operating aid, \$250K for mental health services, \$250K to support students with disabilities, \$135K to enhance student internship experiences, \$2.7 million to expand research, \$18K to address food

insecurity, and \$16K to help reduce mandatory fees for graduate student workers. SUNY Poly also received \$930K of one-time funding to support increasing retention and completion of degree-seeking students through replication of the Accelerate Complete and Engage (ACE) evidence-based strategies, and support of seamless transfer pathways. SUNY Poly received \$750K for ACE and \$180K for seamless transfer.

The 2024-2025 SUNY budget maintained the 2023-2024 investments. In addition, \$102 million was invested to support SUNY faculty and was earmarked to go toward faculty salary costs, \$4.5 million was added to the funding to provide more student internship experiences, \$4 million to expand research, and \$3 million to reduce mandatory fees for graduate student workers. Of these amounts, SUNY Poly received \$919K to support faculty salaries, \$578K to expand research, and \$100K to provide more internship experiences.

### **SUNY Poly Budget Process**

The complete budget process is included in the SUNY Polytechnic Institute Operating Budget Process Manual (S6C3.D1). The budget process at the Institution commences January 1 with a call letter from the Assistant Vice President for Finance that is sent to all Vice Presidents at the Institution asking them to prepare a budget request for the up-coming fiscal year. The call letter includes a five-year history of budget allocations and expenditure totals, as well as information regarding the Institutions goals and objectives for the coming year. The call letter also requests information regarding any new potential employee positions or current employee promotions for the year.

The Vice Presidents, working collectively with their departments, are asked to fill in the budget worksheets indicating amounts needed for specific objects of expenditures, like temporary service, supplies, contractual service, travel, and equipment. In addition to the form, the Vice Presidents are asked for narratives that provide information explaining needs and priorities, extraordinary items and linkages to the Institution's Strategic plan. As appropriate, they describe how their spending priorities support the Institution's instructional and student service programs. In June or July each year, SUNY Poly receives the financial Plan for that fiscal year from SUNY System Administration (S6C3.D2). This document gives the institution the dollar amounts for their budget and the guidelines for utilizing the funds and how to report them to SUNY System Administration.

Beginning with the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget process, there will also be a form that departments can complete to request funding for any initiatives they have that would help the institution advance the strategic plan. Those requests will then be evaluated, and awards will be made based on available funds.

### **SUNY Poly Revenues**

As discussed earlier, operating revenues come from direct state tax support, tuition, fees, and dormitory operations. The table below shows the total revenue receipts for 2017-2018 through 2023-2024. SUNY

Poly revenues leveled off at \$40M in 2020-2021 after two years of decline. In 2023-24, SUNY Poly had an increase of \$4M over the prior year.

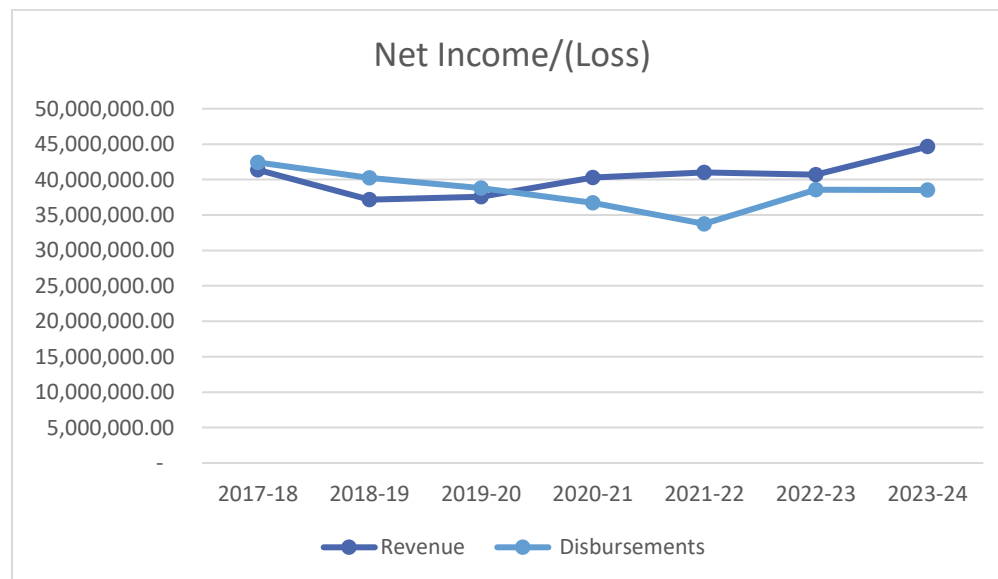
<b>Total Revenue Receipts (Academic Enterprise &amp; Residence Halls)</b>							
Major Receipt Group	Amount 2017-18	Amount 2018-19	Amount 2019-20	Amount 2020-21	Amount 2021-22	Amount 2022-23	Amount 2023-24
Tuition	18,238,509.50	22,553,727.83	19,490,360.49	21,604,376.64	20,603,164.68	21,412,289.46	20,873,339.61
Fees/Deposits	2,634,895.77	3,417,014.40	2,762,590.09	2,794,569.32	3,054,700.89	3,111,595.77	3,040,582.77
Room Rents	6,668,738.14	6,972,226.01	6,099,695.77	2,637,798.66	5,722,640.43	7,815,385.00	7,086,681.59
Grants, Contracts, and Gifts	562,367.49	1,109,279.91	1,102,120.71	1,902,058.52	5,514,920.70	4,616,420.59	3,838,569.94
State Support	13,127,360.00	13,698,774.00	6,160,664.00	13,709,230.00	11,299,648.00	11,839,964.00	16,245,880.00
Assessments	(999,489.08)	(1,276,266.88)	(1,089,536.24)	(1,023,028.52)	(1,619,730.24)	(1,884,853.83)	(1,952,115.06)
Miscellaneous	178,309.74	265,227.26	230,206.11	1,112,732.02	1,110,224.71	1,745,550.81	2,142,963.29
Transfers	972,298.28	(2,643,376.84)	3,763,597.37	(309,563.21)	(1,065,771.80)	(6,535,299.23)	(4,696,462.72)
Student Aid		(6,930,860.65)	(948,654.29)	(2,152,876.07)	(3,609,034.67)	(1,412,646.97)	(1,933,287.65)
<b>TOTAL</b>	41,382,989.84	37,165,745.04	37,571,044.01	40,275,297.36	41,010,762.70	40,708,405.60	44,646,151.77

The Table below shows the breakdown of disbursements each year from 2017-2018 through 2023-2024. It is broken down by Personal Service (full-time) instructional and non-instructional salaries, Temporary Service (part-time) instructional and non-instructional salaries, OTPS (supplies, travel, contractual, equipment and utilities), and OTPS transfers to or from other funding sources. Expenditures gradually decreased until the 2022-2023 fiscal year. This was due mainly to lower enrollments and not filling vacant positions. In December 2022, after the approval of the Board of Trustees for SUNY Poly to hire a permanent position, we began filling some of the vacancies. In August of 2023, all CNSE positions and expenditures were transferred to SUNY UAlbany. Even with \$4.8M in expenditures being transferred to UAlbany, SUNY Poly expenditures remained consistent year over year.



