Eliminating Equity Gaps in the Southeastern Wisconsin Region

September 2023 UPDATE

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A message from our Chancellor

Mark Mone
Chancellor

Over the summer months, the teams continued to reflect on activities and analyze the data from this past year's performance to develop strategies that will advance student success in coming academic year. We were particularly effective in outreach to students who had stopped out, eliminated more holds that prevented students from re-enrolling, were able to award more retention grants, and intensified our focus on improving course outcomes. The standardized term for data reporting on retention and graduation rates occurs next month. We will be assessing carefully how our Moon Shot for Equity practices are ultimately affecting institutional transformation and our students' success.

Voices from campus:

"I am a single mother of two. I don't have a lot of resources to pay for education. It honestly made me feel good since I don't have many options for financial aid. This grant helps me a lot. I'm still going to end up paying a little bit out of pocket, but definitely this is going to assist me. Had I not gotten it, I'm not sure I would have been able to afford to go back this semester."

~ Kayla Miller, Retention Grant Recipient

"The strength of Moon Shot for Equity is its emphasis on data informed actions. Equity mindedness does need to be embedded into all aspects of decision-making impacting students. Moon Shot has the potential to eliminate equity gaps at UWM, which is why we encourage leaders at all levels advancing the initiative to be equipped to address and confront harmful policies and practices."

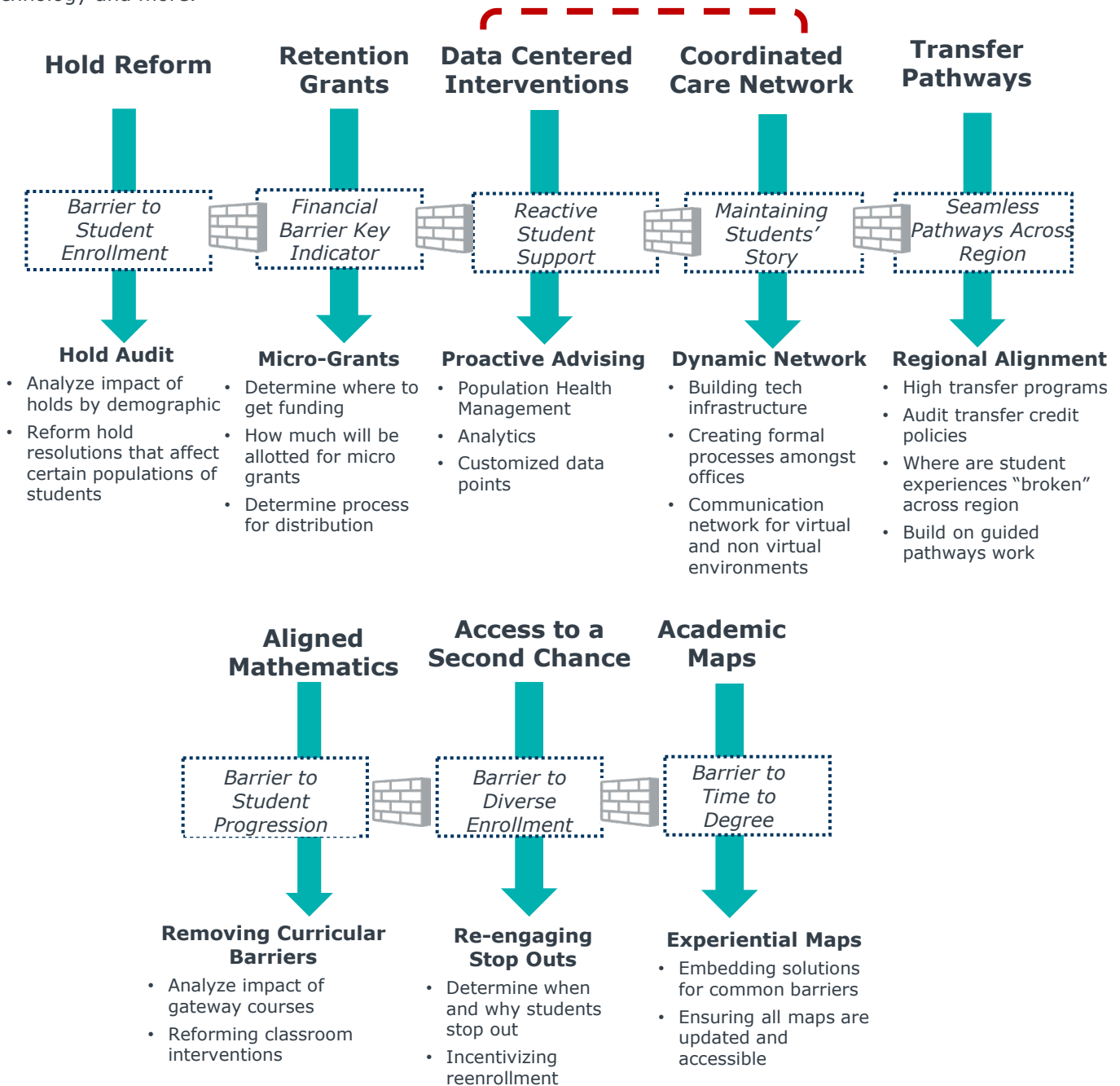~ Chia Vang, Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

