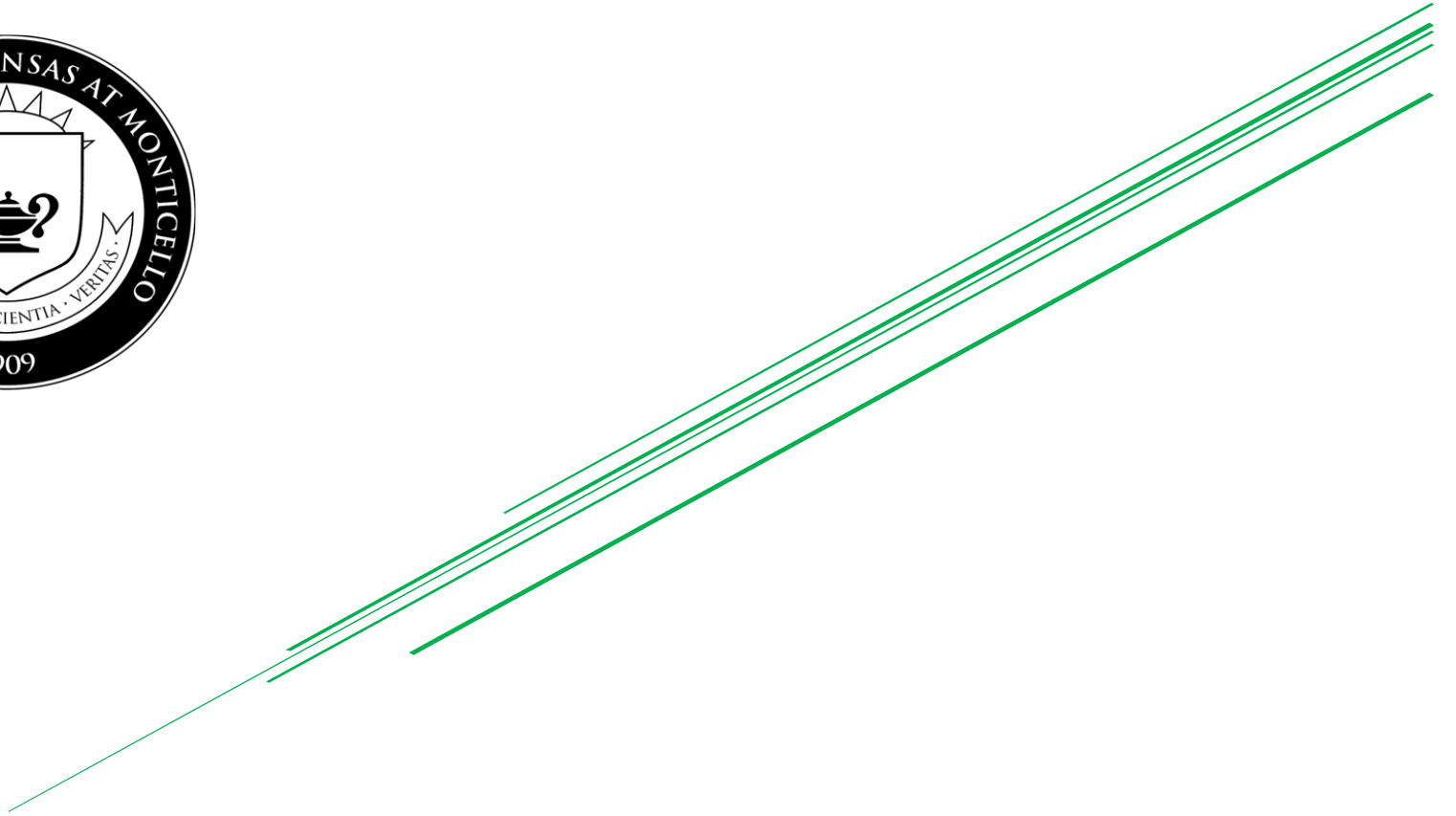


UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT MONTICELLO

Academic Unit Annual Report



School of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Academic Year 2024-2025

I. UNIT VISION, MISSION, AND STRATEGIC PLAN

What is the Unit Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan including goals, actions and key performance indicators (KPI)? Please identify new goals from continuing goals.

Major Programs of Study

There are five major programs of study within the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

- Criminal Justice (AS and BS degrees)
- History (BA degree)
- Political Science (BA degree)
- Psychology (BS degree)
- Social Work (BSW accredited professional degree)

The School of Social and Behavioral Sciences offers minors in each of these disciplines, as well as a Human Services minor. The School further provides coursework in Anthropology (in conjunction with the Arkansas Archeological Survey), Geography, and Sociology.

Vision

The School of Social and Behavioral Sciences will be recognized as a model regional School providing students with excellent instruction and opportunity both in and out of the classroom. The quality of our programs will match any in the region with retention and graduation rates that meet or exceed its peer institutions.

Mission

The mission of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences is to develop competent professionals, leaders, and socially responsible graduates who can effectively interact with populations from all walks of life, function in multi-disciplinary and technologically advanced work environments in their chosen occupations and professions, and serve the citizens of the state, the nation, and the global community.

School SLOs

A student who graduates with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice or Psychology, a Bachelor of Arts in History or Political Science, or a Bachelor of Social Work from the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SSBS) will develop the following skills:

- (1) **Research:** The student will develop comprehensive research skills (both qualitative and quantitative) related to the study of social and behavioral sciences, including the use of appropriate technologies and methodologies to gather, analyze, and communicate research data and results.
- (2) **Critical Thinking:** The student will be able to use critical thinking skills to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize knowledge of major arguments, assumptions, and evidence from the social and behavioral sciences, which includes gaining respect for and using skeptical inquiry and the scientific method to assess new knowledge.
- (3) **Grounded Knowledge:** The student will develop an understanding of the major arguments, assumptions, and evidence from the social and behavioral sciences.
- (4) **Presentation Skills:** The student will gain the ability to evaluate and manage information for presentation in academic and professional settings, including the use of graphic and computer technology as well as the production of quality papers.
- (5) **Social and Cultural Awareness:** The student will develop a sense of self and their role in the world by examining the content and processes used in social and behavioral sciences, with respect for cultural institutions, processes, structures, and interactions.
- (6) **Workforce Preparedness and Planning:** The student will have the communication and leadership skills needed for success in a career grounded in the social sciences, as well as preparation for graduate and professional studies.

**University of Arkansas at Monticello
School of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Strategic Plan 2023**

The School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SSBS) Strategic Plan identifies areas critical to the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences' Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), as well as the goals of the University of Arkansas at Monticello (UAM) Strategic Plan. Strategic areas of emphasis, along with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Alignments for the UAM Strategic Plan identify the subcategory in each of the following areas of emphasis:

1. Student Success
2. Enrollment and Retention Gains

The SSBS Strategic Plan continues to focus on teaching, advising, retention, graduation, and other student-centered issues crucial to student success. In future iterations, the SSBS Strategic Plan should develop additional emphasis on other aspects of the SSBS mission, including faculty research and service.

Student Success

Continuing Goal: Ensuring that all programs are currently meeting best practices in their field as defined by relevant professional organizations and societies. This includes the use of diverse pedagogical methods, incorporating the latest scholarship-based information, and adequately preparing students for future career opportunities in their fields.

Action: The faculty from each SSBS major will undertake an evaluation of their curriculum to determine that it is meeting best practices in the field. Each major will provide a report to the dean outlining problems, suggestions, or concerns shortly after spring break. The dean will meet with the majors to address the issues and determine corrective action. The effectiveness of the evaluation process and responses will be tracked by SSBS assessments developed by the faculty. Each year the dean will provide a detailed report describing all changes and a review of their effectiveness. The school will use that information to make changes the following year.

KPI: Each major will provide the dean with an evaluation report annually to be based on competency evaluation of graduating seniors.

Continuing Goal: Assessment of student performance.

Action: More diverse and frequent assessment of student performance, including both subjective and objective methods.

KPI: All classes will have graded assignments by the third week of class and at least 40 % of all evaluation completed by Week 8 of the full-term semester.

Continuing Goal: Experiential Learning: Internships, Service Learning, and Field Studies.

Action: SSBS will continue to enhance student development and success through experiential and service learning.

KPI: SSBS will offer one opportunity for community service, field trips, or student groups each semester.

New Goal: SSBS will ensure that all classroom materials are of the highest quality and meet the educational needs of our students.

Action: Each major will examine all classroom materials to determine their quality of information and presentation.

KPI: Ensure that 95% of classroom materials are aligned with curriculum standards by conducting a comprehensive review for the curriculum standards and learning objectives for each course every five years.

KPI: Ensure that 80% of classroom materials are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities every two years.

SLO Alignments: SSBS—1 (Research), 2 (Critical Thinking), 3 (Grounded Knowledge), 4 (Presentation Skills), 6 (Workforce Preparedness); UAM—1 (Communication), 2 (Critical Thinking), 3 (Teamwork)

UAM Strategic Plan Alignments: Goal 1 (Promote Opportunity and Success for All Students), Strategies 1.1.4, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 1.3.2, 1.3.4; Goal 2 (Recruit, Empower, and Retain High-Quality Faculty and Staff), Strategy 2.2.2. (See Addendum 1.)

Retention and Enrollment

Continuing Goal: Advising is a crucial component of student success as it assures that students are making appropriate progress through their degree plans towards graduation.

Action: Students will enroll in 15 hours a semester and progress appropriately.

Action: The dean will be responsible for tracking each advisor's adherence to our procedures. This will include, students registered in appropriate level courses, 15 semester hour enrollment, and are progressing appropriately.

KPI: We will see a 5% increase in semester-semester retention resulting in an eventual graduate rate of 40% within six years.

KPI: Maintain a student comprehension of 80% or higher regarding advising services by conducting regular surveys or focus groups to gather feedback from students regarding their advising experiences.

New Goal: Improve retention by revitalizing and developing field study opportunities that allow students to experience the world outside of southeastern Arkansas—both in the United States as well as abroad.

Action: Develop local, regional, as well as national and international trips.

KPI: The School will develop at least one local/regional trip every two years.

New Goal: Maintain enrollment and the number of students in each major until such time as campus/nationwide college enrollment begins increasing overall.

Action: The faculty will actively recruit from regional schools. This will include the participation of the School's clubs and honor societies. We will develop a social media presence for all majors.

KPI: Each major will maintain the number of majors in their respective discipline.

KPI: Each major will participate in one unique recruitment event per year.

KPI: Each major will conduct an annual evaluation of its courses and requirements, and will report to the Dean each year suggestions for improvements that will retain current students and attract new students.

SLO Alignments: SSBS—2 (Critical Thinking); 5 (Self & Sociocultural Awareness); 6 (Workforce Preparedness and Planning); UAM—4 (Global Learning).

UAM Strategic Plan Alignments: Goal 1 (Promote Opportunity and Success for All Students), Strategies 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.2.1, 1.2.3. (See Addendum 1.)

In Table 1, provide assessment of progress toward meeting KPIs during the past academic year and what changes, if any, might be considered to better meet goals. KPIs should be quantifiable—for example, a goal of increased

enrollments should be measured by a specific number or percentage; if school visits are part of a recruitment effort, say how many school visits are your goal; if your goal is to see an improved success rate in a class, by what percentage do you hope to see the success rate increase? Your goals are what you want to achieve. Your KPIs are how you measure your degree of success.

Table 1: Assessment of Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Assessment of Progress	Implications for Future Planning/Change
<i>Student Success</i>		
Each major will provide the dean with an evaluation report.	Faculty regularly update the dean on course progress and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Each major evaluates student success in the program differently. They will evaluate the effectiveness of the tools used, and changes to be made.	The SSBS Dean will be sharing ILO data more broadly with faculty in order to improve course design and outcomes. Faculty will need to be more proactive about reporting how data is used in making decisions about their courses.
All classes will have graded assignments by the third week of class and at least 40% of all evaluation completed by Week 8 of the full-term semester.	Moving progress reports to Week 5 has influenced most faculty to have some form of early assessment. However, courses with significant research or project components tend to have assessment weighted towards the end of the semester.	Faculty are concerned that early assignments and midterm grades may not be accurate reflections of overall student performance. Faculty may require more guidance and training on effective early assessment techniques and scaffolded grading.
50% of all majors in research-oriented classes will present their research papers outside the classroom, in venues such as departmental or campus research symposia, off-campus conferences, or to the general public.	The Social Work program sponsored the Student Research Symposium, and had participation from Social Work, Psychology, and non-SSBS students. Political Science and Psychology students presented work at regional conferences.	Many of the venues for presenting student work are run through honor societies, which limits participation to members, although Social Work sponsors the Student Research Symposium. It is also difficult to have students develop a project and present it in a single semester; there is a need to maintain student interest and continuity once a research course is complete.

KPI	Assessment of Progress	Implications for Future Planning/Change
The SSBS will offer at least one opportunity for community service, field trips, or student groups each semester.	SSBS is currently focusing on day trips (mainly Phi Alpha Theta and History Club). Social Work and Criminal Justice have various service projects during the course of the year, while Psychology and Political Science have focused on research presentations.	Some majors have recurring events each year. The unit as a whole face challenges related to life post-COVID, funding and low participation. Community service is an area that each major as well as student groups could focus on in the future.
Ensure that 95% of classroom materials are aligned with curriculum standards by conducting a comprehensive review for the curriculum standards and learning objectives for each course every five years.	Social Work is monitored by their accreditation board in this area. Each major is required to identify learning objectives on course syllabi.	Deciding when and how this will be done needs to be determined.
Ensure that 80% of classroom materials are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities every two years.	Each faculty member has been working to make Blackboard Shells accessible. IT continues to offer training and guidance in this area.	Some faculty have found helpful methods and tools to simplify this process. Finding a way to share best practices across the unit in the future would be helpful.
<i>Retention and Enrollment</i>		
We will see a 5% increase in semester-semester retention resulting in an eventual graduate rate of 40% within six years.	More data is needed about freshman and sophomore level retention to determine if this KPI is being met. Retention and graduation rates are softest in Criminal Justice, Political Science, and Psychology; special attention should be paid to online students, who seem to be the cause for this gap.	Graduation rates remain relatively good; once students enter their junior year, they are likely to graduate. We need to examine how to increase retention of the freshman to sophomore cohort, which is where we lose most students.