Total Disbursements (Academic Enterprise & Residence Halls)							
Major Object Group	Amount 2017-18	Amount 2018-19	Amount 2019-20	Amount 2020-21	Amount 2021-22	Amount 2022-23	Amount 2023-24
PSR Instructional	12,364,730.06	13,357,935.54	13,576,674.74	13,286,871.61	13,459,772.89	11,241,869.78	11,183,129.41
PSR Non-Instructional	17,957,242.20	18,428,278.12	17,745,444.60	16,716,587.73	16,299,962.02	16,389,420.08	15,673,788.45
PSR Transfers	(956,572.96)	(3,320,489.39)	(5,671,848.16)	(1,056,463.45)	(5,905,921.13)	(724,919.12)	(783,775.14)
TS Instructional	1,898,498.78	1,975,325.12	2,077,233.86	1,468,354.58	2,008,276.70	2,215,278.50	2,895,579.71
TS Non-Instructional	2,780,921.76	2,523,927.37	1,995,978.75	943,701.20	1,258,948.26	1,228,787.93	1,457,084.64
OTPS	8,875,803.97	7,296,998.42	6,739,426.58	5,348,040.97	6,634,607.20	8,230,805.22	8,110,312.99
OTPS Transfers	(500,000.00)	(6,859.00)	2,312,383.27	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42,420,623.81</b>	<b>40,255,116.18</b>	<b>38,775,293.64</b>	<b>36,707,092.64</b>	<b>33,755,645.94</b>	<b>38,581,242.39</b>	<b>38,536,120.06</b>

From 2017-18 through 2019-20, disbursements exceeded revenues. The chart below shows how revenues began to exceed disbursements in 2020-2021 and remained that way through 2023-2024.



These strategic investments in SUNY Polytechnic Institute's operations, faculty, and student services reinforce the institution's mission of fostering an inclusive and innovative learning environment. By

prioritizing research expansion, mental health support, student internships, and faculty salaries, SUNY Poly ensures that students are well-prepared for the 21st-century workforce while advancing technological and scientific discovery. The alignment of financial planning with institutional priorities highlights SUNY Poly's role as a driver of economic and societal progress in the Mohawk Valley and beyond, ensuring continued excellence in education, research, and community engagement. As SUNY Poly continues to evolve, its financial stewardship will remain central to advancing excellence in education, research, and community engagement.

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#### C4: FISCAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES AS WELL AS THE PHYSICAL AND TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ADEQUATE TO SUPPORT ITS OPERATIONS WHEREVER AND HOWEVER PROGRAMS ARE DELIVERED.

##### **Human Resources**

SUNY Poly has a weekly Workforce Planning Committee meeting. Human Resources receives requests for extra service, also receives, backfill of a vacancy, and new position requests through an electronic hiring request form (S6C4.D1). Along with the information from the form, the committee receives a copy of the job vacancy which includes the job duties of the position. That information is reviewed weekly at the standing Workforce Planning meeting. The committee consists of the VP for Finance, Provost, Chief Diversity Officer, VP for Human Resources, and Director of Human Resources. Budgetary and staffing ratios are discussed, and a decision is made on whether to recommend to the President whether the position should be posted or not.

Once Human Resources has received the approval from the President and the hiring manager has been notified of approval, the job is posted to the Hirezon job board. The vacancy is further assessed for additional recruiting efforts to specific job boards or communities based on the job requirements and criteria. Additional job boards would consist of Veteran's Affairs, OPWDD, Office of Mental Health, CSEA, Higher Education sites and various social media sites, etc.

Once an opportunity has been posted, the hiring manager and human resources identifies from a pool of SUNY Poly employees, individuals to serve on the search committee. Giving opportunities for all individuals in the institution the opportunity to serve on a hiring committee is key to meet our commitments to DEIB, and our Affirmative Action Plan. During the Spring 2023 semester, the DEIB Office did a survey across the whole campus gathering names of individuals that would like to serve on a search committee. The Chief Diversity Officer and Human Resources are offering training programs to these individuals to train them on the expectations of a search committee, and to answer any questions that they may have. Search committees review the job description, meet with the hiring manager to review the job description, ask questions related to the scope of work and daily transactions of the job, speak to the culture of the department and department needs and skills the candidate should possess. Interview questions are developed and vetted and approved by Human Resources before interviews are set. Hiring metrics are used for each candidate to ensure consistency in hiring practices. Once the

position has been posted for 14 days, Human Resources holds a kick-off meeting with the search committee.

Once the search committee has had its kick-off meeting, they are free to start reviewing applicants to identify applicants that meet the criteria, the search committee's selections are vetted by Human Resources to ensure compliance with the Affirmative action plan, approval to proceed is delivered to the search committee. The search committee holds first-round interviews (which are typically held via Zoom, in-person interviews, on campus visits, and presentations, depending on the level of the vacancy are scheduled for finalists, and finally the selections are presented to the hiring manager for final interview. Human Resources receives the results and final recommendations and scoring of candidates. Human Resources works with the hiring manager to finalize the candidate and begin negotiations with the selected candidate.