"The Mathematics Department has been deeply invested in student success for many years, dating back at least to the development of our gateway mathematics pathways in 2014, but we have sometimes struggled to explain our new courses and pathways to other campus units. The Moon Shot for Equity has provided a structure that facilitates regular cross-campus communication. In particular, discussions between the Mathematics Department and Academic Advising have helped us with our goal of placing students into appropriate gateway-level mathematics courses."

~ Kevin McLeod, Associate Professor, Mathematical Sciences

Active Proven Practices in Implementation

Initial Charges and Impact by Each Best Practice Team

The five participating institutions, Gateway Technical College was added in the summer, in Southeastern Wisconsin worked collaboratively to choose and prioritize eight of the 15 best practices from the MOU. Across campuses, 35+ teams formed to direct the project, design best practice implementation strategy, implement technology and more.

Hold Reform	**Retention Grants**	**Data Centered Interventions**	**Coordinated Care Network**	**Transfer Pathways**
Barrier to Student Enrollment	*Financial Barrier Key Indicator*	*Reactive Student Support*	*Maintaining Students' Story*	*Seamless Pathways Across Region*

Hold Audit
- Analyze impact of holds by demographic
- Reform hold resolutions that affect certain populations of students

Micro-Grants
- Determine where to get funding
- How much will be allotted for micro grants
- Determine process for distribution

Proactive Advising
- Population Health Management
- Analytics
- Customized data points

Dynamic Network
- Building tech infrastructure
- Creating formal processes amongst offices
- Communication network for virtual and non virtual environments

Regional Alignment
- High transfer programs
- Audit transfer credit policies
- Where are student experiences "broken" across region
- Build on guided pathways work

Aligned Mathematics	**Access to a Second Chance**	**Academic Maps**
Barrier to Student Progression	*Barrier to Diverse Enrollment*	*Barrier to Time to Degree*

Removing Curricular Barriers
- Analyze impact of gateway courses
- Reforming classroom interventions

Re-engaging Stop Outs
- Determine when and why students stop out
- Incentivizing reenrollment

Experiential Maps
- Embedding solutions for common barriers
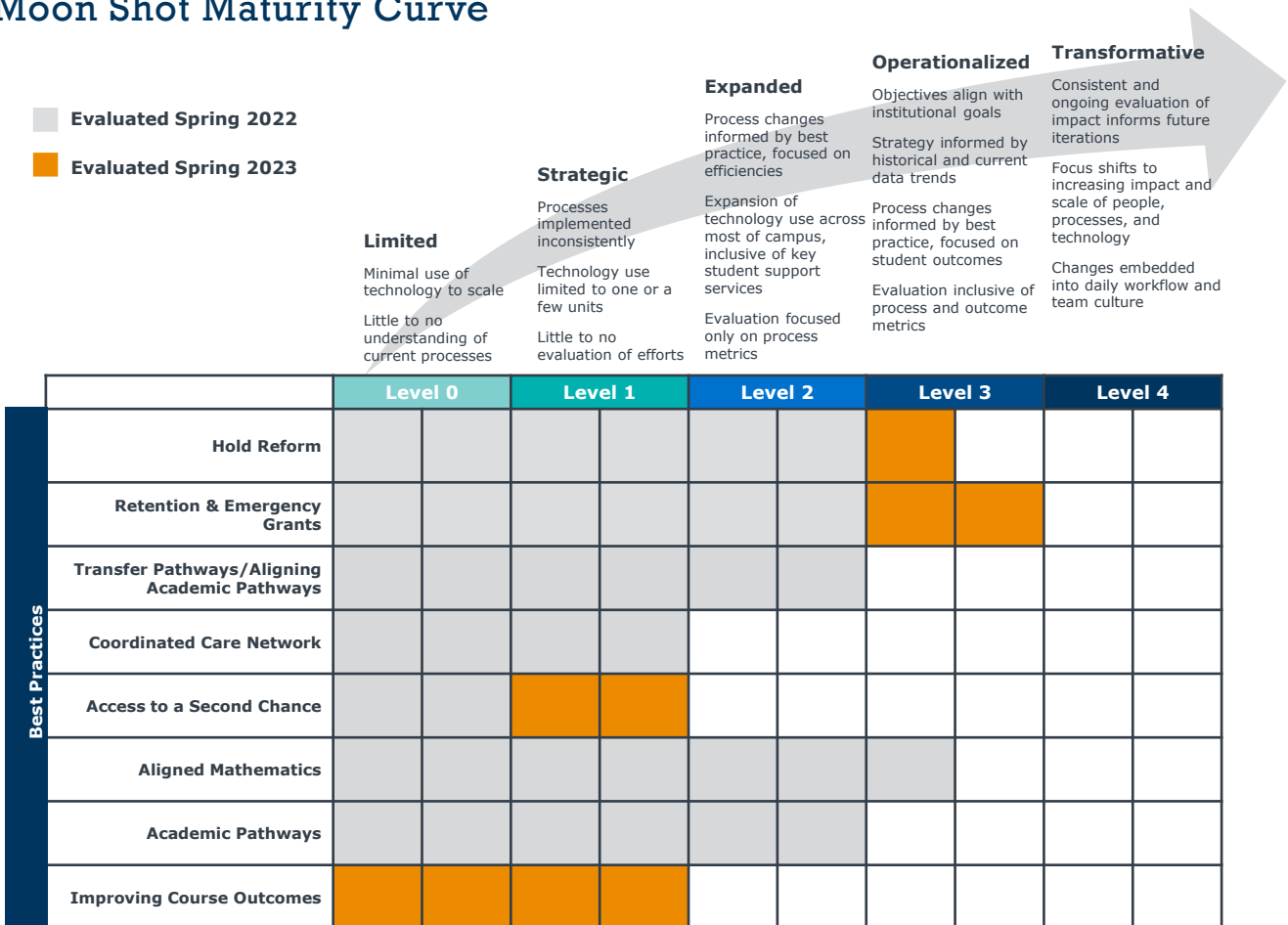- Ensuring all maps are updated and accessible