KPI	Assessment of Progress	Implications for Future Planning/Change
Maintain a student comprehension of 80% or higher regarding advising services by conducting regular surveys or focus groups to gather feedback from students regarding their advising experiences.	Social Work has students complete a short survey after advising appointments.	Create a universal survey to be completed digitally. Make it a required part of the advising process that has to be submitted to move to the next step to complete registration.
The School will develop at least one local/regional trip every two years.	Phi Alpha Theta has been active in conducting regional day trips for the last two years. Two academic classes also engaged in experiential trips during the year.	Faculty need to consider interdisciplinary trips, in order to get a minimum number of students to make trips viable. Collaboration with other academic units might be a possibility.
Each major will maintain the number of majors in their respective discipline.	Most programs continue to hold steady, with a slight increase in Psychology majors. Given declining enrollments in social science majors nationwide, this is encouraging: SSBS programs remain viable.	While declining numbers are worrying, the three-year trend indicates stasis. Each major can continue with its current plans, as fluctuation is to be expected.
Each major will participate in one unique recruitment event per year.	Social Work held its annual Social Work Fair; History was able to use the regional Arkansas History Day competition as a recruitment tool. Other disciplines were represented at campus-wide recruitment events.	Faculty will be encouraged to develop contacts in local schools and the community in order to create more opportunities for recruitment visits.

KPI	Assessment of Progress	Implications for Future Planning/Change
Each major will conduct an annual evaluation of its courses and requirements, and will report to the Dean each year suggestions for improvements that will retain current students and attract new students.	Both Criminal Justice and Psychology have overhauled their curriculum this year in response to program evaluations. The new History/Political Science degree is in the process of collecting data to determine if further changes to the curriculum need to be made. Social Work is experimenting with a “block scheduling” policy for its classes to help students manage their time and increase student retention.	The process and length of time it takes to develop new programs can make responding to current employment and market trends cumbersome. The current political atmosphere makes recruiting and developing in social science programs problematic.

List, in Table 2, the Academic Unit Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and the alignment with UAM and Unit Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plans.

Table 2: Unit Student Learning Outcomes

University Student Learning Outcome	Unit Student Learning Outcome (<i>may have more than one unit SLO related to each University SLO; list each one</i>)	Alignment with UAM/University Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan	Alignment with Unit Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan
<i>Communication:</i> Students will communicate effectively in social, academic, and professional contexts using a variety of means, including written, oral, quantitative, and/or visual modes as appropriate to topic, audience, and	(1) Research	Enhances scholarly activity and provides opportunities for the development of communication skills. Moreover, these opportunities provide experience critical to career development and becoming a critical evaluator and consumer of information.	Learning how to research, even at the most elementary levels in general education, is at the core of humanistic learning and the social sciences. Research skills are essential to the development and viability of academic programs.

University Student Learning Outcome	Unit Student Learning Outcome (may have more than one unit SLO related to each University SLO; list each one)	Alignment with UAM/University Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan	Alignment with Unit Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan
discipline.	(4) Presentation Skills	Prepares students to succeed in the technological world; reliable access to information is critical to student success, and students are more accustomed to receiving information in non-print formats.	It is not enough to do quality research; facts and data must be interpreted and publicly presented. Most careers requiring social science degrees will require some form of presentation of data or analysis.
	(5) Social and Cultural Awareness	Reflects the need to be an educated and productive member of society with the ability to work in different environments.	Students need to be aware that people of different backgrounds will have different experiences; in order to communicate effectively, students need to be educated about cultural differences.
<i>Critical Thinking:</i> Students will demonstrate critical thinking in evaluating all forms of persuasion and/or ideas, in formulating innovative strategies, and in solving problems.	(1) Research	Scholarly activity is the foundation of critical thinking, as it requires students to find information, evaluate information, and deploy it in service of their own ideas and arguments.	Most jobs in the social sciences will require some form of research, data analysis, and presentation skills. All of these are honed through academic research.
	(2) Critical Thinking	This will allow the students to be productive members of the community by increasing their ability to be cognizant consumers of information and to incorporate that information	Critical thinking is central and vital to virtually all aspects of the School and University's mission. The ability to critically consume information is a key component of one's ability to be an

University Student Learning Outcome	Unit Student Learning Outcome (<i>may have more than one unit SLO related to each University SLO; list each one</i>)	Alignment with UAM/University Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan	Alignment with Unit Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan
		into their daily lives, community activities, and plans. This will improve the quality of life in their communities. They will also be better equipped to develop integrated social interactions and provide an employment pool for the modern economy.	entrepreneur, to be creative, to understand social issues, and to be a productive member of modern society.
	(6) Workforce Preparedness & Planning	Being well prepared for further training or employment is a key component of a regional university's goal to support the economic development of the region in which it is based.	Graduates need to be able to land jobs and have reasonable opportunities to advance.
<i>Global Learning:</i> Students will demonstrate understanding of natural and human matters on an international level.	(3) Grounded Knowledge	Nuanced thinking based on fact and critically informed interpretation is central to the development of good citizens.	Effective and socially responsible leadership is based on grounded knowledge, both for students and the citizens they will become.
	(5) Social and Cultural Awareness	Reflects the need to be an educated and productive member of society with the ability to work in a multi-faceted environment.	Southeast Arkansas exists within a global politico-economic framework. To treat people with different backgrounds truly equally and prevent bias, knowledge of how the individual exists in society and how different cultures operate and view the world is critical.

University Student Learning Outcome	Unit Student Learning Outcome (<i>may have more than one unit SLO related to each University SLO; list each one</i>)	Alignment with UAM/University Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan	Alignment with Unit Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan
<p><i>Teamwork:</i> Students will work collaboratively to reach a common goal and will demonstrate the characteristics of productive citizens.</p>	(4) Presentation Skills	Academic research or information is only valuable if it is presented to a wider audience, and contextualized to explain how it will benefit society.	Collaborative work is the norm in social science fields; presentations are usual and are normally put together by teams.
	(6) Workforce Preparedness & Planning	The goal of any program is to prepare its graduates for the workplace. Virtually all our goals require the ability to work with others.	Social science graduates tend to work in fields that rely on “big picture” thinking and engagement with issues; thus, teamwork will be central to any such careers, as large problems can never be solved by individuals alone.

Describe how Student Learning Outcomes are assessed in the unit and how the results/data are used for course/program/unit improvements.

In the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, most curricular evaluation is at the classroom level. The faculty evaluates students by employing instructor-made exams, standardized tests, research papers, short themed papers or reading journals, class presentations, and projects. Additional evaluation examines student performance at regional, national, and international professional meetings. SLO assessment is based upon criteria set forth on a course-by-course basis by the instructor. Faculty members from each major meet annually to discuss standards and appropriate academic rigor.

This dispersed model of assessment does not mean that consistency is not important throughout the School. Faculty members are required to create comprehensive syllabi for each course to ensure that each professor is adhering to the standards set forth for the SSBS. Each syllabus is reviewed by the SSBS dean to ensure that they include the information needed by students to complete the course, including specific grading components, student learning outcomes specific to the course, assignments, daily schedule,

disciplinary guidelines, and expected work load. Faculty members meet by discipline each spring to plan courses for the coming year, to review the curriculum, and to suggest changes. The dean is responsible for reviewing all student questions and concerns that elevated above the instructor level. The dean further evaluates each course by reviewing student evaluations, peer reviews, classroom observations, and student comments; the dean may also evaluate Blackboard course shells, especially for online courses. The dean and the faculty then initiate any necessary changes.

This year's discussions generated the following innovations and concerns:

1. Fall saw the launch of Social Science Research Methods, the unified research methods course that was designed to replace the unit's discipline-specific research courses. Dr. McKee oversaw both the face-to-face inaugural run in Fall and the online pilot in Spring. There are adjustments to be made to the course. There were probably too many assignments for a 20000-level course, and assignments more tangential to the central research project are being rethought. The History module in particular needs further refinement, as the discipline follows different models from other social science disciplines and instructors need more guidance in research question development and grading. But the concept has proven sound, and the fact the course can be offered in multiple modalities should stop the course from being a roadblock in student progress to degree completion.
2. Due to unusually low enrollment in Spring 2025, Statistics for Social Sciences was combined with Psychology Statistics. While there were some minor coordination issues in combining a lower-division and upper-division course, Dr. Prichard reported that everything ran relatively smoothly. (Smoothly except for the issues discussed in the Critical Thinking ILO below.) This may lay the groundwork for eventually combining the two courses, which will free up staffing for other critical courses.
3. At the behest of the Office of Academic Affairs, Criminal Justice began considering the feasibility of a reduced credit hour bachelor's degree. Faculty felt strongly that if such a degree were to be developed, it should be done in tandem with a traditional degree: the 120-hour degree would prepare students for graduate study and professional jobs, while the 90-hour degree would be focused on workforce training for law enforcement officers. The challenge will be in developing a stackable CP that can be completed in one semester, as CJ students need to complete CRJU 10103 before enrolling in other courses. While the bachelor's degree has been placed on the back burner as ADHE explores the ramifications of such degrees, this has sparked discussion of a stackable CJ credential system that will be further explored in AY 2025-26.
4. Social Work has perennial issues with recruitment and retention driven by the fact that many students work and live far from campus. Due to the nature of the curriculum, asynchronous online classes are restricted to senior students. This year, the program has begun to experiment with a combination of block scheduling and hybrid classes. All core Social Work classes are scheduled for Tuesday/Thursday, and one day is set aside for remote instruction. (This system works due to the fact that all students take the same core classes with less freedom of choice than other disciplines.) So far, this system has worked well and student success rates are holding steady. Ms. Jenkins is exploring whether this formula might allow Social Work to develop 2+2 programs with regional community colleges and increase enrollment.
5. As the climate of political civility in the U.S. continues to deteriorate, faculty report that classes are increasingly affected. This is primarily reflected in general education courses in Criminal Justice, History, and Political Science where faculty must

cover politically controversial topics. While faculty are well versed in maneuvering through academic disagreement, they are more at sea with how to respond to students who reject facts. At least one parent has complained to the Dean about “biased” teaching when a faculty member was presenting objective statistics. This is a potential retention issue, as students who reject fundamental concepts that underpin academic disciplines are likely to engage less in class and have their academic performance suffer as a result.

- The Social Work program in particular is concerned by legislation forbidding the reporting of diversity metrics to accrediting agencies; this is in direct conflict with the metrics required by the Council on Social Work Education to maintain program accreditation. The Director of Social Work and the SSBS Dean have been working extremely hard to make sure all aspects of the program are in compliance with both state law and the accreditation standards of CSWE.

To ensure that students have solid foundational knowledge in areas adjacent but significant to their respective majors, each program has supportive requirements that direct students to take specific general education courses that ensure students have the best possible tools for success and quality education. Supportive requirements for each SSBS major (including courses required within the general education core) are outlined in the chart below.

General Education Course	Program(s) Supported	Rationale
BIOL 10043 Intro Biological Science <i>and</i> BIOL 10031 Biological Science Lab	Social Work	Knowledge of human biological functioning, brain chemistry, and genetics is central to working with clients. <i>SLO (3) Grounded Knowledge</i>
SPCH 10003 Public Speaking <i>and</i> SPCH 22003 Interpersonal Communications	Criminal Justice	Communicating to disparate audiences is central to law enforcement jobs and public safety. <i>SLOs (4) Presentation Skills; (5) Social & Cultural Awareness; (6) Workforce Preparedness & Planning</i>
CPSI 10003 Microcomputer Apps	Criminal Justice Social Work	Ensures students will have basic computing skills for the workplace. <i>SLO (6) Workforce Preparedness & Planning</i>
FINN 11903 Personal Finance Economics	Social Work	Provides background for social workers who may have to counsel clients on financial matters. <i>SLOs (5) Social & Cultural Awareness; (6) Workforce Preparedness & Planning</i>
ENGL 32553 Technical Writing <i>(Note: Non gen-ed requirement)</i>	Criminal Justice	Police reports and legal briefs require precise formatting, terminology, and technical standards. <i>SLOs (4) Presentation Skills; (6) Workforce Preparedness & Planning</i>

General Education Course	Program(s) Supported	Rationale
Foreign Language Courses (6.0 hours)	History Political Science	Provides students with a broader global learning framework for studying foreign societies and cultures. <i>SLO (5) Social & Cultural Awareness</i>
GEOG 11003 General Geography I	History	Knowledge of physical geography and basic cultural interaction is inherent to the study of history. <i>SLOs (3) Grounded Knowledge; (5) Social & Cultural Awareness</i>
HIST 22103 American History I <i>or</i> HIST 21203 American History II	Political Science	Knowledge of U.S. history is inherent in understanding how government is structured. <i>SLO (3) Grounded Knowledge</i>
PLSC 20003 American National Government	Criminal Justice History Social Work	Knowledge of basic governmental institutions is assumed in the subject matter of each discipline. <i>SLO (3) Grounded Knowledge</i>
PSYC 11003 Introduction to Psychology	Criminal Justice Social Work	Knowledge of how individuals behave is central to these fields. <i>SLOs (3) Grounded Knowledge; (5) Social & Cultural Awareness</i>
SOCI 10103 Introduction to Sociology	Criminal Justice (option) Social Work	Knowledge of how society operates is central to these fields. <i>SLOs (3) Grounded Knowledge; (5) Social & Cultural Awareness</i>
SCWK 10043 Survey of Social Work	Criminal Justice (option)	Law enforcement and social work professionals frequently work together, and knowledge of the field is useful. <i>SLOs (3) Grounded Knowledge; (6) Workforce Preparedness & Planning</i>

NOTE: Social Work students must complete all general education and supportive requirements, including general education English, prior to formal admission to the Social Work program.

Supportive requirements often supply early insights into how students will perform in their upper-division major courses: Criminal Justice and Social Work majors who fail to receive at least a “C” in Introduction to Psychology have a single digit graduation rate. We are examining ways in which to remediate students who do poorly in the key prerequisite courses. In most cases we find poor reading and writing skills to be the dominant problems. All SSBS classes are required to have some sort of basic writing exercises, even at the introductory level. This year, the Criminal Justice program reviewed its requirements to ensure that all supportive courses are teaching skills needed to be successful in the field. Beginning with AY 25-26, Criminal Justice will no longer require Technical

Writing, as it was determined the course does not cover enough field-specific information; students will not need to take a second speech course, as the requirement was deemed redundant; and students not be required to take American National Government, as faculty determined that knowledge about the US legal and criminal justice system gained in American History I or II would suffice as appropriate background.