The distribution of full-time faculty by rank and gender is displayed in the following table.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Full Professor Male	28	26	23	22	19	18	14	13
Full Professor Female	9	6	7	8	8	7	7	6
Assoc Professor Male	36	35	33	37	39	44	28	28
Assoc Professor Female	16	18	16	14	15	15	9	9
Asst Professor Male	16	20	22	20	17	18	18	20
Asst Professor Female	8	16	15	14	14	13	17	21
Instructor Male	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Instructor Female	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
Lecturer Male	14	15	14	13	12	12	13	14
Lecturer Female	7	8	7	7	7	10	10	10
Total	137	147	140	137	133	138	117	122

Overall faculty size held consistent over the first six years in the table. Beginning with the fall 2023 semester, 26 faculty transferred to UAlbany with the College of CNSE. Five new faculty were hired for fall 2023 and five additional new faculty beginning fall 2024. During the fall 2017 semester, full-time faculty consisted of 69% male and 31% females. For the fall 2024 semester, those percentages shifted to 61% male and 39% female. Although men have dominated at all ranks, this domination has decreased.

The distribution of full-time faculty by ethnicity is shown below. Because of the small faculty size the distribution is limited to white and non-white as the numbers for sub-groups will be small.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
White	103	111	106	100	97	94	80	84
Non-White	34	36	34	37	36	44	37	38
% White	75.2%	75.5%	75.7%	73.0%	72.9%	68.1%	68.4%	68.9%

SUNY Poly has been successful in recruiting an ethnically more diverse faculty over the last eight years. Throughout this period the faculty has been more ethnically diverse than in the student body.

### **Technical Resources, Information Technology Services (ITS)**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute's Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) has a comprehensive and well-structured approach to managing and improving their technological infrastructure. The assessment of these services is performed every day, and we use our helpdesk and ticketing system as a litmus test to establish a baseline for user experience.

Over the past few years, ITS has implemented various measures to maintain network security, including network segmentation, active directory permissions, and software security applications. ITS has implemented new cyber-security tools from lessons learned with the NY-Creates/SUNY Research Foundation/College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) cyber event. In 2022 NY-Creates/SUNY RF/ CNSE had a cyber-security event in which SUNY Poly Human Resources data was partially compromised. After this event, SUNY Poly implemented many new technical controls to prevent ransomware. We have added two new NGFW firewalls, replaced campus core networking and security and added high availability redundancy. The backend network infrastructure has been updated to support 10Gb to the core. SUNY Poly enhanced the endpoint security by implementing Endpoint Detection & Response (EDR)/Managed Detection & Response (MDR), expanded the use of multifactor authentication for account authentication and authorization for remote access and critical applications. SUNY Poly also completed several risk analyses surveys to determine the level of risk for the institution through technology. ITS then purchased cyber security insurance to help protect the Institution in case of a breach of the system. ITS is also working on implementing an Information Security Program.

### **Office of Information Technology Services Structure**

ITS is divided into six units: ITS Helpdesk, Technical Operations, Systems Administration, Network/Security Administration, Programming Services, and Instructional Resources.

The ITS Helpdesk is the first line in helping students, faculty, and staff with technology issues. They have established an achievable service level agreement (SLA) for problem resolution. The ITS Helpdesk supports SUNY Poly's mission to foster an intellectually vibrant, creative, and stimulating environment for innovation, education, and outreach. Reliable IT services are crucial for the campus to effectively fulfill its mission. Establishing baselines helps identify areas for improvement in both technical and human resources, aiding in the achievement of the strategic plan.

Technical Operations (TechOps) provides advanced troubleshooting. TechOps also provides and maintains campus hardware including labs, and faculty/staff computing equipment. TechOps maintains all assets deployed and in store. ITS supports a number of learning spaces with the latest technology, including enhanced classrooms and computer labs, projection, and audio. As computer labs are replaced with new equipment, we refurbish the old equipment and redeploy to faculty and staff. ITS provides recommendations on policies, procedures, and planning related to educational technology, ensuring faculty input is considered. In the past year working with faculty, we have installed a two-node supercomputer cluster to support academic research for the university and built out a secure research network. ITS is in the process of obtaining and installing equipment to support a cyber-range for the Network Computer Security (NCS) department. Working with students from the NCS Club to provide an environment to support learning current tools used in the cybersecurity field.

Systems Administration maintains servers and backend infrastructure, including backups, active directory permissions, Microsoft 365 environment supporting Staff, Faculty, and Students.

Network/Security Administration manages SUNY Poly's campus infrastructure, which contains 125 switches, four firewalls, 400+ access points and 800 phones.

Programming Services works closely with end users to facilitate their data requests via ad hoc reporting, development of data blocks, and implementation/maintenance of third-party software. Programming services also advise departments on how best to structure their data and provide strategic guidance and insight.

### **Instructional Resources**

Classroom technology including Media Projection, and resources for HyFlex course delivery, Television and Video Production Services including capture, recording, editing, and live streaming. FAA Licensed UAS (Drone) Operation for recording of aerial video Audio-Visual Services for internal events and activities. Satellite Reception and Transmission. Distance Learning technology supporting Telepresence, Teams, Zoom, and Collaborate. Maintaining SUNY Poly Campus Cable TV system. Maintaining Technology for the Campus Digital Signage System.

Digital still and video cameras available for loan. Support Admissions and Marketing initiatives. Collaborate with accessibility services to provide technology support.

### **Cybersecurity**

Over the past few years, ITS has implemented various measures to maintain network security, including network segmentation, active directory permissions, and software security applications such as Sentinel One endpoint detection. We have added two new NGFW firewalls, replaced campus core networking and security and added high availability redundancy. The backend network infrastructure has been updated to support 10Gb to the core. The use of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for enhanced

security has been implemented across multiple environments including remote access, email, LMS and many more. ITS is also working on implementing an Information Security Program.

ITS is working on a Disaster Recovery Plan to ensure critical services can be restored quickly in case of a disaster. This includes the use of encryption, immutable cloud-based backups and state of the art data retention tools.

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#### C5: WELL-DEFINED DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND CLEAR ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

SUNY Poly has accountability and responsibility at many levels, as decisions are formulated and vetted in stakeholder groups ranging from internal governance bodies to system and state oversight. These provide important input to campus decisions, as well as checks and balances in the process.

Responsibility for oversight of the SUNY system is vested in a Board of Trustees whose members (with three exceptions – a voting student trustee selected by students, the non-voting chair of the University Faculty Senate, and the non-voting chair of the Faculty Council of Community Colleges) are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the New York State Senate. The SUNY Trustees appoint a Chancellor and campus presidents, approve the system budget, review and approve new degree awards for a campus, and adopt overall university policy.