Iterating and Expanding on Practices

8 best practices have been launched within the framework for Moon Shot for Equity:

- Hold Reform
- Retention and Emergency Grants
- Transfer Pathways
- Coordinated Care Network
- Access to a Second Chance
- Aligned Mathematics
- Academic Pathways
- Improving Course Outcomes

We seek institutional transformation by implementing these best practices, with a goal of increasing their impact and scale of people, processes, and technology. Progress in achieving this goal is depicted in the maturity curve below. The greatest gains have been realized in hold reform and the use of retention grants. Access to second chance and improving course outcomes were launched in Spring 2023 and have already advanced with the development of a strategic plan.

Moon Shot Maturity Curve

Legend:
- ▉ Evaluated Spring 2022
- 🟧 Evaluated Spring 2023

Transformative
Consistent and ongoing evaluation of impact informs future iterations

Focus shifts to increasing impact and scale of people, processes, and technology

Changes embedded into daily workflow and team culture

Operationalized
Objectives align with institutional goals

Strategy informed by historical and current data trends

Process changes informed by best practice, focused on student outcomes

Evaluation inclusive of process and outcome metrics

Expanded
Process changes informed by best practice, focused on efficiencies

Expansion of technology use across most of campus, inclusive of key student support services

Evaluation focused only on process metrics

Strategic
Processes implemented inconsistently

Technology use limited to one or a few units

Little to no evaluation of efforts

Limited
Minimal use of technology to scale

Little to no understanding of current processes

Best Practices	Level 0		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4	
Hold Reform	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	🟧			
Retention & Emergency Grants	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	🟧	🟧		
Transfer Pathways/Aligning Academic Pathways	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉				
Coordinated Care Network	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉					
Access to a Second Chance	▉	▉	🟧	🟧						
Aligned Mathematics	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉			
Academic Pathways	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉					
Improving Course Outcomes	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧						

Hold Reform

Description and Baseline

Description: The enrollment process can be confusing, especially when universities utilize holds to prevent students from enrolling in classes for administrative or financial reasons. For instance, a student might have an enrollment hold because of unfinished paperwork or an unpaid balance. Holds can create unnecessary barriers and can discourage students from returning to school.

Baseline:

- Before the work group was convened, UWM had made two significant steps toward removing enrollment barriers during the 2020-2021 academic year. First, the threshold for a past due tuition balance that held enrollment was increased dramatically to $1,500. Students owing less than this have a different hold placed on their accounts that holds transcripts and diplomas, but they are allowed to enroll in future terms. Second, the hold put on all continuing student accounts each fall and spring as part of the Panther Enrollment Checklist process was eliminated.

- It is important to understand that there was no existing policy on how and when a school/college/office could implement a new hold (known as a service indicator in PAWS). Generally speaking, the Registrar's, Bursar's, and Financial Aid offices have access to create service indicators, but they had no authority to engage in conversation about why the hold has been created. This led to dozens of holds being created over the years that were never used, used briefly and then abandoned, or unknowingly used when another hold existed for the same purpose. There was much redundancy and clean-up needed before the work group could focus on making substantial changes to existing practices.