A student’s research, writing, and critical thinking capabilities come with experience. The successful completion of writing assignments, learning how to use references, and report analytical research is critical to success. As stated earlier, each major requires its students to complete a research methods class. In these classes, students develop the ability to write coherently and concisely, develop their ability to interpret statistical reports, and develop the skill of independently planning and implementing long-term projects. Research is not merely an academic exercise; each of these skills developed in our research methods courses is critical to students’ future success in the workplace. This year, the unit launched Social Science Research Methods, a unified course that will train students across all SSBS disciplines in the basics of research. Curriculum mapping has identified areas of commonality, while faculty have developed discipline-specific modules and rubrics to provide guidance for students (and faculty). The lessons learned in this course will be further developed in each discipline’s upper-division seminars. Psychology will retain advanced research methods courses, as the experimental nature of much psychological research is significantly different from the other disciplines in the unit. Finally, Criminal Justice has converted its capstone class into SBSC 49033 Professional and Career Preparation, which focuses on ways that research and other academic experiences can be leveraged as students prepare to enter the job market, apply to graduate school, and otherwise plan their post-college life.

Major	Methods Courses	Purpose of Course and Skills Developed
Criminal Justice History Political Science Psychology Social Work	SBSC 21003 Social Science Research Methods	Trains students in the basics of academic research: information literacy, project development, literature review, citation, ethical use of information, and presentation.
Criminal Justice Political Science Social Work	SBSC 33143 Statistics for the Social Sciences	Develops mastery of the theoretical and computational elements of foundational statistics, with emphasis on workforce use of data.
Criminal Justice	SBSC 49033 Professional and Career Preparation	Develops presentation skills and trains students how to appropriately discuss research in resumés, cover letters, and graduate school applications.
Psychology	PSYC 22083 Statistical Methods	Develops mastery of the theoretical and computational elements of foundational statistics.

Major	Methods Courses	Purpose of Course and Skills Developed
	PSYC 30183 Experimental Research Methods	Focuses on experimental research design; students develop and execute their own experimental project.
	PSYC 34983 Fundamentals of Measurement	Focuses on the uses of research in clinical and practice settings, including the application of discrete measurement tools and practices.

Both Social Work and Psychology conduct additional assessments through the activities of their students in the practicum courses. Social work is far more formal with the Field Practicum Student Evaluation as one of the required competency assessment measures by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Each student and their field instructor, in consultation with and approval by the Field Director, develop specific activities or observable behaviors the student will perform or exhibit. The evaluation determines how well the student fulfills their learning contract. The actual measure is based upon a Likert scale ranging from 1-5. There are four (4) total evaluation times. Students must receive an average score of four (4) across the measures. The use of four measures allows the Director to track the student's performance and take steps to intervene should the benchmark not be met or if the student is weak in a particular area. These competencies are then used to determine the student's final grade for their Practicum course. This year all four students enrolled in the Practicum received a final grade of A.

Social Work has a second CSWE required assessment employing an integrated paper. This 20-30 page paper must follow an extensive twenty page standardized rubric. The paper requires the students to integrate their Social Work knowledge, values, and skills and apply it to Social Work practice in their agency context. The paper must demonstrate knowledge in a variety of areas as well as the student's personal reflections about their learning experience. The standardized rubric serves to guide the assessment of student's learning experience. Scores can range from 0 – 100. The competency 80% benchmark represents the minimum percentage of students the program expects to have achieved the outcome measure benchmarks in both measures for each of the nine competencies. This year, all 4 students in the program reached or surpassed the competency benchmark. The Social Work Field Instructor reports that this year there were no struggles on the part of the students to measure each of the required competencies. (Students who are placed at smaller agencies, as most of our students are, often don't have enough varied experiences to match CSWE's competencies.) In particular, social work students had numerous hands-on opportunities during their field placement. This in turn helps to explain the high job placement rate that the Social Work program has had in the last three years: when students get a chance to demonstrate their skills, agencies are more likely to want to hire them.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Psychology program was evaluated as part of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education Program Review process. The program developed a self-study that examined the goals and objectives of each program; the curriculum; qualifications of the faculty; resources allocated to each program; student graduation rates; overall program assessment; and a summation of the program's effectiveness. (The full self-study for the Psychology program review can be found on the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences website.) The self-study was reviewed by a pair of off-site reviewers, one of whom then made a

campus visit before the team submitted an independent evaluation of the program. The review of Psychology was quite positive, the reviewers noting that—in spite of significant faculty turn-over in the last few years—the program was still innovating and serving students well by making program changes to enable students to be eligible for a wider range of jobs and post-baccalaureate educational opportunities. The reviewers also noted the significant amount of scholarship turned out by faculty while still maintaining high teaching standards. The reviewers recommended increased professional development for faculty and more flexibility in leave time and appointments if salary increases cannot be justified under current budgetary circumstances. The next program to undergo an ADHE Program Review will be Criminal Justice in AY 2029-2030.

II. UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT

AACU Rubric Data

Describe **with specific details** how Student Learning Outcomes are assessed in your unit and how the results/data are used for course/program/unit improvements.

Oral Communication

If the dimension is not assessed, leave blank.

Dimension	Course Assessed	# of students scoring 4	# of students scoring 3	# of students scoring 2	# of students scoring 1	# of students scoring 0	Average score for class or activity	Total # of students assessed in unit
Organization	PLSC 46483	7	2	1	1	1	3.1	25
	PSYC 30183	2	7	3	1	0	2.8	
Language								
Delivery								
Supporting Material								
Central Message								

Describe assignment or exercise used for assessment.

For PLSC 46483, the instructor used a holistic approach as oral communication was embedded in several parts of the curriculum, including class discussion, a conference-length presentation, and an oral final exam. Rubrics were provided to the students for the last two exercises. For PSYC 30183, students were evaluated on a presentation of their research projects, which included a question-and-answer session.

What do the data indicate about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth and threats to effectiveness regarding student performance?

Strengths

- Students were able to explain terms and concepts clearly, and repeated key terms related to the project theme and theoretical connections to better guide listeners through their presentations.
- Students learned how sequence material for economy of words and to revise presentations to eliminate jargon. Students learned what is germane to a public presentation, and to present in a concise and respectful manner.

Weaknesses

- Some students expressed anxiety and self-consciousness before launching their presentations, and in PSYC 30183 one student openly expressed their dislike of public speaking, which shifted the focus of the presentation away from the research and towards the student's feelings. In an era of texting and direct messaging, many students are nervous about speaking in public.
- By nature of the discipline, PLSC 46483 dealt with current hot-button issues and controversial topics. Some students feel hindered from speaking confidently about subjects, which impacts the organization of presentations and discussions as students hedge.

Opportunities for Growth

- The instructor for PSYC 30183 set up the room for presentations a day ahead of time to allow students to practice. This sort of coaching would be highly effective for familiarizing students with the public speaking process and increasing their confidence in their abilities.
- Students could also use coaching on how to formulate better discussion questions—students tend to ask tightly focused (“yes or no”) questions about points of content, not larger questions about implications. This would lead to better class discussions.

Threats to Effectiveness

- Effective public speaking comes with practice, which means that research and project work will ideally be done well ahead of time. Of course, in the real world, this is rarely how students operate. Faculty should consider this when setting deadlines for drafts and other project scaffolding.
- Student use of AI can be problematic, as students often do not realize that AI does not generate understanding but is built on language models. AI-generated materials are rarely as focused as similar materials generated by humans, generates much more jargon, and students relying on AI will not see quality examples of organization.

What actions, if any, do you recommend that might improve student performance in this learning outcome?

Given student discomfort with public speaking, building in more low-stakes opportunities to practice over the course of the semester would help to build confidence and provide additional chances for feedback. Instructors should review any presentation rubrics to ensure that benchmarks are clearly communicated and easily understood by students. If class time and format permits, allowing students to present in different formats can assist those with greater levels of anxiety or preference for written communications. Use

of properly vetted and scholarly audio-visual class materials and resources (such YouTube videos, TED talks, etc.) not only relays content but can be used to demonstrate the skills and techniques of public speaking and creating a presentation.

What revisions, if any, to the assessment process do you recommend that might help us to acquire more useful data in this learning outcome?

Oral Communication is a learning outcome that might be best assessed through a holistic approach rather than on a one-assignment model. There are different modes of public speaking (presentation, informal discussion, lecture, etc.) and a single assessment might not capture an accurate view of the student’s skills. Incorporating peer review into the oral communications process might also be productive, as students can share their strategies for coping with anxiety and stage fright.

Written Communication

If dimension not assessed, leave blank.

Dimension	Course Assessed	# of students scoring 4	# of students scoring 3	# of students scoring 2	# of students scoring 1	# of students scoring 0	Average score for class or activity	Total # of students assessed in unit
Context and Purpose for Writing	SCWK 21443	5	3	0	0	0	3.6	8
Content Development								
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions								
Sources and Evidence								
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	SBSC 49033	5	5	2	0	0	3.3	12

Describe assignment or exercise used for assessment.

For SCWK 21443, the instructor used a holistic approach based on multiple professional writing assignments, including case notes, reflexive exercises, and preparation for role-playing activities. For SBSC 49033, the scores were determined using a progressive series of writing assignments in which students were required to revise and resubmit their work to demonstrate the ability to work with and incorporate feedback into their writing.

What do the data indicate about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth and threats to effectiveness regarding student performance?

Strengths

- In SBSC 49033, results suggest that the iterative process of revisions and feedback in the course effectively supported students in improving their writing skills.
- In SCWK 21433, students consistently performed well in specific types of assignments, such as case reports or reflective writing, suggesting writing with a specific professional purpose in mind strengthens student outcomes, especially when it comes to applying discipline-specific outcomes to their work. This perhaps explains why the average class score was higher for a sophomore-level course than for a senior-level capstone course.

Weaknesses

- A small group of students struggled to meet basic proficiency in their writing. Addressing this could involve additional practice with editing and revising or workshops focused on common syntax and mechanics issues. However, since all students evaluated have completed English Composition I and II, these problems could reflect more widespread problems with writing instruction across the curriculum.
- Many students lack confidence in their writing skills and often overcompensate by including irrelevant or unnecessary information in their writing, which is a common issue at the introductory professional writing stage.

Opportunities for Growth

- Students' confidence in their writing skills will continue to grow as they have more opportunities to practice writing in future courses. This is to be expected in introductory courses, as many of the professional writing skills learned are new to students. They need to be encouraged in their writing skills to assist in confidence building as they learn and practice new skill sets.
- A portfolio structure and iterative feedback process present valuable opportunities for sustained growth. By focusing on individualized support for developing writers, refining proficient students' skills, and providing targeted resources, there is significant potential to enhance students' overall mastery of syntax and mechanics.

Threats to Effectiveness

- If students do not fully integrate the feedback provided on their assignments, they risk repeating errors and missing opportunities for improvement. This could undermine the iterative learning process and diminish the effectiveness of the revisions required for the portfolio. Students who approach revisions superficially, without critically addressing the issues highlighted, may not achieve the intended learning outcomes, which will limit their ability to refine their writing to professional standards. To mitigate these threats, it is essential to foster a classroom culture that values thorough engagement with feedback, emphasizes the importance of iterative improvement, and provides ample resources to support students' growth.

- Skill gaps and learning disparities can undermine students’ ability to succeed in complex assignments if they lack foundational skills (e.g., grammar, time management, technology skills).

What actions, if any, do you recommend that might improve student performance in this learning outcome?

Early formative assessments could be used to identify and remedy skill gaps, either early in the course or early in the overall academic career of the student. There should be a mechanism to measure the extent and quality of revisions, especially since students frequently do not see the need to revise their work. Students could submit a reflective note with their revised work explaining how they addressed feedback, which would reveal whether students are effectively engaging with the revision process. (This could be further enhanced by an end-of-semester self-assessment component identifying growth areas and areas for improvement.) Peer review sessions where students assess each other’s syntax and mechanics using guided rubrics would help them identify errors in others’ work and reinforce their understanding of effective writing practices.

What revisions, if any, to the assessment process do you recommend that might help us to acquire more useful data in this learning outcome?

AI-based tools or diagnostic writing software (e.g., Grammarly or Turnitin Revision Assistant) can be used to generate objective reports on syntax and mechanics issues in students’ drafts. This data can highlight patterns across the class. For longer-term data tracking, students’ writing progress can be charted across their academic journey by using digital portfolios or centralized assessment tools. This approach would provide actionable insights into the long-term development of writing skills.

Critical Thinking

If dimension not assessed, leave blank.

Dimension	Course Assessed	# of students scoring 4	# of students scoring 3	# of students scoring 2	# of students scoring 1	# of students scoring 0	Average score for class or activity	Total # of students assessed in unit
Explanation of Issues	SBSC 22083 (Fall 24)	11	3	5	0	0	3.3	37
	SBSC 22083 (Spring 25)	7	6	0	0	5	2.6	
Evidence								

Dimension	Course Assessed	# of students scoring 4	# of students scoring 3	# of students scoring 2	# of students scoring 1	# of students scoring 0	Average score for class or activity	Total # of students assessed in unit
Influence of Context and Assumptions	SBSC 3314	5	3	1	1	0	3.2	10
Student's Position (Perspective, Thesis/Hypothesis)								
Conclusion and Related Outcomes (Implications and Consequences)	PSYC 22083 (Fall 24)	2	3	6	8	9	1.3	54
	PSYC 22083 (Spring 25)	12	9	5	0	0	3.3	

Note: The Spring 2025 section of SBSC 33143 was combined with PSYC 22083 due to low enrollment. Data from PSYC 22083 reflects student outcomes from both sections.

Describe assignment or exercise used for assessment.

SBSC 22083: In Fall 2024, students were given a 10-question multiple-choice quiz designed to assess their ability to evaluate the quality and veracity of research evidence as presented in professional literature. The quiz questions focused on concepts such as identifying credible sources, distinguishing between primary and secondary sources, and critically evaluating claims made in research studies. In Spring 2025, the ILO was evaluated by the rubric for a literature review that emphasized the quality of evidence selection, interpretation, and synthesis.