Section 356 of the Education Law of the State of New York establishes a College Council for each SUNY campus. The Council is a ten-member body with nine community members appointed by the Governor, and the remaining member selected by students. The Council is not a Board of Trustees; that role is fulfilled by the state-wide SUNY Board. The enumerated powers of the Council include: (a) recommending candidates for president to the SUNY Board; (b) reviewing “major campus plans”, and making recommendations with respect to them to the SUNY Board; (c) making regulations covering “the care, custody, and management of lands, grounds, building and equipment”; (d) reviewing the campus budget request; (e) “fostering the development of advisory citizens committees” (S6C5.D1) Advisory Board Minutes.2019-2023 to render assistance to the Council; (f) naming buildings and grounds; (g) adopting a student code of conduct; (h) exercise supervision over student housing and safety; (i) provide an annual report to the SUNY Board. The Council meets at least four times a year in open session, with meetings (except for authorized executive sessions) streamed and accessible to the public. The Council was intimately involved in the 2023 search for a president; Ms. RoAnn Destito, the Chair of the Council, was the chair of the committee that conducted the search and recommended President Soboyejo to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees (S6C5.D2)

Article IX, Title A of the Policies of the Board of Trustees designates the President as the Chief Administrative Officer. As such this individual is responsible for the overall organization of the college, specifically including an organization chart to be published in the Faculty Handbook. The organization chart is available at (S6C5.D3).

Within the campus, much of the clarity exists in the job descriptions for administrators and directors. These include their span of control and responsibility on campus, including which positions are their direct reports and which office and position they report to. Most decision flow is through the hierarchy reflected in the organization chart. Decisions that affect multiple groups on campus are carried out by committees that are designed to include the input of all constituents. For example, requests for new positions, promotions, and extra service requests all go through a workforce planning committee that includes representation from finance, academic affairs, Human Resources, and DEIB.

Decisions that involve areas that are normally under the primary influence of the faculty, such as curricular issues, go through a governance process. The governance recommendations are advisory to the President, and the President provides feedback to the governance bodies regarding the disposition of the advice and decisions. The composition and responsibilities of the governance bodies are as follows.

### **Faculty Governance**

Faculty governance has undergone substantial change in recent years. Since the mid-1970s faculty governance was accomplished through a body of the whole Faculty Assembly consisting of all full-time faculty, the President, and academic administrators such as the Provost and the Deans. Meetings were typically held monthly during the academic year. While essential work got done in a timely fashion, achieving quorum was challenging. Some months actions had to be delayed because of lack of a quorum. A study of the governance structures on other SUNY campuses was undertaken with particular interest in a hybrid structure in existence at SUNY-Purchase. The Vice-Chair of the University Faculty Senate, himself a governance leader at Purchase, made a presentation at a Faculty Assembly meeting. After much discussion, a new set of Faculty By-laws was overwhelmingly adopted. It provides for continuation of the body of the whole Assembly that meets twice a year, and a much smaller representative Senate that meets in other months. The new structure went into effect in Fall 2021. Since that time no meeting has had to be cancelled for lack of a quorum. Faculty committees address issues related to curriculum, research, academic affairs, personnel evaluations, and technology.

### **Staff Governance**

In 2008 an initiative was undertaken to establish a Staff Assembly whose membership comprises all campus employees who are not represented in faculty governance or who hold management/confidential titles.

“The mission of the SUNY Polytechnic Institute Campus Staff Assembly is to focus the collective energy, knowledge, and experience of the non-faculty staff, to advance the mission of the campus, to serve as a participant in campus governance, and to provide a mechanism for communications and feedback relative to issues affecting the campus community.”

The Staff Assembly primarily addresses issues related to campus construction, communications, and staff development.

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C6: COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING FOR FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND TECHNOLOGY THAT INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF SUSTAINABILITY AND DEFERRED MAINTENANCE AND IS LINKED TO THE INSTITUTION’S STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESSES.

### **Physical Resources**

At the system level, SUNY periodically funds the facilities master planning process. SUNY Poly completed the last Academic Building Master Plan (S6C6.D1), a Housing Master Plan (S6C6.D2), and a Clean Energy Master Plan (S6C6.D3). The college anticipates that SUNY will fund the updating of the campus master plan within the next two to three years. This is particularly appropriate subsequent to the return of the CNSE to UAlbany and the direction by the SUNY Board of Trustees to establish SUNY Poly as the Premier Public Polytechnic Institute.

The SUNY Construction Fund received \$550 million dollars for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. They utilize a formula that incorporates the number of buildings on a campus, the age of the buildings, and the condition of the buildings to determine how much funding each campus receives. SUNY Poly is a fairly new campus with only eight buildings, therefore receives approximately \$1.3 million per fiscal year. In addition, the Construction Fund holds a portion of the \$550 million for “lump” funding. The funding allows campuses that receive small amounts of renovation money to apply for additional funding for specific projects. SUNY is receiving \$3 million of lump funding toward the renovation of the Campus Center.

On November 17, 2023, Governor Kathy Hochul and SUNY Chancellor John B. King, Jr. announced a \$44 million investment in SUNY Poly. It will be used to expand the current health science wing and update nursing labs in Donovan Hall, as well as create a semiconductor processing lab for workforce development, and a robotics and advanced manufacturing research and education lab.

Infrastructure planning is predicated on investments to further the objectives of SUNY Poly’s strategic initiatives, including academic program growth, strengthening of recruitment efforts, improving retention, enhancing student life, and optimizing utilization of existing space and resources; coinciding with providing advanced research, classroom, faculty, and student space to meet future need of new and growing academic programs. There is a continued positive push for expanding multi-disciplinary facilities to support campus priorities such as entrepreneurship and an efficient workforce, prioritizing people, human resources and technology specific infrastructure with an eye to the future.

Our new construction follows Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) specification standards which ensure that green, highly efficient, cost-saving facilities are constructed. The current Campus Center renovation project includes a geo-thermal build to promote energy efficiency, while the



2020 Hilltop dormitory build not only included geo-thermal but included a zero-net, carbon-certified design, the first on any SUNY campus. Per energy analysis during our Clean Energy Master Plan, SUNY Poly has some of the best energy performance metrics (such as energy use intensity) in the SUNY system.