Goals

1. We will continue our thorough review of enrollment holds and scrutinize any proposed new holds.

2. We will eliminate or revise obsolete or redundant holds and ensure that offices utilizing holds are communicating with students about them and auditing them at least annually.

3. We will continue to explore and advocate for a centralized, online payment portal for all charges.

4. We will explore audit table data in PAWS to determine if analysis can be done on time to resolve holds.

Data and Metrics for Implementation:

- Process Metrics: Percentage of students with a registration hold, broken down by race/ethnicity; Continued use of $1,500 threshold for enrollment holds; Audit of existing holds and communication plans.

- Outcome Metrics: Review of any requests for new holds.
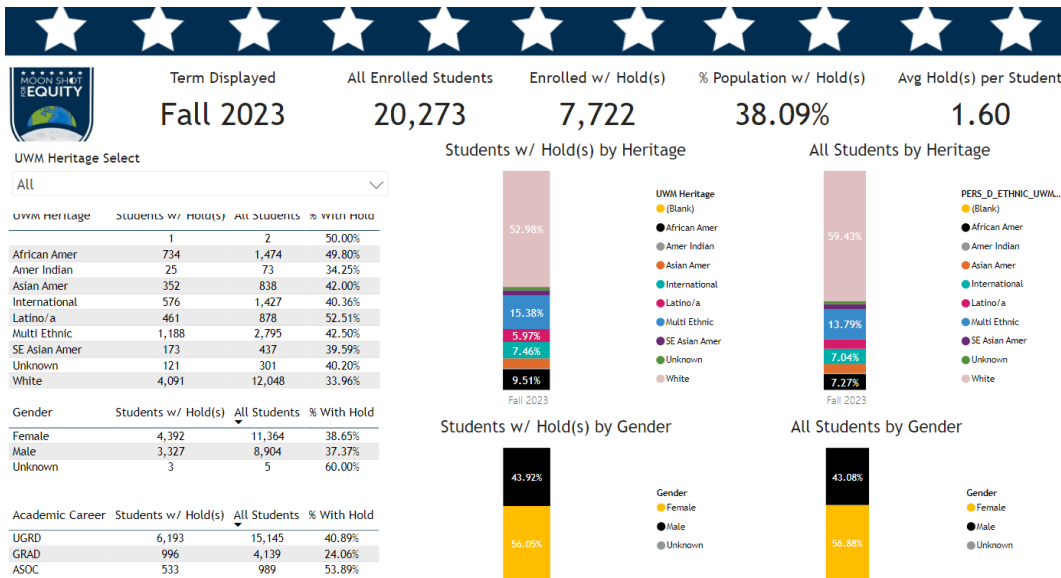
Hold Reform

Summary 2023 Progress

Advising and admissions colleagues reviewed the use and language associated with their holds. Nine more holds were eliminated, and language was updated on 17 holds.

UWM will participate in the Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA) convening in October to discuss holds reform, particularly as related to transcripts.

Since unofficial transcripts have been available to past students, regardless of holds, we have fulfilled 811 requests in just the past four months.

Program Spotlight

	Term Displayed	All Enrolled Students	Enrolled w/ Hold(s)	% Population w/ Hold(s)	Avg Hold(s) per Student
	Fall 2023	**20,273**	**7,722**	**38.09%**	**1.60**

UWM Heritage Select

All

UWM Heritage	Students w/ Hold(s)	All Students	% With Hold
	1	2	50.00%
African Amer	734	1,474	49.80%
Amer Indian	25	73	34.25%
Asian Amer	352	838	42.00%
International	576	1,427	40.36%
Latino/a	461	878	52.51%
Multi Ethnic	1,188	2,795	42.50%
SE Asian Amer	173	437	39.59%
Unknown	121	301	40.20%
White	4,091	12,048	33.96%

Gender	Students w/ Hold(s)	All Students	% With Hold
Female	4,392	11,364	38.65%
Male	3,327	8,904	37.37%
Unknown	3	5	60.00%

Academic Career	Students w/ Hold(s)	All Students	% With Hold
UGRD	6,193	15,145	40.89%
GRAD	996	4,139	24.06%
ASOC	533	989	53.89%

Students w/ Hold(s) by Heritage

52.98%
15.38%
5.97%
7.46%
9.51%
Fall 2023

UWM Heritage
- (Blank)
- African Amer
- Amer Indian
- Asian Amer
- International
- Latino/a
- Multi Ethnic
- SE Asian Amer
- Unknown
- White

All Students by Heritage

59.43%
13.79%
7.04%
7.27%
Fall 2023

PERS_D_ETHNIC_UWM...
- (Blank)
- African Amer
- Amer Indian
- Asian Amer
- International
- Latino/a
- Multi Ethnic
- SE Asian Amer
- Unknown
- White

Students w/ Hold(s) by Gender

43.92%
56.05%

Gender
- Female
- Male
- Unknown

All Students by Gender

43.08%
56.88%

Gender
- Female
- Male
- Unknown

Updated Data Dashboard

This semesterly dashboard breaks down the number and percentage of total students with a hold into heritage and gender and compares this to their percentage in the total student population.