SBSC 3314: Students completed a 10-question multiple-choice quiz designed to assess their understanding of statistical assumptions, including their ability to identify assumptions and evaluate their implications in various contexts.

PSYC 22083: In Fall 2024, students were asked to evaluate the following scenario in terms of causation, correlation, and research design: “A researcher does a correlational study and finds a relationship between the number of hours a student reports studying and their GPA. The conclusion of their paper is as follows, ‘We have proven that studying causes GPA to increase’.” In Spring 2025, students answered 10 questions on the final exam that emphasized interpreting statistical significance and interpreting media coverage of scientific findings.

What do the data indicate about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth and threats to effectiveness regarding student performance?

Strengths

- In PSYC 22083, Dr. Prichard continues to stress the importance of statistical significance and the avoidance of conflating causation and correlation, a weakness that the unit identified in the AY 2023-24 annual report. Discussing the topic more in the course and building it into course assessments accounts for the improvement in this metric from Fall to Spring semesters.
- While several of the assessments were built around multiple-choice quizzes and tests, this method does allow for efficient assessment of students' foundational understanding of evaluating research evidence, ensuring consistency and objectivity in scoring. Additionally, it provides clear insights into specific areas where students may struggle, enabling targeted instructional improvements.
- Use of a rubric to evaluate the literature review supplies targeted feedback that students can immediately apply, and those who follow the sequence reach the top evidence band. The design aligns well with best practices for teaching advanced academic writing.
- If one removes the students scoring 0 from the data calculations (since these scores are usually due to non-participation), average scores for each class evaluated are relatively consistent: except for the Fall 2024 section of PSYC 22083, class averages range from 3.2 to 3.5 (SBSC 22083, Spring 25).

Weaknesses

- Performance dips stem from participation, not content, because several students skipped one or more milestones and forfeited feedback. Their missing submissions produced zeros that lowered the overall class average. It is difficult to re-engage students once they drift away.
- Multiple-choice format limits the ability to evaluate deeper critical thinking or the students' capacity to analyze assumptions in complex, real-world scenarios. It may also encourage rote memorization rather than fostering a deeper understanding of how assumptions influence statistical results.
- In terms of statistical significance, only around 40% of students were capable of either catching multiple errors or catching one and adequately explaining why it is an error. As before, student concepts of absolute "proof" continue to be hard to shake.

Opportunities for Growth

- Especially for online courses, adding a brief "What I Learned" discussion post after every milestone would promote independent reflection and make progress visible to both peers and instructor. The posts could double as early alerts, allowing timely intervention when a student fails to submit. This lightweight change would preserve the existing scaffold while strengthening accountability.
- To better use multiple-choice assessments of critical thinking, faculty could include integrating short-answer questions or follow-up activities where students justify their responses to multiple-choice questions, providing insight into their reasoning.

Additionally, incorporating case studies or practical examples could help students connect theoretical knowledge about assumptions to real-world statistical analyses.

Threats to Effectiveness

- Disengagement remains a risk if students continue to underestimate the value of intermediate steps. Last-minute efforts cannot replace the iterative feedback that the scaffold provides, so gaps in participation will still translate into poor final drafts. Time-management challenges and competing course demands may encourage some students to bypass milestones unless the new accountability layer is enforced.
- There is a disconnect between giving “correct answers,” and then showing a deeper understanding of the logic of statistics. There were a few students who are in the C range who caught at least one error and there were students in the A and B range that caught none despite being able to calculate correct responses and mimic the form of statistical reporting on exams.
- Around 25% of students in statistics classes still struggle with numeracy and basic quantitative skills. Disengaged students routinely skipped class, regularly left the classroom, and acted agitated if class went on too long—and these students struggled with both class and the assessment.

What actions, if any, do you recommend that might improve student performance in this learning outcome?

Dr. Prichard cuts straight to the heart of the correlation versus causation problem:

This continues to perplex me. I have explicitly taught and explained that statistics do not prove things. I have said it multiple times and made the idea central to my discussions of the central limit theorem. I am now toying with the idea of specifically including a lecture and an assignment about “proof vs. probability.” I mention it repeatedly, I cover probability, I cover the central limit theorem. I talk about Type I and Type II errors, which imply statistical studies can be in error. I have literally said, “repeat after me, statistics don’t prove conclusions.” And a large percentage of them still think a statistically significant finding proves a correlational relationship and/or a correlational relationship implies causation. The idea of “proof” seems so pernicious and so hard to expunge I might literally have to spend an entire day with a power point presentation called “Stats Don’t Prove Anything” and make a related assignment.

In addition to the blunt object approach, faculty should consider incorporating supplemental instructional materials, such as interactive modules or video explanations, focused on the application of statistical assumptions in real-world contexts. Introducing practice quizzes with immediate feedback and opportunities for reflection could help reinforce key concepts and improve understanding of how assumptions impact statistical analyses.

What revisions, if any, to the assessment process do you recommend that might help us to acquire more useful data in this learning outcome?

All faculty reporting data for this ILO suggest low-stakes “evidence appraisal” mini-assignments. These could be supplementing the

multiple-choice quiz with a brief written response section where students explain their reasoning for one or two key questions, rating the methodological soundness of an academic article, or mixing multiple-choice with short answer questions. These methods would provide insight into their critical thinking processes, help identify whether students can apply concepts beyond recognition-level tasks, chart individual growth in source evaluation, pinpoint the point in the term where progress stalls, and correlate early appraisal skill with final-paper quality.

Global Learning

This criterion was not assessed during the 2024-2025 academic year. It will be assessed in the 2025-2026 academic year.

Teamwork

This criterion was not assessed during the 2024-2025 academic year. It will be assessed in the 2025-2026 academic year.

Online Class Assessment Based on Simplified OSCQR

Fill in unit totals in each box below; summarize action plans (if any are needed) for each Standard; do SWOT analysis based on this data.

Standard	Sufficiently Present	Minor Revision	Moderate Revision	Major Revision	Not Applicable	Action Plan Summary
1. Welcome, Overview, and Information						
1.1 It's clear how students contact the instructor and how and when students attend class and submit assignments.	32				2	No action necessary at this time.
2. Course Organization						

Standard	Sufficiently Present	Minor Revision	Moderate Revision	Major Revision	Not Applicable	Action Plan Summary
2.1. The course is organized into modules, units, weeks, or other chunks. Each section has due dates and expectations clearly stated.	32	1			1	This is increasingly becoming a standard best practice for course construction across disciplines, and very little action is needed at this time.
3. Accessibility						
3.1. At a minimum, videos should have automatically generated captions that have been reviewed for accuracy by the instructor.	17	8			9	While captions are often outside of instructor control, the data suggests that either faculty are becoming better at finding appropriately captioned material, or awareness of the need for accessible material across the Internet is making life easier.
3.2. Blackboard Ally reports have been used to identify and remediate course content for improved accessibility.	17	12			5	Faculty using PDF copies of materials often have difficulty finding time and/or resources to convert those materials into an accessible format that complies with copyright law.
4. Course Activities						
4.1. Course activities should encourage collaboration between students whether through discussion boards, synchronous sessions, or group projects.	28	4	1		2	Creating genuine student interaction is difficult, especially in asynchronous courses where students wait until the last minute to complete work and post to discussion boards. Faculty continue to look for ways to incentivize early posting and non-AI responses.
4.2. Course activities encourage learners to develop higher-order thinking and problem solving skills, such as critical reflection or analysis.	31	1			2	This is easier to manage in upper-division courses, where learning is already more geared towards papers, projects, and various forms of experiential learning.
5. Interaction						

Standard	Sufficiently Present	Minor Revision	Moderate Revision	Major Revision	Not Applicable	Action Plan Summary
5.1. Expectations for timely and regular feedback from the instructor are clearly stated.	31	2			1	Most faculty need take no further action at this time; clarifying feedback expectations is a simple fix.
5.2. Expectations for interaction are clearly stated.	31	2			1	Most faculty need take no further action at this time; clarifying feedback expectations is a simple fix.
5.3. Learners have the opportunity to get to know the instructor.	18	13		1	2	Courses needing revision generally prioritize content delivery; short videos or the instructor posting to discussion boards can help with this.
5.4. Course offers opportunities for learner-to-learner interaction and constructive collaboration.	24	7			2	Building collaboration is difficult in asynchronous courses, where differing student schedules and student tendencies towards procrastination undermine collaborative work. That said, since upper-division classes tend towards projects and paper, it is actually easier to build more collaboration into such courses than into general education courses.
6. Technology Requirements						
6.1. Students are provided detailed information and instructions regarding technology, and faculty point students to support for any technology not managed by the UAM IT department.	31	2			1	Most faculty need take no further action at this time; others may need to highlight policies in the syllabus and course addendum.
6.2. If there are technology requirements for assignments or exams, a practice assessment is included.	15	6			13	The most common technology requirement in SSBS is publisher-provided courseware, and many of those programs incorporate practice materials. Most faculty use a syllabus quiz or a “dry run” to test specific software requirements.

Note: Courses assessed were non-general education courses in the unit. Fall 2024: CRJU 21223, 21333, 33533, 36133, 4403V, 4893V; PLSC 4784V; PSYC 21003, 32483, 46283, 46483; SCWK 43443, 43543, 46744. Spring 2025: CRJU 21133, 21533, 21633, 24003, 32433, 43733,

44133, 46303; HIST 22503; PLSC 34143, 46643; PSYC 21003, 34983; SBSC 21003; SCWK 23243; 43343; 46543. All sections evaluated were asynchronous. CRJU 4893V and PLSC 4787V are Internships where Blackboard is primarily used as a repository for the syllabus and a tool for submitting paperwork; these courses account for most of the N/A answers in the chart above.

Based on the numbers in the table above, what conclusions can be drawn about the quality of online classes in your academic unit?

Strengths

- Overall, SSBS online courses are clearly organized with detailed information and instructions. Faculty set firm expectations for students similar to those found in face-to-face courses. Basic course design means it is easy for students to find the information they need regarding assignments, assessments, course materials, etc.
- In the majority of categories, faculty report standards as being either sufficiently present or needing only minor revisions; SSBS courses are in good shape overall. This should not be surprising as most SSBS faculty have been teaching online courses for several years and have had time to develop solid instructional design and habits.

Weaknesses

- Faculty still rely on materials they have pulled over from face-to-face iterations of their courses. These include non-accessible PDFs of course readings and videos that may not have adequate captioning. Even in the modern digital world, these materials may not have accessible or compliant versions easily available on the Internet, and converting said materials into accessible formats is time-consuming, costly, and of dubious-copyright legality. Not being able to use these materials may infringe on academic freedom. It must also be admitted that PDF materials not available elsewhere on the Internet are quite a strong way of defeating the use of AI in student assignments, since that material has yet to be absorbed by programs like ChatGPT.
- While many textbook companies provide excellent courseware that can be integrated with Blackboard, technical glitches and ill-timed software updates can disrupt faculty course planning and student work in the course. Since such courseware often keeps grades on publishing company servers, that data is not always available to outside course observers (such as deans).
- Some faculty are still unsure that “getting to know the instructor” is a necessary part of instruction. While this may be a proven online instructional strategy, it is also one that has the potential to infringe upon an instructor’s right to privacy.

Opportunities

- The quantity and type of online electronic resources (OERs) is growing daily. Faculty have the opportunity to revamp and update their courses with new materials that will be accessible, as well as up to date in terms of content.
- Publisher-provided courseware offers sophisticated adaptive quizzing and other assessments that faculty would be pressed to build in the absence of university-employed course designers and other technological support; such assessments can improve student learning and retention of knowledge.
- As UAM adopts the new Teams software built into Blackboard Collaborate, there should be opportunities to enhance both

engagement between instructors and students, but also engagement between students.

Threats

- While this data tracks how well faculty organize and deploy their courses, it does not address the extent to which students actively and deeply engage with the content. Anecdotally, many faculty report building out video instructions, providing detailed guides to assignments, pre-loading assessment rubrics—and yet Blackboard shows that very few students avail themselves of such resources, to their detriment. Faculty can build the best online course in existence, but it relies upon student engagement to provide positive learning outcomes, and faculty cannot provide intrinsic motivation to students to care about their education.
- Artificial Intelligence is an ongoing threat to the quality of online education. Anecdotally, there does seem to be less use of it in upper-division courses than in general education courses: assignments and discussion boards tend to be more focused and nuanced, which makes it more difficult for students to deploy AI effectively. However, faculty are still having to consider ways to revise their assignments and assessment strategies to further “AI-proof” them, which involves more work in both creating and grading assignments. Faculty are also required to keep up-to-date on the latest AI innovations and are having to put more work into thinking about if and how to incorporate AI into their classes. This is quite a lot of work, especially if faculty are going to continue to keep up with best practices and innovations in their disciplines as well.

To what extent do you believe your unit’s online classes meet the federal government’s requirements for “regular and substantive”? The following link provides definitions and guidance regarding the requirements: <https://oscqr.suny.edu/rsi/>.

The School of Social and Behavioral Sciences provides regular and substantive online course work through the following strategies:

- Faculty provide substantive feedback on assignments using rubrics and individualized comments.
- Faculty regularly send announcements about weekly assignments and due dates.
- Faculty schedule due dates for exams and assignments on a **predicable** (usually weekly) schedule.
- Virtually all classes use some form of discussion board to promote student engagement.
- Faculty hold both in-person and virtual office hours to assist students with issues in their courses.
- Course content is either identical or equivalent to content offered in face-to-face courses.

Data-based Unit Changes

Summarize all of your unit changes predicated on assessment data.

Data from SSBS ILOs was used to shape the structure and content of Social Science Research Methods, which launched this year.

Faculty who taught courses that evaluated Critical Thinking felt that average class scores reflected several problems in terms of how students understand academic evidence and concepts. Teaching such understanding was built into the SLOs and assessments as a faculty committee developed the course; the results can be seen in the Critical Thinking section above, as faculty feel that some progress is being made with student understanding. In addition, the average Critical Thinking score has risen since the AY 2023-2024 assessment.