Sustainability is at the forefront of SUNY Poly's initiatives with programs including Green Cleaning Policy, a commitment to the use of products and practices that have lower environmental impacts than conventional products and practices. LEED Facility Maintenance and Renovation Policy, this applies to ongoing maintenance activities and faculty renovations that occur at buildings originally certified and/or designed to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Building Design and Construction Silver standards or better at SUNY Poly (S6C6.D4). This plan applies to all purchases entering and all ongoing waste leaving the campus. Reducing carbon footprint on campus has included EV charging stations, conversion to electric facilities tools and equipment aligning with the soon-to-be implemented SUNY Climate and Sustainability Action Plan. SUNY Poly has also recently established a Center of Smart Infrastructure and Sustainability (S6C6.D5) dedicated to advancing research, technology, education, and policies that promote intelligent and sustainable infrastructure development by leveraging interdisciplinary collaboration and cutting-edge technologies. Students can participate in sustainability-related research projects and internships, where they apply their classroom learning to real-world issues such as renewable energy, environmental policy, sustainable material, resilient infrastructure, smart transportation, and green buildings. Sustainability is more than just a goal at SUNY Poly; it is a shared value that informs the actions of our students, faculty, staff and academic programs. These initiatives not only reduce our environmental impact but also engage the broader community in creating lasting change.

SUNY Poly Facilities department is responsible for the protection, operation, preservation, maintenance, and construction of over 910,000 square feet of building area and nearly 500 acres of landscape, athletic fields, roadways, sidewalks, and parking lots. This is achieved with a dedicated staff of more than 55 employees. SUNY Poly consists of seven academic/administrative buildings, including the Cayan Library, Kunsela Hall, Donovan Hall, the Campus Center, Wildcat Field House, the Student Center, and the Service Complex. We also have four residence hall complexes including Adirondack Residence Hall, Oriskany Residence Hall, Mohawk Residence Hall, and Hilltop Residence Hall.

Each year, the Facilities department responds to thousands of work orders requested by campus faculty, staff, and students for repairs and installations. They also provide for the set-up and take-down of equipment for campus events, deliver the campus mail, and distribute packages to students, faculty, and staff.

The Facilities department is also responsible for major and minor construction projects on the SUNY Poly campus. The department plans, designs, and constructs capital projects to maintain and preserve the physical plant, address environmental concerns, and meet the changing pedagogies of higher education. Over the last eight years, we have completed eleven major capital projects in the academic/administrative buildings, and nine capital projects in the residence halls. This is a list of the

projects that were completed (S6C6.D6). SUNY Poly currently has current projects totaling more than \$77M. This is a brief list of the current projects (S6C6.D7). During the design and construction phases for any capital projects, meetings are held to ensure all aspects of the design and construction are met. The Campus Center renovation is a major building renovation (S6C6.D8) The Residence Hall generator replacement is a campus capital project. (S6C6.D9)

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#### C7: AN ANNUAL INDEPENDENT AUDIT CONFIRMING FINANCIAL VIABILITY WITH EVIDENCE OF FOLLOW-UP ON ANY CONCERNS CITED IN THE AUDIT'S ACCOMPANYING MANAGEMENT LETTER.

SUNY Poly, as a part of a larger educational unit, does not have a yearly annual independent audit. An annual Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) report is created by SUNY System Administration for each SUNY campus. (S6C7.D1). Submission of the IPEDS data is required by the campus Program Participation Agreement for Title IV federal student financial aid programs with the US Department of Education. Campus foundations and auxiliary service corporation are not included in the IPEDS amounts (except for Part H – Details on Endowment Assets and Part N – Financial Health). Campus foundation and auxiliary information is presented on separate pages in SUNY's annual financial report (S6C7.D2).

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#### C8: STRATEGIES TO MEASURE AND ASSESS THE ADEQUACY AND EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES REQUIRED TO SUPPORT THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION AND GOALS.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute conducts an annual Student Satisfaction Survey to assess various aspects of campus life, with a primary focus on the residence halls. This survey allows students to provide feedback on their living experience, including their satisfaction with amenities, student services, meal services, and dining options. Over the years, this survey has played a crucial role in tracking the effectiveness of services and support provided by Resident Assistants (RAs), as well as identifying areas for improvement in residential life.

The Office of Residential Life and Housing oversees the administration of this survey, formally known as the Residential Satisfaction Survey. The survey is released late fall and open until the conclusion of the fall semester. The results are carefully reviewed to gauge student sentiment regarding the residential experience, particularly in terms of policy enforcement, building safety, and suitability for academic study. Insights from the survey are shared with the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Task Force as well as other campus constituents such as dining services, university police, and facilities ensuring that any concerns related to safety, policy adherence, or environmental factors are considered when shaping future initiatives and interventions.

In response to the evolving needs of the student population, the survey was expanded in Fall 2020 to include questions about patterns of drug and alcohol use. This addition was primarily driven by the need to understand the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on student socialization, as in-person events and peer

interactions were significantly limited during that time. By Fall 2022, these questions remained relevant, providing valuable data on how students' experiences and behaviors were shifting as campus events gradually resumed.

The quantitative data shows consistent success in areas where students have connections with their resident advisors that the students feel their RAs are well trained and knowledgeable about campus resources and have formed meaningful relationships with students. In fall 2024, additional questions were added to assess the effectiveness and engagement of students who have opted to participate in our focused interest communities in Hilltop Hall. With this data as well as targeted questions related to programming the office has been able to best allocated resources to meet student needs.

After an absence of several years, the Office of University Conferencing and Events was reconstituted in February 2024 with the hiring of a coordinator to oversee resources for both internal and external events and activities. The coordinator chairs a Logistics Committee that has representation from multiple departments and offices including: Conferencing and Campus Events, Student Involvement, Wildcat Hospitality (food service), Auxiliary Services, Residential Life, Facilities, Instructional Resources, University Police, Athletics, and Admissions.

Events within the upcoming week to ten days are reviewed to identify the needs and support required from various departments in order to ensure successful outcomes. When necessary, the activity organizer is invited to attend the meeting to discuss their event and answer any questions. The committee also conducts after-action reviews for major activities as part of a continuous improvement effort. The Office of Conferencing and Events prepares a revocable permit and has it signed by the outside entity that will use SUNY Poly space and/or services (S6C8.D1). A group of on-campus events that SUNY Poly ran during the summer of 2024 was labeled the Summer Spotlight Series (S6C8.D2). The Office of Conferencing and Events does a profit and loss report for each event that it holds (S6C8.D3).