This dashboard can break the data down further by level, school/college, and type of hold.

What's next? See goals and the previous page and the following

- Continue to review language of existing holds to ensure accuracy and clarity
- Advocate for the analysis of the practice of <u>official</u> transcript holds

Retention Grants

Donor Spotlight

In March 2023—after viewing early success from the Fall 2021 completion grant pilot—UWM received a $1.2M donation to further expand the program. This donation represents an opportunity to scale the program and ensure that students with demonstrated financial need receive the necessary funds to enroll and finish their degree.

Description and Baseline

Description: Small grants or other kinds of economic assistance can help students who may not be able to register for classes because of a financial hold. Students who leave because of holds often do not return to pay bills. In the current economic environment, a financial setback like a layoff can mean the difference between completing courses or dropping out.

Baseline:

- UWM began offering $250,000 in retention grants in the 2020-21 academic year, targeting low-income students or others in need who were in their junior or senior years.

Goals

UWM reviews data on the percentage of students that received retention grants who returned for the subsequent fall/spring semester to determine the effectiveness of the program and make modifications for the future. Specific goals:

1. Influence course registration for the subsequent term by offering retention grants to reduce outstanding balances below the hold threshold.

2. Raise philanthropic funds to support this project.

Data and Metrics for Implementation:

- Process Metrics: Count of students meeting award eligibility criteria each term, count of students awarded retention grants, re-enrollment count in the following semester.

- Outcome Metrics: Credits attempted in the following semester by students receiving an award, graduation rate of students receiving an award (100% and 150% of time), re-enrollment rate one year later among students who have not yet graduated -OR- combined rate of re-enrollment and graduation one-year after award, time to degree after receiving the award.

Retention Grants

$1.2M

Secured in donor funding for 2023-24 awarding

80

Students received a retention grant in August 2023

Summer 2023 Progress:

- Student retention/graduation rates for the Spring 2023 administration will be determined in November 2023 following official enrollment.

- Beginning in August 2023, students were able to apply for an award via the Panther Scholarship Portal, UWM's universal scholarship application system. In addition, UWM financial aid staff were able to nominate a student for an award. These changes align with best practice literature that recommends students have multiple avenues to be considered for available retention grant funding.

- The philanthropic funding enabled awarding to those outside of the typical "completion" group (i.e., sophomores and juniors). In total, an additional 80 students were awarded in August (totaling nearly $200,000) to remove their past due balance holds and permit course registration for Fall 2023.

- <u>For the first time</u>, due to available funding, multi-term offers were issued to eligible students who have exhausted other types of aid.

Program Spotlight

Implementation Metrics	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Count of students meeting award eligibility criteria each term	136	127	164	174	113
Count of students awarded retention grant	102 (75%)	105 (83%)	164 (100%)*	133 (76%)	113 (100%)
Re-enrollment in the following fall/spring semester	81 (79%)†	84 (80%)	115 (70%)†	104 (78%)	TBD†
Credits attempted in the following semester by students receiving an award (average)	10.88	12.48	10.54	11.24	TBD

*100% of eligible students were awarded due to a one-time increase in funding.
†Some additional students graduated in the summer term and thus did not enroll in the fall term.

Data-Centered Interventions and Coordinated Care

Description and Baseline

Data-Centered Interventions leverage technology for proactive advising, enable proactive academic advising, and allow advisors to focus their attention on students who need their support.

Coordinated Care makes student care a coordinated effort. This practice creates a Coordinated Care Network across offices such as financial aid, career advising, support services, and counseling centers to easily coordinate and collaborate on appropriate next steps for student support.

Baseline:

- Data-Centered Interventions: UWM has long utilized Navigate for advising appointments and academic progress reports, but most of UWM's advising offices offered their services in a student-demand model that creates high student demand during enrollment periods with little differentiation in care for students for advisee populations.

- Coordinated Care: Advisors are able to refer students to certain student supports through Navigate, but these were largely "one-way" referrals with no feedback loop to ascertain whether students had connected with the referred service. UWM's culture has led to offices connecting through a student rather than coordinating services around a student.