Assessment data was also central to the modifications made to the Criminal Justice AS and BS degrees this past year. Faculty had come to feel the BS degree had too many supportive requirements that were hindering student progress towards timely degree completion. Based on the last several years of annual report retention data, fewer Criminal Justice students at the 60-90 hour mark are able to complete their degrees within a year than any other SSBS major, in spite of the fact that Criminal Justice is the only SSBS major to regularly offer upper-division classes during summer terms. Nor did this data fully communicate the scope of the issue, since between 20% and 25% of Criminal Justice majors are transfer students, who are not as well represented in the retention data. As a result, the Criminal Justice degree reduced its supportive requirements from 21.0 to 6.0 hours. Data was also used to justify the attempt to make Criminal Justice a 100% online degree: enrollment data from Spring and Fall 2024 semesters demonstrated that 53-55% of full-time students are taking between 50% and 80% of their classes online; 21-29% take all of their classes online, even though the major is not technically an online degree. Faculty could demonstrate that the program could be an online degree with minimal modifications. ADHE determined the program is not substantially different enough from other programs in the state to merit a 100% online degree plan, but did agree that the program could be offered 50% online.

Finally, data collected from the pilot Social Science Pathways course was used to determine that the course was viable and ready to be placed in SSBS curriculum. Of the declared social science majors in the trial, 81% passed as to an overall 76% pass rate in Pathways to Success. Anecdotal data provided by the instructor correlated to this outcome: students were more engaged with the material and could link more directly to material they were learning in their classes.

Public/Stakeholder/Student Notification of SLOs

List all locations/methods used to meet the HLC requirement to notify the public, students and other stakeholders of the unit SLOs. (Examples: unit website, course syllabi, unit publications, unit/accreditation reports, etc.)

- Each syllabus includes course objectives based upon the SLOs.
- The School of Social and Behavioral Sciences page on the UAM website.
- Informational handouts available to students from the SSBS office including:
 - A listing of student SLOs is on the handout outlining the majors and minors found in the SSBS.
 - Department informational “fact sheets” outlining the requirements for and expected SLOs from the various departments found in the SSBS.

- The SLOs are presented to the Social Work Advisory Board and IV-E Stakeholders Advisory Board during their first meetings each year.
- Social Work Field Practicum Handbook. This handbook is required reading for all social work field practicum students and explains the social work field practicum portion of the B.S.W. degree program.

III. ENROLLMENT, PROGRESSION, AND RETENTION

Table 3: Number of Undergraduate and Graduate Program Majors (Data Source: Institutional Research)

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM MAJOR: CRIMINAL JUSTICE							
Classification	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	3-Year Total	3-Year Average	10-Year Total	10-Year Average
Freshman (BS)	14	10	13	48	16	228	28
Freshman (AS)	2	4	5				
Sophomore (BS)	11	8	14	38	12.7	137	13.7
Sophomore (AS)	1	1	3				
Junior (BS)	12	12	11	38	12.7	135	13.5
Junior (AS)		2	1				
Senior (BS)	8	9	6	26	8.7	146	14.6
Senior (AS)	1		2				
<i>Total</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>646</i>	<i>64.6</i>

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM MAJOR: HISTORY							
Classification	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	3-Year Total	3-Year Average	10-Year Total	10-Year Average
Freshman	3	3	1	7	2.4	45	4.5
Sophomore	3		4	7	2.4	45	4.5
Junior	3	2	1	7	2.4	49	4.9
Senior	1	3	4	8	2.7	45	4.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>9.3</i>	<i>184</i>	<i>18.4</i>

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM MAJOR: POLITICAL SCIENCE

Classification	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	3-Year Total	3-Year Average	10-Year Total	10-Year Average
Freshman	1	10	2	13	4.3	56	5.6
Sophomore	1	1	7	9	3	53	5.3
Junior	7	1	0	8	2.7	46	4.6
Senior	2	5	7	14	4.7	43	4.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>14.7</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>19.8</i>

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM MAJOR: PSYCHOLOGY

Classification	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	3-Year Total	3-Year Average	10-Year Total	10-Year Average
Freshman	16	18	22	56	18.7	202	20.2
Sophomore	16	12	10	38	12.7	145	14.5
Junior	15	12	17	44	14.7	162	16.2
Senior	9	13	15	37	12.3	146	14.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>58.3</i>	<i>655</i>	<i>65.5</i>

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM MAJOR: SOCIAL WORK

Classification	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	3-Year Total	3-Year Average	10-Year Total	10-Year Average
Freshman	7	6	11	24	8	149	14.9
Sophomore	8	2	6	14	4.7	109	10.9
Junior	14	9	6	29	9.7	102	10.2
Senior	5	13	8	26	8.7	84	8.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>444</i>	<i>44.4</i>

What do the data indicate in regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth and threats to effectiveness?

Strengths

- The lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and renewed emphasis on the importance of mental health continue to drive strong enrollment in the Psychology program, as well as significant freshman interest in Social Work.
- While History majors are low in number, their enrollment figures are remarkably steady, demonstrating student interest in history and persistence through the program. This may partially be driven by the fact that small numbers of students can receive more individualized instruction from faculty.
- The Political Science program has made strong attempts at recruitment, boosting the sophomore cohort by six.
- Criminal Justice cohorts have remained remarkably steady in number over the last three years.

Weaknesses

- Both History and Political Science have cohorts that are too small for the programs to be considered viable degree programs under ADHE guidelines. AY 2024-2025 is the first year that the new combined History/Political Science B.A. is enrolling students, and joint reporting of data will begin next year. The combined numbers should provide enough students to cross the viability threshold.
- Psychology and Social Work both have dramatic slumps in the freshman to sophomore cohorts, and Psychology has an equally big slump in the junior to senior cohort. Both majors attract broad numbers of students (both freshmen and transfer) who are aware that mental health fields offer a pathway to employment but may have selected such a course as a “default” option rather than out of interest or passion. (Social Work’s provisional admission status eliminates the slump for transfer students.) More data would be useful to understand if students are switching to other majors or dropping out of university from these programs.
- Social Work has the sharpest percentage decline in enrolled students from freshman to sophomore year. The Social Work curriculum for freshman year is primarily general education. Students may lose some interest as they cannot enroll in discipline-specific courses until their sophomore year.

Opportunities for Growth

- Most Criminal Justice students signing up for the bachelor’s degree are unaware they can work on the associate’s degree at the same time. Faculty are working to make students aware of both degree plans and their enrollment options.
- Revisions for the Criminal Justice program scheduled to go in effect for AY 25-26 should make it easier for transfer students to enroll in the program and graduate on time.
- The newly combined History/Political Science degree should drive increased enrollment in some of the smaller-upper division classes; this in turn should increase student enthusiasm and attitude, which can attract more students to the major. Both disciplines also have active honor societies/clubs, which should be highlighted across campus to drive recruitment.
- While there is much to be lamented in the current political situation, it may create a greater interest in the American and international political systems, which is a boon to the Political Science program.

- The Social Work Director is currently working to construct a viable 2+2 program for the degree, as well as working with local programs to develop informational programs about college, UAM, and Social Work for students in foster care or who otherwise don't receive as much attention from recruitment offices.

Threats to Effectiveness

- Many of the career paths open to students in the social and behavioral sciences are government jobs or rely on federal funding. It is unclear how the current attempts to reform the federal workforce and spending will influence what students choose to study.
- Many of the career paths open to students in the social and behavioral sciences require an advanced degree to achieve significant earning potential. It is unclear how emphasis on high paying jobs for students with bachelor's degrees influence what students choose to study.
- Many of the career paths open to students in the social and behavioral sciences do not have a direct or obvious relation to the student's field of study, especially in the liberal arts disciplines of History and Political Science. Sadly, it is clear that business demands for graduates trained in soft skills ignore the disciplines that actually teach soft skills, leading to declines in those degree paths.

Progression/Retention Data

Table 4: Retention/Progression and Completion Rates by Major (Data Source: Institutional Research)

Major: Criminal Justice	Number	Percentage
Number of majors classified as juniors (60-89 hours) in fall 2022	10	
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 22-23 academic year	2	20%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 23-24 academic year	5	50%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 24-25 academic year		

Major: History	Number	Percentage
Number of majors classified as juniors (60-89 hours) in fall 2022	4	
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 22-23 academic year	2	50%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 23-24 academic year	2	50%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 24-25 academic year		

Major: Political Science	Number	Percentage
Number of majors classified as juniors (60-89 hours) in fall 2022	9	
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 22-23 academic year	3	33%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 23-24 academic year	2	22%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 24-25 academic year	1	11%

Major: Psychology	Number	Percentage
Number of majors classified as juniors (60-89 hours) in fall 2022	15	
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 22-23 academic year	5	33%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 23-24 academic year	6	40%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 24-25 academic year		

Major: Social Work	Number	Percentage
Number of majors classified as juniors (60-89 hours) in fall 2022	10	
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 22-23 academic year	2	20%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 23-24 academic year	5	50%
Number and percentage graduated in that major during 24-25 academic year	1	10%

What do the data indicate in regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth and threats to effectiveness?

Strengths

- History has a 100% four-year graduation rate. The cohort of History students is largely self-selecting and has fewer students who drift into the major without a passion for the field, and the small size of the program allows for significant individualized instruction.
- Social Work has an 80% six-year graduation rate. This success can be largely explained by the standardized curriculum and emphasis on professionalism, both of which help keep students on track for degree completion.
- Almost all SSBS students who complete a degree do so within a four-year window. Faculty advising is keeping students on track for timely graduation.

Weaknesses

- Around 30% of Criminal Justice and Psychology fail to complete their program within a six-year window. Many, if not most, Criminal Justice majors are already in the workforce and request fully online class schedules. While this is convenient for the student, it also makes it more difficult to engage students in the material, to contact students when they stop logging into class, and to contact students for registration and advising purposes.
- Psychology is harder to parse, as more students take classes face-to-face and are traditionally college-aged. However, the

recent spike in Psychology majors has been driven by pandemic-fueled concerns about mental health, and it is possible that students are not as deeply engaged with the material. Students with weaker academic preparation also tend to “fall into” popular majors, and may not be prepared for the rigors of upper-division coursework.

- Political Science has failed to retain one-third of its students. This would seem to be a blip on the radar, as in most previous years retention rates were higher. However, this may also be the downside of aggressive recruitment by faculty to build the major, as they may be recruiting students whose personal situations or academic preparation leave them unready to pursue a reading- and writing-intensive degree plan.

Opportunities for Growth

- The success of the Social Work cohort model where students take a core of identical classes regularly scheduled for their sophomore and junior years might be a model worth emulating in other majors: providing students with clear plan for their class schedule and the opportunity to bond with a group of like-minded students may build cohesiveness and provide students with an easily identifiable peer group they can turn to for help. This might be especially worth exploring in Criminal Justice, where working students might feel even more isolated from their peers in a fully online setting.
- While getting students to engage in extra-curricular activities has been much harder since the pandemic, each major has an honor society and affiliated interest club, and it would be worth exploring new ways in which these groups might draw students into a major-specific community. Perhaps there might be Zoom options for movie nights, or field trips geared towards the interests (and locations) of online students.

Threats to Effectiveness

- Many students become Psychology majors after achieving junior standing when they do not meet the entry requirements for majors such as Education, Nursing, or Social Work. Those students are unlikely to be captured in the data provided above (and may be skewing completion requirements for some of those degrees as well).
- It is difficult to gauge how much shifting national social and political trends are influencing students to change majors or pursue other plans, especially in the fields of Criminal Justice, Political Science, and Psychology.
- Students attempting to take classes fully online are more difficult to engage with traditional retention methods. There may be ways to build communities for online students and engage them in campus culture, but this is not something that can be done at the unit level and without additional resources. However, given the increasing pressure on UAM to offer more online options and cater to online students, this must be done if undergraduate online degree programs are going to thrive.

Gateway Course Success

Table 5: Gateway Course Success (Data Source: Institutional Research)

Course	2022-2023				2023-2024				2024-2025				3-Year Trend			
	Passed		Failed		Passed		Failed		Passed		Failed		Passed		Failed	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
HIST 21103	176	76%	57	24%	153	69%	69	31%	145	80%	36	20%	474	75%	162	25%
HIST 21203	109	64%	60	36%	181	80%	46	20%	138	84%	27	16%	428	76%	133	24%
PSYC 11003	451	64%	259	36%	210	66%	110	34%	311	87%	45	13%	972	70%	414	30%

Note: No SSBS courses have required remediation components. Passed = A, B, or C; Failed = D, F, or W.

What do the data indicate in regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth and threats to effectiveness?

Strengths

- For the first time in several years (and possibly ever), the SSBS gateway courses surpassed the ADHE recommended 75% passing benchmark rate.
- PSYC 11003 is now using publisher-provided adaptive quizzing technology, which gives students more opportunities to practice and re-learn material before higher-stakes assessments and tests.

Weaknesses

- It is not clear how much grade improvement may be due to inappropriate student use of artificial intelligence. This is difficult to police, especially for classes that rely on essays and short answer assessments. Faculty are still grappling with the need to modify course assessments and otherwise work with AI in the classroom, as this will require rethinking the way entire courses are offered.
- It is also not clear how much of the grade improvement may be due to the increased number of online offerings for gateway courses. It is easier for students to use technology or other unsuitable means to assist them with multiple-choice questions and other standard assessment tools in online sections. Use of monitoring technology such as Respondus or other lockdown browsers is not yet common among SSBS faculty.

Opportunities for Growth

- New software capabilities in Blackboard to enhance synchronous online learning and test monitoring could help faculty to promote online student engagement and monitor against inappropriate behavior in test environments.
- Faculty who have been experimenting with newer assessment models, especially scaffolded assignments and work that requires students to reflect on AI usage, have reporting promising results in terms of student learning and engagement.