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## C9: PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL PROCESSES, AND AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES.

### **Planning Activities**

Several units of the institution have their own formalized planning processes. Many academic programs have formal plans that are regularly reviewed and evaluated during the disciplinary accreditation process. Accreditation agencies including AACSB (S6C9.D1), ABET (S6C9.D2), CAHIM (S6C9.D3), and CCNE (S6C9.D4) require comprehensive planning and assessment in the programs that they accredit. All of SUNY Poly's business, engineering, engineering technology, health information management, and nursing programs are accredited by their respective accreditation agencies. Other academic programs undergo regular reviews on an approximately five-year cycle as mandated by the New York State Education Department (S6C9.D5, S6C9.D6).

Several other units also have their own formalized planning documents. Other departments, such as Instructional Resources (S6C9.D7), do not have formal planning documents of their own as they operate to support other functions in the institution. Their plans are therefore directly generated by the needs of the offices that they serve.

As a small institution, many of SUNY Poly's support functions are essentially one-person operations. These units are unlikely to have formal unit plans, but that does not indicate an absence of planning and evaluation. The Policies of the Board of Trustees (April 2023) Article XII, Title C, Section 4a requires annual written performance reviews of all professional employees based upon a performance program “determined by the immediate supervisor after consultation with the employee.” Likewise, classified employees undergo similar annual performance reviews as mandated in their collective bargaining agreement. Thus, even in small offices there is a formal planning and review process that formalizes the goals for the next year and evaluates the performance of the prior year's program.

### **Recommendations**

- Non-Academic Assessment – Assessment for Non-Academic areas has been inconsistent across the institution. Now that we have hired a Coordinator of Assessment, we recommend that we establish a consistent means of assessing these areas.
- Budget Process – The budget process has not always been transparent. With the hiring of a Budget Control Officer, that process has begun to change. We recommend that the Budget Process Manual be updated with clear guidelines surrounding the budget process.

# STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION

THE INSTITUTION IS GOVERNED AND ADMINISTERED IN A MANNER THAT ALLOWS IT TO REALIZE ITS STATED MISSION AND GOALS IN A WAY THAT EFFECTIVELY BENEFITS THE INSTITUTION, ITS STUDENTS, AND THE OTHER CONSTITUENCIES IT SERVES. EVEN WHEN SUPPORTED BY OR AFFILIATED WITH GOVERNMENTAL, CORPORATE, RELIGIOUS, EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, OR OTHER UNACCREDITED ORGANIZATIONS, THE INSTITUTION HAS EDUCATION AS ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE, AND IT OPERATES AS AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION WITH APPROPRIATE AUTONOMY.

SUNY Poly is an institution with a proud history of shared governance in every sense of the phrase. As a fairly young campus, the faculty, staff, and administrators who built its offices, policies, and procedures created a community of active participation and have instilled those values into the next generations of employees; many of those early founders are still engaged in serving and mentoring. As a SUNY campus, it has guidance from the state and its College Council, as well as advice from its community partners in pursuit of educating its students.

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## C1: A CLEARLY ARTICULATED AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### **State Governing Structure**

SUNY is a corporation housed in the New York State Education Department and is composed of 64 higher education campuses across the state (S7C1.D1). The Education Department, NYSED, has authority for approval of programs and curricula on SUNY campuses (S7C1.D2). SUNY itself is governed by The Board of Trustees, described as follows: “all of the powers of the State University, derived from the statute, are vested in and exercised by the Board of Trustees, acting as a whole, and as delegated by the Board. The Board is currently authorized to be comprised of 18 members, 15 of whom are appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, the President of the Student Assembly who serves as student Trustee ex officio, the President of the University Faculty Senate, and the President of the Faculty Council of Community Colleges who serve as faculty Trustees ex officio but without the right to vote” (S7C1.D3). Authority of the Board of Trustees includes appointing campus presidents, submitting and allocating budgets, creating policies and procedures, among other duties (S7C1.D4, S7C1.D5).

A central SUNY administrative staff manages issues that are common to all campuses including negotiating bulk purchasing contracts, legal assistance, human resource assistance, and so on. The SUNY Chancellor, John B. King Jr., oversees the 64 campuses and the central administration (S7C1.D6). On an operational basis, a SUNY campus receives policies and procedures related to overall operation from the

Board of Trustees, and the central administration assists campuses in carrying those out as well as with other issues requiring specific expertise. These policies and procedures include the review and approval of degree programs; hiring, periodic review, and reappointment of faculty and staff; approval of annual budgets and enrollment plans; support for serving distinct student populations; and so on. Offices at SUNY assist and liaise with campuses in all operational areas (S7C1.D7).

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## C2: A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED GOVERNING BODY

### **Local governing body**

At the campus level, each SUNY Campus has a College Council that serves as an advisory group, community liaison, and has specific areas of authority on campus. These include recommending presidential candidates to the Board of Trustees, approving student conduct rules, reviewing budgets and master plans, and naming buildings. The composition of the College Council is nine members appointed by the state governor, and one student representative chosen by the campus student body (S7C2.D1, S7C2.D2). They meet quarterly with the President, Provost, and other members of the campus leadership (S7C2.D3, S7C2.D4).

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## C3: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### **President/Chief Administrative Officer**

The selection of a SUNY campus President is governed by the SUNY Board of Trustees and is detailed in the Policies of the Board of Trustees (S7C3.D1). These circumscribe the formation of a representative search committee, steps in the search process, and ensure input from all constituents (S7C3.D2). As mentioned previously, the President at the time of SUNY Poly's last reaccreditation, Dr. Alain Kaloyeros, was removed from his position in 2016. From 2016 to 2022, SUNY Poly was given a series of interim Chief Administrative Officers to work on our budget and strategic plan; each administrator was chosen to focus on different portions of the campus budget and programming based on their areas of expertise. They are listed below.