Goals

1. Create greater capacity for differentiated care levels for students in advising at UWM through lowering caseloads and establishing standard student learning outcomes/assessment. Foster holistic and proactive advising practices at UWM.

2. Create bolt-on supports (rather than opt-in supports) for students entering UWM with high school GPAs below 3.0.

3. Enhance capabilities for interdepartmental referrals and student notes for student-facing offices including financial aid, career advising, student affairs supports, and health/wellness services.

4. Develop an institution-wide intervention for students who enter academic probation after their first term. Consider changing the language of probation to "warning" or "notice."

5. Incorporate opportunities for intervention and/or data collection from students who withdraw from UWM during standard terms.

Data and Metrics for Implementation:

- Process Metrics: Time to case closure, utilization of non-advising student support services, percentage of cases closed by case outcome, progress report campaign response rate, changes in GPA or academic standing.

- Outcome Metrics: Persistence rate, time-to-degree, graduation rate (100% and 150%), summer melt.

Data-Centered Interventions and Coordinated Care

Summer 2023 Progress:

1. Pivoted the former Panther Academic Scholarship program to "First Year Forward," focused particularly on providing support and service referrals to students with <2.99 high school GPAs, layering in peer mentoring and academic skills tutoring for this population. Early responses have seen a significant increase in peer mentoring appointments.

2. Hosted a summer workshop with academic department stakeholders to review success outcomes in key courses. One result of this meeting was a request from the Provost to Schools/Colleges to submit data-centered proposals focused on increasing student success in their programs.

3. A team of 11 faculty, staff, and students attended the NACADA Summer Institute to create institution-wide solutions that will reduce the number of first-time, first-year students who end their first college semester on academic probation after earning a <2.00 cumulative GPA. Details of these plans are featured in the Spotlight section below.

Spotlight: Academic Probation and Reset Activities

1. Reduce the number of students who end their first term in Probation status.

After mapping students' first year experiences, we identified several places in their interactions with Admissions, Orientation, and early classroom experiences that could be interwoven with support activities. There's a lot we can do by identifying what prospective and admitted students are telling us about themselves prior to appearing on campus that we can operationalize to have particular resource offices (Accessibility, Tutoring/SI, Student Involvement, etc.) do targeted outreach to incoming students to drive up student engagement, belongingness, and positive academic behaviors.

2. Revise Notification of Probation status.

For many years, individual advising offices have been responsible for notifying students about their probation status. By sending out a standard letter under the Provost's signature, we can standardize the tone and content of that letter, and position students' academic advisors as student advocates rather than agents of punishment or scolding, encouraging advisor connections for a student population that really needs support and guidance.

3. Change the name of Academic Probation to Academic Warning.

Following Cal State Fullerton, we seek to remove incarcerative language from our student policies. We also feel that many students mistake probation status for an academic dismissal or discouragement. We are changing our language to reflect support.

4. Create a campus-wide intervention program for students in Academic Warning status.

Through the use of student self-assessment and in consultation with their academic advisor, students on probation will choose from a menu of options for increased support while they are in Academic Warning status. Options include a 1 credit course incorporating individualized academic supports, health and wellness counseling, tutoring/Supplemental Instruction, and success coaching.

Transfer Pathway

Description: Transfer students often are unable to use all of their previously earned credits at their new institution, forcing them to spend more time and money (through credit hours) to earn a degree. Students of color often are much less likely to transfer credits successfully.

Baseline: UWM is the top destination for transfers in the UW System. UWM has expanded the number of courses that are accepted for transfer from the Wisconsin Technical College System from more than 150 in Fall 2019 to nearly 2,300 in Fall 2020. We are working to strengthen partnerships with area technical colleges. The use of Transferology has been expanded. This technology allows prospective transfer students to more easily receive answers to college transfer credit questions.

Goals

1. Work with two-year institutions participating in the Moon Shot for Equity to make sure there are appropriate MOUs so students transfer to UWM with junior standing. Promote pre-major advising and use of Transferology for those students transferring without a completed associate's degree.

2. Continue to use online portals to make it easier for potential transfer students to understand the transfer process, plan ahead and make sure that their credits will apply at UWM.

3. Develop agreements to utilize Navigate as a data-sharing tool with other institutions that use Navigate.

4. Foster personalized onboarding and student engagement through collaborations in advising, transfer fairs, and shared student involvement activities.

Data and Metrics for Implementation:

- Process Metrics: Credit transferability: percentage of a student's credits accepted by the receiving institution, Credit applicability: percentage of credits contributing to a student's major at the receiving institution, Total # of transfers, broken down by pathways and sending institution.

- Outcome Metrics: Excess credits upon completion beyond required number for credential, Graduation rate for transfer students by sending institution, Time to degree post-transfer, Total time to degree.