Threats to Effectiveness

- It is becoming increasingly clear that artificial intelligence is going to require re-thinking how gateway courses are constructed and assessed—especially online courses. It is far too easy for students to use AI to write discussion posts and generic answers for essay and short answer questions. However, instructors are reluctant to engage in this work, especially when they have been teaching the same way for several years: this requires a lot of extra preparation along with a certain flexibility of mind that can be difficult to cultivate when faced with the myriad responsibilities of being a professor. But unless faculty can find a way to navigate the difficulties that AI imposes, student success data will become increasingly unreliable.
- But if faculty must change, institutional culture must change as well. There is very little institutional support for course redesign, which is as critical as initial course design if instructional effectiveness is to be maintained. Students are highly resistant to any form of synchronous engagement or proctored in-person testing for online courses. Faculty are increasingly being asked to do more assessment work (ILOs, etc.); as faculty churn makes student progress towards graduation more difficult, faculty are being asked to teach more students and more overloads; and faculty are stretched thin trying to accommodate both online and face-to-face students to keep enrollment healthy. These factors make it difficult to devote adequate time to course redesign, let alone the additional burdens of grading imposed by newer assessment models. UAM could desperately use a Center for Teaching and Learning that houses staff trained in course design and assessment to assist faculty with course development and improvement.

Completion (Graduation/Program Viability)

Table 6: Number of Degrees/Credentials Awarded by Program/Major (Data Source: Institutional Research)

Undergraduate Program/Major	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Three-Year Total	Three-Year Average
Criminal Justice (BS)	8	8	8	35	11.7
Criminal Justice (AS)	3		5		
Criminal Justice (TC)		1			
Criminal Justice (CP)	1	1			
History	4	3	2	9	3
Political Science	5	7	3	15	5
Psychology	14	12	21	47	15.7
Social Work	5	10	4	19	6.3
<i>Unit Total</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>41.7</i>

Provide an analysis and summary of the data related to Progression/Retention/Program Viability including future plans to

promote/maintain program viability.

For the most part, enrollment, progression, and viability trends in the social science disciplines remain unchanged from the last few years. History and Political Science enrollment have both precipitously declined from pre-pandemic levels, threatening the viability of the degree programs. The merging of the two degrees into the BA in History/Political Science will at least ensure viability, and faculty are focused on offering courses that will engage students and recruit non-majors into the degree; faculty are also focused on strengthening the associated honor societies and clubs to promote student engagement and retention. While faculty are working against significant cultural and political headwinds, there are indications that enrollment has bottomed out and is slowly beginning to rise again. And even with this, History students have the strongest retention and completion rates in the unit: students who declare a History major are more likely to go full-time, request face-to-face classes, and earn a degree than other social science disciplines.

Psychology had a significant bump in degree competition this year: most of these students would have entered in the Fall of 2021 and are part of the cohort who had a significant interest in mental health issues following the Covid-19 outbreak, which boosted Psychology enrollments nationwide. It is this interest that has led the program to develop a guidance and counseling track to the degree that will begin in January 2026. Psychology students may be slower to complete their degrees as the faculty do not have the resources to offer enough online classes to meet demand from working and part-time students, while still fulfilling the demand for face-to-face classes on campus. Social Work faces similar issues: more students want to attend part-time or online, whereas the Social Work curriculum requires significant face-to-face interaction (not to mention the demands of the senior field experience, which involves working 20 hours a week). The Social Work faculty are currently exploring innovative options to meet these demands, including hybrid-flex classes with block scheduling and potentially developing 2+2 programs that would allow students to take courses at partner community colleges.

Criminal Justice is in the preliminary stages of developing a fully stackable credentialing program that will allow students to progress from a CP to the BS. (The current CP to AAS track can only be offered to serving law enforcement officers and is not available to the vast majority of UAM students.) Finally, Criminal Justice faculty are becoming more aggressive in recommending students add the AS degree to their academic record, resulting in a significant bump in those degrees being awarded.

Tracking Graduates

Summarize how you track the career progression of your unit's graduates.

Currently, the only formal tracking instrument utilized is the UAM Senior Survey, which cannot be considered fully reliable since it relies on self-reporting information. SSBS faculty are asked to provide information about students they know at the end of the academic year as a supplement to the Senior Survey; however, such anecdotal information is difficult to reconcile and track in conjunction with the Senior Survey results. The quantitative data in the table below should be interpreted with caution, as the number

of former students completing the survey represents only a fraction of those who earned credentials through SSBS.

Anecdotal reports suggest that the data in the table provides a reasonably representative sample of SSBS graduates' post-completion activities. Graduates are relatively split between students entering the workforce and those pursuing further credentials. Within the Criminal Justice program, students earning Certificates of Proficiency are generally current law enforcement officers seeking credentials for promotion purposes, while currently most students earning the associate's degree do so while on a pathway to a bachelor's degree.

Record the number of recent graduates entering jobs related or unrelated to their major or pursuing further credentials related or unrelated to their major.

Total Graduates, past three years			Graduates Entering Workforce, past three years	Related to Major	Salary Range	Unrelated to Major	Salary Range	Pursuing Further Credentials	Status Unknown
	CP	2	CP	2	\$30,000-\$54,999				0
	TC	1	TC					1	0
	Associate	8	Associate					1	7
	Bachelor	127	Bachelor	26	\$1-\$99,999	9	\$1-\$74,999	19	73

IV. FACULTY AND UNIT OPERATIONS

Table 7: Faculty Profile, Teaching Load, and Other Assignments (Data Source: Institutional Research)

Faculty Name	Status/ Rank	Highest Degree	Area(s) of Responsibility	Teaching Load				Other Assignments
				Sum II	Fall	Spring	Sum I	
<i>Full-Time Faculty</i>								
Bransford, S.	Assistant	Ph.D.	CRJU/SOCI	3.0	15.0	15.0	3.0	
Courson, A.	Instructor	M.A.	PSYC		12.0	15.0	3.0	
Day, J.K.	Professor	Ph.D.	HIST		12.0	12.0		
Everett, W.	Instructor	M.A.	GEOG/HIST		15.0	15.0	3.0	
Grissom, L.	Assistant	M.S.W.	SCWK		12.0	12.0		
Isaac, T.	Assistant	M.S.W.	SCWK		12.0	12.0		Director of Social Work Field Education
Jenkins, M.	Associate	M.S.W.	SCWK		6.0	6.0		Director of Social Work
McKee, A.	Professor	Ph.D.	CRJU		15.0	15.0		
Miller, J.	Associate	Ph.D.	CRJU	3.0	15.0	15.0	3.0	
Prichard, E.	Associate	Ph.D.	PSYC	6.0	15.0	12.0	3.0	
Prior, Y.	Assistant	Ph.D.	PSYC	3.0	15.0			
Silzell, S.	Associate	Ph.D.	HIST		12.0	12.0		
Strong, C.	Professor	Ph.D.	PLSC		12.0	12.0		
Young, C.	Professor	Ph.D.	HIST		3.0	3.0		Dean

Faculty Name	Status/ Rank	Highest Degree	Area(s) of Responsibility	Teaching Load				Other Assignments
				Sum II	Fall	Spring	Sum I	
<i>Part-Time Faculty</i>								
Berry, S.	Adjunct	Ph.D.	PSYC		3.0	6.0		
Campbell, L.	Adjunct	J.D.	PLSC		3.0	3.0		Collections Development Librarian
McClain, D.	Adjunct	M.P.A.	PLSC	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	Director of Student Programs and Activities
Rooney, M.	Assistant	Ph.D.	ANTH			6.0		Station Archeologist, Arkansas Archeological Survey
<i>Concurrent Faculty</i>								
Lewis, S.	Instructor	M.A.	HIST		9.0	9.0		

In addition to the formal teaching load listed above, the following faculty also supervised independent studies and internships:

- Dr. Miller supervised a 3.0 hour Internship (CRJU 4893V) in Fall.
- Dr. Strong supervised one 3.0 hour Internship (PLSC 4748V) in Summer II and Fall, and two 3.0 hour Internships in Spring.

The following faculty also taught courses for other academic units:

- Dr. Miller taught UNIV 11171 in Fall for General Studies.
- Dr. Strong taught WLLC 23003 in Fall and WLLC 4430V in Spring for Arts & Humanities.

What significant change, if any, has occurred in faculty during the past academic year?

Staffing issues in the Psychology program dominated unit concerns this year. Dr. Braswell and Dr. Turner both resigned at the end of AY 23-24, and Dr. Prior submitted her resignation in July 2024, effective at the end of the Fall semester. The program was able to hire Ms. Ashley Courson as an Instructor (including a course release in Fall to make use of her prior experience as an Academic Advisor to cover our student advising shortfall), and Dr. Stephen Berry of National Park College came on board as a part-time instructor. The unit successfully completed a search to hire a third full-time Psychology faculty member, and Dr. Rosilyn Sanders will join UAM for the Fall 2025 semester. Outside of Psychology, the Political Science program was able to recruit Ms. LaShonda Campbell of the Taylor Library to offer law-oriented courses, making use of the expertise earned from her J.D. and long career in the

legal field.

Two unexpected faculty changes during Summer 2025 will challenge SSBS in AY 2025-2026. On the first day of Summer I term, Dr. McKee passed away, leaving a gap not only in Criminal Justice but in SSBS-wide statistics and research methods courses. In July, Dr. Young resigned as Dean to take a new position out of state.

Table 8: Total Unit SSCH Production by Academic Year (ten year) (Data Source: Institutional Research)

Academic Year	Total SSCH Production	Percentage Change	Comment
2015-16	10,903		
2016-17	10,557	- 3.1%	
2017-18	9,852	- 6.7%	Significant decline in PSY 1013 enrollments; reasons unclear.
2018-19	9,343	- 5.2%	
2019-20	8,866	- 5.1%	
2020-21	9,169	+ 3.4%	Pandemic-driven intrusive advising may have played a role in first growth of SSCH in over a decade.
2021-22	8,373	- 8.7%	
2022-23	7,440	- 11.1%	
2023-24	8,466	+ 13.8%	Reflective of increased undergraduate enrollment.
2024-25	8,604	+ 1.6%	

What significant change, if any, has occurred in unit SSCH during the past academic year and what might have impacted any change?

SSCH production was relatively static in AY 2024-2025, which given the current headwinds buffeting higher education feels like a win. It is worth noting that although SSCH production ticked up only slightly, SSCH production in terms of full-time faculty increased significantly, as SSBS lost three full-time faculty members going into the academic year and a fourth in December. While a new faculty hire and part-time faculty partially offset the loss, the unit still lost the equivalent of two FTE faculty compared to the previous year. Faculty are to be commended for stepping up to the plate with course overloads and overriding student over course enrollment limits to ensure student progress towards degree completion. But such a strategy is not sustainable in the long term for generating SSCH, as it runs the risk of faculty burn-out. Increased enrollment in concurrent instruction also assisted with the modest gains of the past year, and the projected growth of concurrent coursework will only benefit a unit that hosts a significant number of general education classes. However, concurrent enrollment gains will be short-term if those students cannot be convinced to continue

their educational careers at UAM. Normally, this year’s SSCH numbers would be cause for mild optimism, as they might seem to indicate that UAM and SSBS have staunched enrollment losses from the pandemic. However, given the recent changes to federal financial aid guidelines, it remains to be seen if the prevailing headwinds in higher education will eventually swamp the modest gains of this past year.

Unit Agreements, MOUs, MOAs, Partnerships

Table 9: Unit Agreements-MOUs, MOAs, Partnerships, Etc.

Unit	Partner/Type	Purpose	Date	Length of Agreement	Date Renewed
Memorandums of Agreement					
SWK	Advantages	Children/Adults with Intellectual Disabilities	11/21/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	ABC Homes, Baptist Group Home	Children’s Home	3/10/2015	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Area Agency on Aging, Monticello & Pine Bluff	Senior Care	5/8/2013	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Area Agency on Aging, McGehee	Senior Care	5/8/2013	No End Date	Inactive
SWK	AR DHS Children & Families (Drew Co.)	Child Protection/Family Preservation	8//13/2012	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	CASA of the 10 th Judicial District	Child Advocacy	5/10/2016	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Children’s Advocacy Center CAC Pine Bluff & Monticello	Child Advocacy	5/2/2019	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Children’s Protection Center CPC Little Rock	Child Advocacy	4/17/2020	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Dana’s House, Inc.	Children’s Home	3/5/2020	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Delta Counseling Associates	Community Mental Health	12/1/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Dermott Juvenile Correctional Facility	Adolescent Corrections	7/18/2016	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Drew Memorial Hospital	Medical Social Work	12/15/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Hospice Home Care of Arkansas	Medical Social Work	11/29/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Life Touch Hospice El Dorado	Medical Social Work	3/10/2020	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Mainline Behavioral Health Systems, Inc.	Mental Health Social Work	7/16/2018	No End Date	6/23/2025

Unit	Partner/Type	Purpose	Date	Length of Agreement	Date Renewed
SWK	Methodist Behavioral Hospital	Mental Health	2/24/2020	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Newhaven Counseling & Health	Mental Health and Substance Abuse	6/18/2025	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Options, Inc.	Domestic Violence Advocacy and Homeless Services	12/6/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Phoenix Youth and Family Services	Community Outreach	11/30/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Pinnacle Pointe Outpatient Behavioral Services	Mental Health Social Work	5/17/2023	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Prosecuting Attorney's Office, 11 th West District	Victim Advocacy	7/1/2015	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Reform Pine Bluff	Outreach and Mental Health	3/2/2020	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	St. Frances Ministries	Intensive In-Home Services	4/29/2021	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Southeast Arkansas Human Development Center	Adults with Mental Health & Intellectual Disabilities	11/22/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Southeast Rehab Hospital Lake Village	Medical Social Work	4/27/2015	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	Sunrise Outreach Solutions	Mental Health	1/6/2021	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	The Exodus Project--Out for Life	Therapy and Case Management	8/9/2018	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	UAM Counseling and Testing Center	Youth-Adult Educational/Referral Services	12/1/2011	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	UAM Student Services	Disability Services	8/21/2020	No End Date	6/23/2025
SWK	University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, KIDS First	Childhood Early Intervention	11/29/2011	No End Date	Inactive
SWK	Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services	Children's Home	6/10/2016	No End Date	6/23/2025
Memorandums of Understanding					
CJ	U of A System Criminal Justice Institute	Crime Scene Investigation and Law Enforcement Administration Training	11/18/2022	No End Date	Active
	Bowen School of Law, UALR	Law School Admission	1/1/2024	1/1/2029	Active
PSY	Monticello School District	Guidance and Counseling Practicum	9/1/2023	No End Date	Active

List/briefly describe notable faculty recognition, achievements/awards, service activities and/or scholarly activity during the past academic year.