<u>CAO/CEO</u>	<u>Previous position</u>	<u>Time in position</u>	<u>Reference</u>
Alex Cartwright	Provost/Exec. Vice Chancellor SUNY	2016	S7C3.D3
Bahgat Sammakia	VP Research SUNY Binghamton	2017-2018	S7C3.D4
Jinliu (Grace)Wang	Provost/Sr. Vice Chancellor SUNY	2018-2020	S7C3.D5
Tod Laursen	Provost/Sr. Vice Chancellor SUNY	2020-2022	S7C3.D6
Andrew Russell	Dean of Arts and Sciences SUNY Poly	2022-2023	S7C3.D7

In December 2022, the Board of Trustees authorized the Chancellor to begin a search for a permanent SUNY Poly president. College Council Chair RoAnn Destito served as Chair of the search, which drew on the support of SUNY as well as an external search firm to recruit a diverse pool of candidates. Interviews took place in the spring and summer of 2023, and the Board of Trustees approved the hire of Dr. Winston Soboyejo at their meeting on September 12, 2023. President Soboyejo took office on October 2, 2023 (S7C3.D8). He has overseen the finalization of the campus Strategic Plan, mission, and vision statements, and has managed the creation of 3- and 5-year plans for program and research initiatives.

President Soboyejo's credentials and administrative experience are an excellent match for SUNY Poly. He is a distinguished educator and researcher, having served as a member of the faculty at The Ohio State University and Princeton University. He also served in the administrative roles of dean, provost, and interim president at Worcester Polytechnic Institute; and as president and provost of the African University of Science and Technology (AUST) in Abuja, Nigeria, a Pan-African university founded by the Nelson Mandela Institutions (NMI). President Soboyejo has a PhD in materials science and metallurgy from the University of Cambridge and has published extensively in the areas of biomaterials and the use of nanoparticles for the detection and treatment of disease, the mechanical properties of materials, and the use of materials science to promote global development. He was elected to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences in 2021 for his contributions to understanding the dynamic behavior of materials and for leadership in STEM outreach in Africa (S7C3.D9).

SUNY Chancellor King reviews campus presidents on an annual basis, a process under which President Soboyejo submitted a self-evaluation in the fall semester of 2024 (S7C3.D10).

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#### C4: ADMINISTRATION

##### **Administrative structure**

The administrative staff structure is seen in the organizational charts in Standard VI. In the last several years, we developed vacancies in top-level administrative positions due to attrition and due to the move

of CNSE faculty and staff back to the University at Albany. This created the opportunity for the President, Provost, and Vice Presidents to restructure some positions to focus on priorities in the new Strategic Plan, such as expanding the Chief of Staff position to include External Relations as a primary responsibility. The Vice Presidents meet weekly with the President and Provost (S7C4.D1), and a larger group inclusive of all academic Deans (the Cabinet) also meets with them weekly (S7C4.D2). These meetings serve to both disseminate important information across campus and to seek broad input on new initiatives and operational priorities.

President Soboyejo, in consultation with the Cabinet, decided to hold a leadership retreat in the summer of 2024. The goals were to provide some extended time for the new leadership team to focus on the implementation of the Strategic Plan; and to provide some opportunities for self-reflection amongst the leadership team. In advance of the retreat, Cabinet members completed Gallup Clifton Strengths Finder and other self-assessment tools, guided by leadership consultants Daneli Partners and interim dean of health sciences (and practicing clinical psychologist) Dr. Joanne Joseph. In addition to a level of team building that had been absent from SUNY Poly senior leadership in recent memory, Cabinet members also established a clear plan for the implementation of the new strategic plan (S7C4.D3).

SUNY Poly is now in the final stages of moving from a leadership team primarily composed of a series of interim appointments to one with a stable and permanent leadership structure, with only a few positions remaining under the "interim" designation. All Vice-President positions are now filled with regular (non-interim) appointments, and only two interim positions remain at the cabinet level. One, the Dean of Arts & Sciences, has a search currently underway (S7C4.D4). The final interim position, the Dean of Business, is planned to start in mid-2025. With the stability of leadership positions, President Soboyejo and Chief Human Resources Officer Michele Kilburn have revived a more consistent approach to performance reviews at all levels of the organization, to ensure that performance plans are current, employees are receiving the feedback they need to succeed, and the campus has a clear process for reviewing the performance of administrators and ensuring that they are adequately supporting the President and the needs of the students and faculty (S7C4.D5).

One initial success of the administrative organization and operation can be seen in the recent formation of interdisciplinary Research Centers (S7C4.D6). This involved a joint effort from the President, Provost, and VP for Research to create a request for proposals and the funding to make it possible. Center space was provided by the Student Affairs Office, and release time and managing assistance for Center operation is being provided by Deans. Further discussion among Center directors, the VP for Research, and the Provost led to a successful search to hire a grant writer as well as a search to hire an administrative assistant to support the needs of the Office of Research and the smooth functioning of the Centers, for example in the promotion of events and administrative processes needed for faculty stipends, travel, and other research-related activities (S7C4.D7, S7C4.D8).

The administration engages faculty and staff regularly through updates from the Provost at Faculty Senate meetings, as well as Town Hall or Campus Update gatherings led by the President. These engagements highlight successes of the past semester, preview upcoming events or milestones, and provide opportunities to update the campus on the implementation of the strategic plan and to seek feedback on initiatives designed to advance the objectives of the strategic plan (S7C4.D9, S7C4.D10).



### **Faculty, staff, and student governance**

When SUNY Poly acquired the CNSE college from SUNY University at Albany, a two-tier governance structure was created. This structure kept the individual governance structures on each campus primarily intact, so that the campus had a Utica Faculty Assembly, Utica Staff Assembly, Utica Student Assembly, and a CNSE Faculty/Staff Senate, CNSE Undergraduate Student Senate, and CNSE Graduate Student Senate. Any issues that were common to both campuses were jointly adjudicated by their Utica and CNSE equivalents. If the two campuses disagreed, then the issue rose to a higher-level joint governance body composed of the joint executive committees (S7C4.D11).

Although this preserved the autonomy of each group in a way that allowed them to work together in a positive and widely supported manner, the workload burden was unsustainable on the faculty side. The number of committee appointments became almost equal to the total number of faculty, and many seats went unfilled. This led to difficulty in committees doing business and meeting quorum in regular meetings. Additionally, the campus administration experienced frustration due to the time involved in moving documents through the governance system. This problem was the worst for the Utica faculty, so they underwent a self-assessment exercise including obtaining advice from the SUNY University Faculty Senate president. The result was that the Utica Faculty Assembly created a smaller Senate structure to carry out most of its duties during the academic year, with the full assembly meetings reduced to once per semester (S7C4.D12).