Partnerships Spotlight

UW-Milwaukee is partnering closely with Milwaukee Area Technical College in order to align academic pathways and ensure that students who begin their college journey at MATC are able to identify a seamless transfer pathway to UWM. With many activities underway to foster this, we are now expanding our reach to other two-year campuses, including our own College of General Studies. Special regional focus this Fall will be on growing the teacher pipeline.

Aligned Math

Description and Baseline

Description: Traditional introductory-level math courses like college algebra or precalculus often don't align with a student's field of study. For instance, a logic class may be more appropriate for a philosophy major. Using a strategy called Math Pathways, colleges and universities can provide a variety of courses that better align with the skills a student needs to graduate and still fill math requirements.

Baseline: UWM has been moving away from a one-size-fits-all philosophy for introductory math since 2014, when we began implementing the Math Pathways strategy. Results are promising. For new entering students who were required to take a credit-bearing math course, the percentage who completed such a course in their first year more than doubled from 24% in 2014 to 50% in 2019.

Goals

1. Continue to evaluate math requirements to make sure students are taking courses that align with their fields of study.

2. Clear communication to transfer students to understand what math courses are required for their degree.

Data and Metrics for Implementation:

- Process Metrics: Percentage of students matriculating with gateway mathematics satisfied, Percentage of students needing gateway math who earn a grade of C or better in a gateway math course within their first year (first two years), Percentage of students identified by instructors as not making satisfactory progress in a mathematics gateway course in semester Progress Report, Percentage of students declaring an intended major or meta-major on matriculation, Percentage of students with declared intended major or meta-major enrolling in an appropriate mathematics course in their first 2 semesters.

- Outcome Metrics: "D,F,W" (dropped, failed, withdrew) course grade rates in each individual gateway mathematics course, Number of students per year who change to a major or meta-major requiring a different gateway mathematics course.

Improving Math Placement

UW-Milwaukee has begun leveraging ALEKS placement test, which has advantages of being computer-adaptive, can be taken up to 5 times, and has unlimited individualized practice in between tests. The intention of the new placement test is to produce more accurate math placements than ACT scores or the UW System multiple choice test.

Aligned Math

Summer 2023 Progress:

- We are continuing our efforts to measure our identified benchmarks for student success.

- Mathematics Department representatives attended a joint UWM/MATC workshop in July (following up from a previous workshop in January). Workshop sessions were devoted to reducing the barriers to transferring STEM courses and milestones from MATC to UWM.

- Our cohort of 12 MPS high school teachers are continuing with their program of graduate math courses, with the goal of becoming eligible to teach dual enrollment courses in their high schools. Of these teachers, 8 will be eligible to teach dual-enrollment courses in Spring of 2024. One Is already (Fall 2023) teaching our first dual-enrollment offering of College Algebra.

- Several members of the Mathematics Department attended New Student Orientation sessions (NSOs) over the Summer, to answer student and parent questions about UWM mathematics courses and mathematics placement.

- Representatives from Advising and the Department of Mathematics continue to meet regularly to discuss strategies for choosing appropriate mathematics courses for incoming freshmen who do not declare a major or meta-major on matriculation. This Summer, the discussions broadened to include strategies for easing student placement at NSOs.

Program Spotlight

DFW Rates are Falling in Math Gateway Courses

It is not enough to place students into appropriate mathematics courses: they must then earn a grade of C or better to satisfy their general education mathematics requirement and proceed with their major. The mathematics department closely monitors the percentage of students who fail to earn at least a C in each mathematics course—the so-called DFW rate. This percentage has fallen significantly in gateway mathematics courses over the past two years.

DFW Rates for Math Gateway Courses, 2020-2022
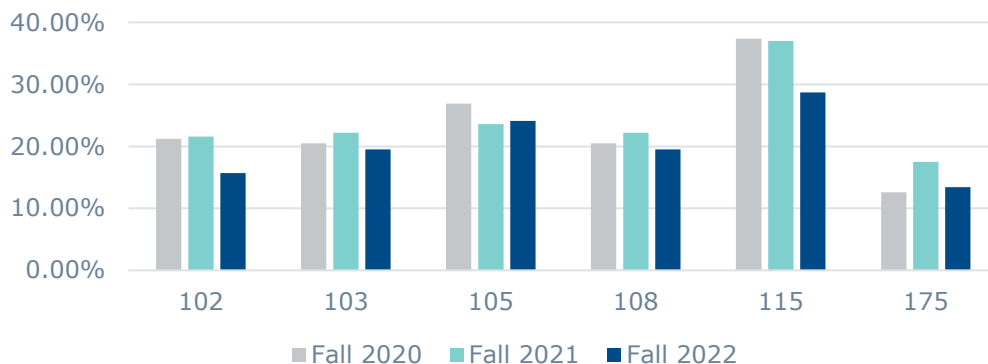
Access to a Second Chance

Description and Baseline

Description: About 35 million adults older than 25 years have completed some college credit without having earned a degree. Many have exhausted their eligibility for Pell Grants or may be in default on student loans. Adult learners also may be reluctant to return to school out of fear that they might not feel welcome and may be afraid of repeating the same failures.