Scholarly Activity—Peer Reviewed Publications

Day, J.K. “‘We Meet Upon the Level’: Arkansas Freemasonry’s Interracial Moment in the Long Reconstruction, c. 1863-1908.” *Freemasonry and the Enlightenment: The 1723 Constitutions*, ed. John S. Wells, 197-224. Lewis Masonic: 2024.

Miller, J. “The Two Faces of Justice: Retribution and Rehabilitations in Contemporary Society.” *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 30, no.3 (2025), 70-81. She has also had two articles accepted for publication later in 2025.

Prichard, E. and C. Strong, eds. *Machiavellianism: Political Strategies, Psychological Dimensions, and Societal Influence*. Nova Science Publishers, 2025. This volume contained essays from UAM faculty, including:

- McKee, A. “Policing Through a Machiavellian Lens.”
- Prichard, E. “The Machiavellian Personality Meets the G.W. Plunkitt Personality: Scheming Across Historical Contexts.”
- Prior, Y. “Power, Control, and Workplace Connections to Maladaptive Personality Traits.”
- Strong, C. “Don’t Shoot the Impartial Messenger: Exploring the Forgotten Sociability of Machiavellian Text.”
- Strong, C. & E. Prichard. “Beyond Ruthlessness: A Nuanced Exploration of Machiavellian Leadership.”

Prichard, E. *Philosophy of Science for Psychology Students*. Nova Science Publishers, 2025.

Young, C. “‘Aplaudida por españoles’: Italian Opera and the Invention of Spanish Musical Theater.” *Cultures of the Popular in the Modern Hispanic World*, ed. Alison Sinclair, 166-182. Boydell & Brewer, 2024.

Scholarly Activity—Selected Other Publications and Presentations

Day, J.K. “*Ut Adiuvalet in Reunions: The Scottish Rite’s Knights of Saint Andrew,*” *The Plumblin: The Newsletter of the Scottish Rite Research Society*. Vol. 30, no. 1 (Spring 2025), 1-5.

Dr. Day reviewed *Myth America: Historians Take on the Biggest Legends and Lies About our Past* (New York: Basic Books, 2022), Kevin Kruse and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., for *Academic Questions* vol. 37, no. 4 (Winter 2024), 112-117, and *Educating the Enemy: Teaching Nazis and Mexicans in the Cold War Borderlands*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022) by Jonna Perrillo for *Journal of American History*, Vol. 111, no. 2 (September 2024), 387–388.

Dr. Day presented a paper titled “The Masonic Fraternity and the Transfiguration of Law and Order in Arkansas after the Civil War”

at annual conference of the Arkansas Historical Association, held in Fort Smith on 12 April 2025. He also had several presentations before various Masonic organizations in southeast Arkansas.

On 8 March 2025, Ms. Jenkins and Ms. Grissom presented on “Ethical Use of Technology for Social Workers in Clinical and Higher Education Settings” at the National Baccalaureate Program Directors conference in New Orleans.

Dr. McKee and Dr. Bransford developed an OER textbook, *Fundamentals of Drug Enforcement*.

Dr. McKee and Dr. Miller developed several OER textbooks: *Fundamentals of Juvenile Justice*, *Fundamentals of Criminal Courts*, *Fundamentals of Corrections*, and *Ethics and Cultural Competence*.

Dr. Miller developed an OER textbook for *Professional and Career Preparation for the Social Sciences*. She has also twice presented on the criminal justice system for the Arkansas Victim Assistance Academy.

Dr. Strong was a featured speaker at the Vaclav Havel Library in New York City for an event, “Dissident Power in Havel’s *Vanek*” on 22 April 2025. She was also invited to discuss her monograph *The Dissident Politics in Vaclav Havel’s Vanek Plays: Who is Ferdinand Vanek Anyway?* at the Spring 2025 Oxford International Round Table Symposium “Beyond the Pages: Exploration in (Political) Literature. Finally, she was a participant in two round tables and a “Author Meets their Critic” session at the 2025 meeting of the Arkansas Political Science Association.

Dr. Rooney presented his paper/poster “African American Household Change over Time at an Arkansas Plantation” at the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in Denver, CO, and the annual meeting of the Southeastern Archeological Conference in Williamsburg, VA. He also presented “Two-Timing the Hollywood Grove Site (3DR475)” at the annual meeting of the Arkansas Archeological Society.

Notable Achievements, Professional Development, and Service Projects

Dr. Bransford joined the Drug Free Ashley County Coalition (D-FAC).

Dr. Day is the editor of the *Drew County Historical Journal*; a member of the Drew County Historical Society and Commission; associate editor of the newsletter of the Scottish Rite of Arkansas, *Voice of the Orient*; and serves as a manuscript reviewer for Louisiana State University Press.

Ms. Jenkins served as a Reaffirmation Consultant for the Social Work program at the University of Arkansas, Fort Smith. She reviewed and helped prepare the program in advance of their reaffirmation with the Council on Social Work Education.

Dr. Miller served as the Chair of the Criterion 2 Committee for the Higher Learning Commission's Ten Year Review of UAM's accreditation. She continues to serve as the Chair of the UAM Institutional Review Board, and she is member of the Core Planning Team for the Arkansas Victim Assistance Academy.

Dr. Rooney is the editor of "Horizon & Tradition," the newsletter of the Southeastern Archeological Conference, and the associate editor for the *Journal of Emerging Investigators*.

Grant Awards

Dr. Day was awarded an UAM Faculty Research Grant, as was the team of Dr. Rooney and Dr. Silzell.

Dr. Miller was the faculty sponsor for a Chapter Project Grant from Alpha Phi Sigma.

Dr. Rooney was awarded a \$4,000 grant from the American Philosophical Society for the project "European Material Goods in Indigenous Arkansas Contexts, 1500-1830." He was also awarded a \$88,000 grant from the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council to rehabilitate the Bayou Bartholomew Archeology Collection.

Professional Leadership

Ms. Isaac is a member of the board of directors for Advantages of Southeast Arkansas, and serves on the interdisciplinary committee that advises the Arkansas Partnership for Child Welfare.

Ms. Jenkins serves on the National Nominating Committee for the Council on Social Work Education, and is currently the Chair-elect. Since 2023 she has served on the National Conference Planning Committee for the Baccalaureate Program Directors.

Dr. McKee was tapped to chair an ad hoc Artificial Intelligence Policy Committee for UAM. He began serving on the board of directors for CASA of the 10th Judicial District, and served on the board of the UAM Wesley Foundation.

Dr. Silzell completed her term as President of the Arkansas Association of College History Teachers, and organized the annual meeting. She is also the Regional Coordinator for History Day Arkansas and serves on the advisory board for the Arkansas Digital Newspaper Project and the Chronicling America advisory board. She is project director for the Arkansas Heritage Garden for Master Gardeners.

Dr. Rooney serves as the President of Preserve Arkansas and is the Trustee, Education and Public History Chair for the Arkansas Historical Association.

Describe any significant changes in the unit, in programs/degrees, during the past academic year.

In August 2024, the long-planned merger of the bachelor's degrees in History and Political Science finally became official; the degree is now a BA in History/Political Science, with a new core curriculum and unique tracks for each discipline (along with a dual track that takes the place of the old double major). Faculty will be monitoring student progress over the next few years to ensure that the curriculum is not adding additional burdens, but early indications seem positive.

This year also saw the debut of Social Science Research Methods, the new course designed to replace discipline-specific (and frequently low-enrollment) courses. Initial reports are positive. Even the modules designed for History majors, which due to the nature of the discipline are rather different from the other discipline modules, have been rolled out successfully. Dr. McKee refined the course still further for Spring semester, when it ran in an asynchronous online modality. While there is still fine tuning to be done, the unit can claim a successful roll-out. In tandem, Dr. Miller taught a pilot social science-specific orientation course in Fall. Social Science Pathways used the same textbook and ideas as Pathways to Success, but focused the academic conversations on areas relevant to course disciplines. Given the success of the pilot, the course has been added to the catalogue and will be taught in Fall 2025.

Finally, after three years of discussion and delay, the Psychology program has developed its long-awaited Human Services track for the major. This was part of a larger overhaul to the Psychology curriculum, which will give students a broader choice for advanced research methods courses, and to incorporate courses from related disciplines into degree plans as appropriate. The new curriculum was designed to provide more flexibility in the event of future staffing fluctuations; it was also designed to meet best practices guidelines as outlined by the American Psychological Association. The Human Services track will be the first of its kind for a bachelor's degree in Arkansas. The new curriculum will go into effect in Spring 2026.

List program/curricular changes made in the past academic year and briefly describe the reasons for the change.

SSBS submitted 48 curriculum changes through the Committee on Curriculum & Standards during the 2024-25 academic year, resulting in the following modifications to our programs:

1. Criminal Justice modified the degree plans for the AS and BS degrees. This involved dropping several supportive requirements that were no longer deemed necessary and streamlining elective requirements. These changes should make it easier for transfer students to bring over credits from previous institutions and lower obstacles to on-time degree completion.
2. As part of the streamlining process, Criminal Justice added two courses (Courts, Ethics and Cultural Competence) and deleted

two courses (Criminal Justice Ethics, Multicultural Justice). The learning outcomes from the deleted courses have been incorporated into the new Ethics course.

3. Psychology modified the degree plans for the BS degree and the minor. The current Psychology curriculum was built around the specializations of faculty who retired, and with current staffing shortages the degree plans would be increasingly difficult for students to complete in a timely fashion. The new curriculum was also brought into line with current best practices for undergraduate curriculum as outlined by the American Psychological Association and creates a new track within the major for students interested in guidance and counseling jobs. Since the new track will negate the need for the Human Services Minor, that minor was deleted. These changes go into effect on 1 January 2026.
4. SSBS added a new Social Science Pathways course as an option for first time freshmen needing an orientation course; this course will cover the same material as Pathways to Success, but with an emphasis on academic preparation for social science disciplines. The unit also removed instructor permission to enroll in Job and Career Preparation, since that course is now unit-wide.
5. Criminal Justice, Political Science, Psychology, and Social Work each modified courses to clear up inconsistent pre-requisites and clarify catalogue language.
6. Social Work added two new courses (Crisis Intervention, Sports Social Work) to cover emerging practice areas in the field and modified Social Work Values and Ethics to a 20000-level course to better reflect its foundational nature in the curriculum. Social Work also modified the BSW degree and the minor to reflect the changes to Values and Ethics.
7. Every discipline deleted its research methods course, since those were replaced last year by Social Science Research Methods.
8. Anthropology deleted one course (Sex, Gender, and Culture); Criminal Justice, Social Work, and Sociology modified several course descriptions; and Social Work modified the description of the BSW degree to demonstrate that all SSBS curriculum is in compliance with the Access Act passed by the Arkansas General Assembly in 2025.

Describe unit initiatives/action steps taken in the past academic year to enhance teaching/learning and student engagement.

SSBS has an honor society for each program in the school to acknowledge and reward superior student engagement.

Honor Society	Discipline	Advisor(s)
Alpha Phi Sigma	Criminal Justice	Dr. Jennifer Miller
Phi Alpha	Social Work	Ms. Trinia Isaac
Phi Alpha Theta	History	Dr. Shari Silzell
Pi Sigma Alpha	Political Science	Dr. Carol Strong
Psi Chi	Psychology	Dr. Eric Prichard

Note: Phi Alpha, Phi Alpha Theta, and Psi Chi also have auxiliary groups that allow non-society members to participate in selected activities.

Collectively, the honor societies are finally ramping up their post-Covid activities. With the increasing demand for online classes by

students who are not in the Monticello area (especially in Criminal Justice), it is difficult for some of the societies to develop a robust slate of activities. Nevertheless, SSBS honor societies inducted a total of 12 students during AY 24-25. Alpha Phi Sigma did two supply drives for CASA of the 10th Judicial District: a toy drive in Fall and a hygiene item drive in Spring. They also have an ongoing fundraiser through Fun Pasta Fundraising to bring in money to be used for student membership fees and graduation regalia. Phi Alpha did service events for Child Abuse Prevention Month, including planting a pinwheel garden and sponsoring Go Blue Day to raise awareness. Although Pi Sigma Alpha and Psi Chi were less active due to faculty staffing issues, those societies are putting together active plans for the future. Dr. Strong has recruited Mr. Everett and Ms. Campbell to assist with Pi Sigma Alpha (Dr. Strong and Ms. Campbell took students to the annual meeting of the Arkansas Political Science Association), while Ms. Courson has begun to work with Psi Chi.

Phi Alpha Theta has been particularly active this year: the Alpha Nu Zeta chapter sponsored the regional History Day Arkansas competition on 26 February 2025, with students serving as hosts, judges, and campus tour guides. Students also took part in the Heritage Garden Workday sponsored by Master Gardeners in March. The society was particularly active with social and learning activities this past year, including a field trip to Old Washington State Park in October and three movie nights that featured a discussion of the historical aspects of *The Northman*, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, and *The Last Duel*. As a result of this programming, the chapter received an Honorable Mention for Division I by the Phi Alpha Theta national committee in their annual best chapter awards.

In other student engagement service, Ms. Jenkins has become a driving force for the campus Food Hub; she served as the lead faculty for the November 2024 food drive, and she has been meeting with the director of the Warren Food Pantry with an eye to developing a partnership that would increase resources for food-insecure students at UAM. In her role as the faculty advisor for the Student Social Work Association, she assisted students in partnering with Options Domestic Violence Shelter to bring the National Clothesline Display to UAM in late October to raise issue awareness. The SSWA also raised funds via a bake sale to make Christmas stockings for children living in the domestic violence shelter.

On 21 November 2024, the Social Work program sponsored its annual Student Research Symposium. Students from across campus were invited to present their research and answer questions from attendees. Thirty-one students from the Schools of Arts and Humanities, Business, Computer Information Systems, and Social and Behavioral Sciences took part; three academic deans (Dr. Harper, Dr. Level, and Dr. Young) judged the presentations. Kayra Gonzalez, a junior Psychology major, won third prize for her presentation on “Sleep Deprivation.”