The Staff Assembly has four committees: Bylaws, Policy and Governance; Campus Construction and Renovation; Staff Development; and Communications, Orientation, and Training. In addition to the committee chairs, the Staff Assembly Executive Committee has a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Liaison to the Faculty Assembly. The Executive Committee meets once a month, and the entire body meets at least once per semester (S7C4.D13).

The Faculty Senate is composed of representatives from each of the four academic Colleges. Each College has four senators to represent the first twenty faculty, with an additional senator for each set of twenty above that. The Senate Executive Committee is composed of the Chair, Secretary, Committee Chairs, and the UFS faculty senator as a nonvoting member. The nine committees of the Faculty Senate are: Academic Affairs; Academic Quality; Curriculum; Distance Learning; Academic Personnel; Planning and Budgeting; Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity; Technology; and the Graduate Council. The Executive Committee and Senate each meet once per month during the academic year (S7C4.D14).

The Student Government body consists of three senators per class level, and the Executive Committee comprises the President, Vice President, Chief of Staff, Treasurer, and Secretary. They also have an Executive Cabinet. Committees include Academic Affairs and Technology; Budget; Class Gift; Food Service; Game Room; Policy; Safety and Facilities; and Student Wellness/DEI. The Poly Student Government meets weekly (S7C4.D15, S7C4.D16).

Actions taken by the Faculty or Staff bodies go to the appropriate Vice President or to the Provost for consideration, and then to the President for final signatory authority. If the Provost or President modify or reject the actions, they send a report back to the governance body explaining the action taken. The chairs of the bodies meet monthly with the President and Provost. The SGU is more independent than the other two bodies and has its own authority in matters outlined in their documents.

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## C5: PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION

### **Assessment of governing structures**

The governing structures on campus each carry out regular assessment. The College Council has an annual year-end meeting wherein they discuss the business that has happened during the year, how smoothly it functioned, and how informative and useful the interactions with the campus administration were. College Council minutes and recordings of their meetings are available publicly online (S7C5.D1).

The faculty, staff, and student governing bodies have regular assessment built into their bylaws to ensure that it occurs. Changes to operation and procedures can also occur based on request and feedback of either a member of the administration or a member of the body, as in the description above of changing to a Faculty Senate. During that process, the faculty governance also brought in the SUNY University Faculty Senate to provide external assessment and advice. They also recommended a change to a smaller, more nimble overall structure that provided more of a sense of ownership and responsibility for those involved. After the transfer of CNSE to the SUNY University at Albany, the overall faculty governance structure became even more simplified with the removal of the joint governance structure. This has been successful in making the body more efficient while maintaining input and representation from across campus. For example, difficulties in procedures and processes for approvals kept the campus Faculty Handbook in a state of revision throughout the time that CNSE was with SUNY Poly, but was finally approved within the new Senate structure (S7C5.D2).

At the administrative level, feedback is continual and discussed among the President and Vice Presidents, both in their weekly team meetings and in individual meetings between the President and respective Vice Presidents. One example of improvement to the administrative structure after assessment is that of the VP for Research position. The campus mission shifted to focus more on research, but that was overseen by a faculty member serving in a part-time administrative capacity. In the following years, new faculty hires across the campus arrived with higher expectations of research and grant output, and the need from faculty quickly outstripped the needs of a part-time position. Moreover, under President Soboyejo and the 2024 – 2029 Strategic Plan, SUNY Poly's approach to research and scholarship places a heavy emphasis on collaborative activity. These collaborations require more coordination, which in turn enables research teams to compete for larger grants and to work on projects that would not be viable if undertaken by one or two individual faculty. This growth accelerated, with the most recent three-year sponsored program growth being 165.5% (S7C5.D3). The new full-time position of VP for Research, established in the summer of 2024, dedicates more resources to fulfilling this crucial element of the Strategic Plan. At the same time, it enables the success of research-active faculty, which will help in their retention and the further recruitment of new faculty.

Another example of improvement is the establishment of an institutional Coordinator for Assessment. The position of institutional assessment was assigned part-time to a faculty member for several years, but as programs grew and assessment increased, the administration realized that a full-time coordinator was needed. This realization arrived during 2023 when plans to move CNSE to University at Albany were underway, a move that would include the faculty member serving as assessment coordinator. Given their impending departure, along with the self-study processes engaged by the campus for Middle

States as well as AACSB, President Soboyejo approved the hire of a Coordinator for Assessment who began in January 2024 (S7C5.D4).

### **Conclusions**

The SUNY system provides multiple levels of consultation and direction to campuses. It provides support by experts in the field whenever needed, and many expenses such as legal advisement are made more efficient and affordable through using SUNY joint resources. The College Councils serve as community conduits and consultants at a local level, and required reporting at all levels ensures that attention is paid to outcomes, resource use, and adherence to mission.

SUNY Poly has seen several turnovers in its senior leadership in the last several years. Although not ideal, this situation has resulted in some positive outcomes. One has been to emphasize the importance of frequent, transparent communication between the governing bodies, administration, and the rest of the college. Much of the information used in the Self-Study is housed publicly on the SUNY Poly website and disseminated through direct emails and notifications to staff, faculty, and students. When decisions on policies or procedures are made, they are announced in this way by and with the group that created them to take ownership of those actions.

Another positive outcome is that the frequent changes in upper administrative structures created opportunities to adapt and refine governance and other committee structures at other levels, leading to more streamlined and efficient operations and successes such as finishing the faculty handbook.

### **Recommendations**

- One recommendation is to increase the interaction between governance bodies. At various times in the past, the governance bodies have experimented with liaisons to the other bodies who attended their meetings and kept an open line of communication between them. Increasing those will assist in ensuring that the groups are working together on initiatives and eliminating duplicative efforts. The Staff Assembly began this in 2024 with a liaison to the Faculty Senate. Adding a liaison from the Faculty Senate to the Staff Assembly would be beneficial, as would adding liaisons between both groups and the Student Government. This may also be a way to increase participation from all groups to keep them vibrant and effectual.
- The other major recommendation is to increase the assessment of leadership and governance. The Coordinator of Assessment has spent their first year reaching out to operational and academic units in their first year to evaluate and assist with assessment plans. In the next year, they will be doing the same with governance units including the academic leadership groups and College Council.