SSBS also hosted events that combined student and community engagement. In November, Dr. Strong helped to host two Civic Arkansas Listening Sessions with the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on campus. Students, staff, and faculty discussed civic engagement in their community, including how participants can influence progress towards their vision of what civic engagement looks like. During the course of the year, Dr. Rooney and the Arkansas Archeological Survey organized three public lectures at UAM: “Hidden Secrets of the Poverty Point Plaza (and Other Cool Stuff)” by Diana Greenlee of the University of Louisiana at

Monroe; “How Inequality Happens: Kings and Commoners in the Native Southeast” by Alex Barker of the Arkansas Archeological Survey; and “Hernando de Soto East and West of the Mississippi River” by Charles R. Cobb of the Florida Museum of Natural History. As part of Social Work Month, on 19 August 2025, the Social Work program hosted a Lunch-and-Learn event: Delories Williams, Instructor Emeritus at the University of Southern Mississippi, spoke to students and local social workers on ethical practice, policy advocacy, and self-care in social work. The event also featured the proclamation of Social Work Month by Monticello Mayor Jason Akers. The event also served as a celebration of the 30th anniversary of the UAM Social Work Program.

Other Unit Student Success Data

Include any additional information pertinent to this report. Please avoid using student information that is prohibited by FERPA.

The following students were initiated into SSBS Honor Societies this past year:

- Lawren “Sunni” Deb Brooks-Weaver (Alpha Phi Sigma)
- Blakely Leopard (Phi Alpha)
- Lillian Harris-Morphus (Phi Alpha Theta)
- Lilly McKee (Phi Alpha Theta)
- Rylee Meeks (Phi Alpha Theta)
- Noah Tatum (Phi Alpha Theta)
- Jaden Wallace (Phi Alpha Theta)
- Jaden Whittle (Phi Alpa)

The following students presented research at the Arkansas Political Science Association at Arkansas Tech in March:

- Lawren “Sunni” Deb Brooks-Weaver, “The Effect of Populist Leaders on Democratic Systems”
- Jack Chiasson, “The Platonian Roots of Modern (Western) Education”
- Rhett Wallace, “Crossroads of Policy: A Global Comparison of Progressive Social and Economic Policy Development in Democracies”
- Mary Emily Wrzesinski, “The Correlation of Church and State in Arkansas: An Examination of Religious Influence on Governmental Policies”

Jaxon Anderson was accepted to the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at UCA.

Abby Anthony and Hailey Harmon were both admitted to the Master of Social Work advanced standing program at UALR. Ms. Harmon was also offered a full-time position at Southeast Arkansas Behavioral Healthcare.

Kaitlyn Bostion was accepted to Bowen Law School at UALR.

Lawren “Sunni” Deb Brooks-Weaver accepted a position as the Monticello Station Assistant for the Arkansas Archeological Survey.

Jacob Shelton will attend the Marine Corps Officer Training School in Quantico, Virginia.

Noah Tatum published “The Confederate Affect: Lower Arkansas in the American Civil War” in the *Drew County Historical Journal*.

Sophie Wood will be attending a clinical counseling program at Sam Houston State University.

17 July 2025

ADDENDA

Revised February 8, 2018

Addendum 1: UAM Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan

VISION

The University of Arkansas at Monticello will be recognized as a model, open access regional institution with retention and graduation rates that meet or exceed its peer institutions.

Through these efforts, UAM will develop key relationships and partnerships that contribute to the economic and quality of life indicators in the community, region, state, and beyond.

MISSION

The University of Arkansas at Monticello is a society of learners committed to individual achievement by:

- Fostering a quality, comprehensive, and seamless education for diverse learners to succeed in a global environment;
- Serving the communities of Arkansas and beyond to improve the quality of life as well as generate, enrich, and sustain economic development;
- Promoting innovative leadership, scholarship, and research which will provide for entrepreneurial endeavors and service learning opportunities;
- Creating a synergistic culture of safety, collegiality, and productivity which engages a diverse community of learners.

CORE VALUES:

- *Ethic of Care*: We care for those in our UAM community from a holistic perspective by supporting them in times of need and engaging them in ways that inspire and mentor.
- *Professionalism*: We promote personal integrity, a culture of servant leadership responsive to individuals' needs as well as responsible stewardship of resources.
- *Collaboration*: We foster a collegial culture that encourages open communication, cooperation, leadership, and teamwork, as well as shared responsibility.
- *Evidence-based Decision Making*: We improve practices and foster innovation through assessment, research, and evaluation for continuous improvement.
- *Respect*: We respect all people and all points of view, and we promote tolerance and acceptance.

UAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- *Communication*: Students will communicate effectively in social, academic, and professional contexts using a variety of means, including written, oral, quantitative, and/or visual modes as appropriate to topic, audience, and discipline.
- *Critical Thinking*: Students will demonstrate critical thinking in evaluating all forms of persuasion and/or ideas, in formulating innovative strategies, and in solving problems.
- *Global Learning*: Students will demonstrate understanding of natural and human matters on an international level.
- *Teamwork*: Students will work collaboratively to reach a common goal and will demonstrate the characteristics of productive citizens.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: Promote Opportunity and Success for All Students

Outcome 1.1: Exemplify a student-centered culture.

Strategy 1.1.1: Promote effective communication, marketing, and business practices that underscore our student-centered culture and thereby enhance recruitment and retention.

Strategy 1.1.2: Assess current student support structures to identify gaps in service or deterrents.

Strategy 1.1.3: Implement new curricular and co-curricular activities to enhance the overall student experience.

Strategy 1.1.4: Broaden student knowledge of and access to resources that promote mental health, physical health, and safety.

Strategy 1.1.5: Streamline admission, enrollment, and financial processes.

KPI: *Year-to-year student enrollment*

KPI: *Fall-to-spring, fall-to-fall student retention rate (excluding completers, graduate students and concurrent students)*

KPI: *Year-to-year number of students participating in curricular and co-curricular activities*

KPI: *Year-to-year number of students accessing support services*

KPI: *Student satisfaction rate for support services*

Outcome 1.2: Prepare students for success with active learning and personalized engagement opportunities that inspire student creativity, motivate student persistence, and create a desire for life-long learning.

Strategy 1.2.1: Enhance academic advising, tutoring services, and career counseling for all students, especially by establishing a Center for Teaching and Learning.

Strategy 1.2.2: Further promote the academic success of student-athletes, band, choir, residential, international, non-traditional, military veterans and first-generation students.

Strategy 1.2.3: Establish new high-impact student experiences, such as internships, field experiences, job shadowing opportunities, and study abroad.

Strategy 1.2.4: Develop a system of connecting students to service-learning opportunities specific to their interest.

Strategy 1.2.5: Implement innovative instructional models, such as hyflex, in more academic programs.

***KPI:** Academic standing data*

***KPI:** 15, 30, 45, 60, and 90-hour progression data*

***KPI:** Fall-to-spring, fall-to-fall student retention rate (excluding completers, graduate students and concurrent students)*

***KPI:** On-time graduation rate*

***KPI:** Number of credentials conferred year-to-year*

***KPI:** Employment rates of graduates in fields related to program of study*

Outcome 1.3: Support the transition from high school to postsecondary education to career by developing marketable skills in students and providing access to employment opportunities.

Strategy 1.3.1: Partner with public schools for early career awareness initiatives starting in elementary school, for example by coordinating a Career Fair twice a year on the Monticello, McGehee, and Crossett campuses.

Strategy 1.3.2: Provide more opportunities for students to directly engage with potential employers.

Strategy 1.3.3: Integrate Career Services support in more academic programs by focusing on junior/ senior courses, projects, or capstones.

Strategy 1.3.4: Partner with industry and businesses for more student internships, and practicums throughout the student technical education/college experience.

***KPI:** Academic standing data*

***KPI:** Fall-to-spring, fall-to-fall student retention rate (excluding completers, graduate students and concurrent students)*

***KPI:** Number of senior projects and capstone experiences*

***KPI:** Number of student internships and practicums*

Goal 2: Recruit, Empower, and Retain High-Quality Faculty and Staff

Outcome 2.1: Implement a marketing plan that attracts a qualified and diverse pool of faculty and staff.

Strategy 2.1.1: Expand the advertisement of job postings.

Strategy 2.1.2: Provide training on best practices for hiring, from crafting better job descriptions to running more successful search committees.

***KPI:** Percentage of faculty receiving “Excellent” or “Exceeds Expectations” on annual faculty evaluations*

Outcome 2.2: Enhance the working environment for all faculty and staff by providing necessary resources.

Strategy 2.2.1: Increase access to professional development workshops and training to help members of the university community improve their skills.

Strategy 2.2.2: Provide technology that supports advancing instructional needs of faculty.

***KPI:** Maintenance of a 5-year rotation of technology*

***KPI:** Number of training opportunities released via the Workday Learning Center and/or Blackboard*

***KPI:** Number of faculty using Center for Teaching and Learning*

Outcome 2.3: Increase retention of faculty and staff.

Strategy 2.3.1: Identify and share opportunities for job advancement with highly skilled faculty and staff.

Strategy 2.3.2: Develop a mentorship program to prepare individuals for successive leadership roles.

Strategy 2.3.3: Study the feasibility of a career ladder system for staff including incentives for higher education attainment.

Strategy 2.3.4: Enhance funding for faculty and staff salaries each year contingent on enrollment and legislative appropriations.

Strategy 2.3.5: Enhance academic and administrative operating budgets as funding allows.

***KPI:** Number of promotions among UAM faculty and staff*

***KPI:** Average years of employment for faculty*

***KPI:** Average years of employment for staff*

Goal 3: Strengthen Institutional Resources

Outcome 3.1: Optimize student recruitment through transformative marketing initiatives.

Strategy 3.1.1: Promote UAM's presence in the region, state, and beyond through more customized, targeted social media and other marketing strategies.

Strategy 3.1.2: Strengthen communication of marketing plans and procedures to faculty, staff, students and the community.

***KPI:** Number of admission applications year-to-year*

***KPI:** Enrollment of new students year-to-year*

Outcome 3.2: Enhance the conditions and reliability of university infrastructure and equipment.

Strategy 3.2.1: Update the campus master plan with a timeline for new construction and remodeling of campus facilities.

Strategy 3.2.2: Determine requirements for and begin assembling a sufficient, modern vehicle fleet available for

university purposes, including academic field trips, sports events, etc.

Strategy 3.2.3: Develop a plan to prioritize replacement of farm and grounds equipment.

***KPI:** Maintenance or construction projects accomplished each year*

***KPI:** Disposal and replacement of vehicles and large equipment each year according to set criteria: age, performance, anticipated maintenance cost*

Outcome 3.3: Develop partnerships to strengthen institutional, regional and state resources.

Strategy 3.3.1: Expand concurrent enrollment partnerships to meet regional and state workforce demands.

Strategy 3.3.2: Partner with industry to fund the development of new credit and/or noncredit workforce training to meet regional, state and national needs.

Strategy 3.3.3: Partner with other institutions of higher education to offer unique, cutting-edge academic programs.

Strategy 3.3.4: Partner with other institutions of higher education to offer existing, high-need programs to underserved regions of the state.

Strategy 3.3.5: Partner with communities to address the socio-economic, educational and health and wellness challenges.

***KPI:** Number of concurrent enrollment partnerships year-to-year*

***KPI:** Number of industry partners year-to-year*

***KPI:** Number of students enrolled in noncredit workforce training*

***KPI:** Number of academic programs offered with other institutions of higher education year-to-year*

***KPI:** Number of articulation agreements year-to-year*

***KPI:** Number of grants awarded related to addressing socio-economic, educational, and health and wellness challenges.*

Outcome 3.4: Augment operational funding through external efforts.

Strategy 3.4.1: Strengthen efforts to obtain grant funds for all purposes, including student research, faculty research, academic program development, instructional equipment and general institutional needs.

Strategy 3.4.2: Expand alumni engagement and fundraising efforts.

***KPI:** Number of grant applications submitted each year aimed at enhancing UAM's ability to serve its students, staff, and faculty, especially in the areas of student and faculty research, academic program development, and instructional equipment*

***KPI:** Number of social media posts and hits on the alumni page*

***KPI:** Outreach to prospective donors*

Addendum 2: Higher Learning Commission Sample Assessment Questions

1. How are your stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, degrees, students, and other stakeholders? How explicitly do major institutional statements (mission, vision, goals) address student learning?

- How well do the student learning outcomes of programs and majors align with the institutional mission?
- How well do the student learning outcomes of general education and co-curricular activities align with the institutional mission?
- How well do course-based student learning outcomes align with institutional mission and program outcomes?
- How well integrated are assessment practices in courses, services, and co-curricular activities?
- How are the measures of the achievement of student learning outcomes established? How well are they understood?

2. What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?

- Who actually measures the achievement of student learning outcomes?
- At what points in the curriculum or co-curricular activities are essential institutional (including general education), major, or program outcomes assessed?
- How is evidence of student learning collected?
- How extensive is the collection of evidence?

3. In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?

- Who analyzes the evidence?
- What is your evidence telling you about student learning?
- What systems are in place to ensure that conclusions are drawn and actions taken on the basis of the analysis of evidence?
- How is evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes incorporated into institutional planning and budgeting?

4. How do you ensure shared responsibility for student learning and assessment of student learning?

- How well integrated are assessment practices in courses, services, and co-curricular activities?
- Who is responsible for the collection of evidence?
- How cross-functional (i.e., involving instructional faculty, Student Affairs, Institutional Research, and/or relevant administrators) are the processes for gathering, analyzing, and using evidence of student learning?
- How are the results of the assessment process communicated to stakeholders inside and outside the institution?

5. How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning?

- What is the quality of the information you have collected telling you about your assessment processes as well as the quality of the evidence?
- How do you know how well your assessment plan is working?

6. In what ways do you inform the public about what students learn—and how well they learn it?

- To what internal stakeholders do you provide information about student learning?
- What is the nature of that information?
- To what external stakeholders do you provide information about student learning?

- What is the nature of that information?

Addendum 3: Arkansas Productivity Funding Metrics

- The productivity funding formula consists of four categories: Effectiveness (80% of formula), Affordability (20% of formula), Adjustments, and Efficiency (+/-2% of formula).

Effectiveness	Affordability	Adjustment	Efficiency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credentials • Progression • Transfer Success • Gateway Course Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to Degree • Credits at Completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research (4-year only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Expense Ratio • Faculty to Administrator Salary