With this project, our focus is to remove barriers to re-enrollment and create flexible learning environments to enable adult students, including those who were formerly incarcerated, to complete their degrees.

Baseline: UWM started a summer marketing campaign, which included a financial incentive, aimed at former students who might be interested in returning to finish a degree. We continuously evaluate how the UWM experience can best meet the need-to-be-flexible schedules of adult learners. UWM is recognized nationally for the quality of its online instruction and educates more online students than any other university in the state of Wisconsin. We are ranked as one the top 50 online bachelor's programs in the country by U.S. News & World Report.

Goals, Metrics and Progress

Initiative Goals:

1. Establish an ongoing approach to encouraging re-entry of stopped out students with a focus on degree completion.

2. Continue reaching out to former students or other adult learners interested in returning to school or advancing their education.

3. Explore ways to expand financial assistance to those in need and make sure that adult learners are aware of academic support options like advising and career counseling. We will make sure that adult learners are aware of flexible class schedules and options like virtual classes that may better fit into busier schedules.

Data and Metrics for Implementation:

• Process Metrics: Applications and enrollments of re-entry students.

• Outcome Metrics: Retention rate of re-entry students, Graduation rate of re-entry students, Credits at time of graduation.

Access to a Second Chance

Summer 2023 Progress:

Students Re-Entering:
- The Re-Entry Manager conducted targeted outreach to more than **2,300** stop-out, potential, and current re-entry students. She engaged in over **630** individual conversations to assist students in navigating the barriers to returning to UWM.
- Financial concerns (limited aid remaining, large past-due balances, etc.) remain one of the key barriers for students.
- Many students expressed interest in returning but needed to work with the Re-Entry Manager to determine the appropriate term to return. Some were leaving full-time jobs or balancing challenging life situations so careful, collaborative planning was essential.

Incentivizing a return to UWM:

- Awarded over $340,000 to students returning to complete their degree thanks to the Moon Shot for Equity Fund.

- To accept the award, students had to complete actions in the UWM Scholarship Portal which further exposed them to other scholarships for which they may be eligible.

- These funds were split across fall and spring semester to encourage continuous enrollment.

Program Spotlight

5%
Increase in stop-out students with more than 90-credits who returned to UWM

558
Students received a financial incentive to return to UWM

8
Outreach campaigns targeting students who left UWM were conducted across summer 2023
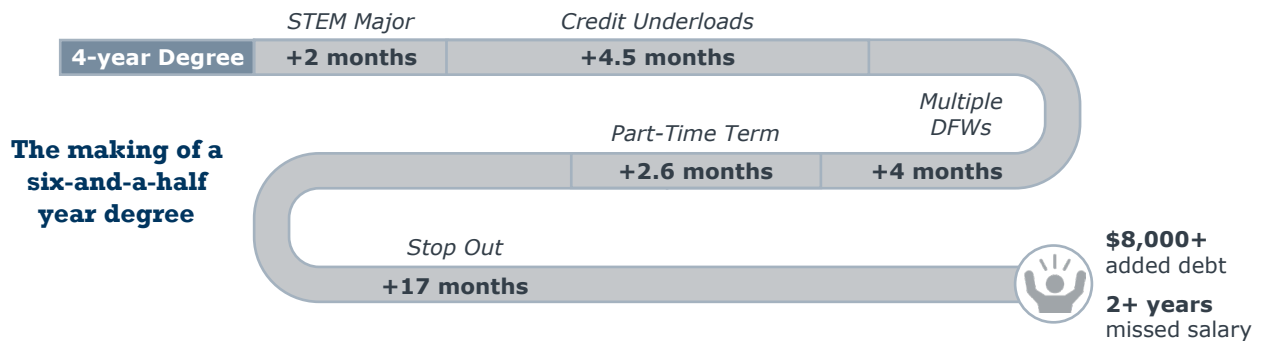
$340,000
In scholarships have been awarded to students returning to UWM to complete their degree

What's Next?
- A slate of recommendations will go before the Access to a Second Chance Team for endorsement. These recommendations are far-reaching and seek to improve the student experience from the point of departure through the end of the students first semester back at UWM.

- The Re-Entry Manager will offer success coaching to students who have newly returned to UWM while continuing to help prospective re-entry students navigate their return.

Academic Maps

The Challenge: Common Pitfalls Extend Time and Cost to Degree

4-year Degree	STEM Major +2 months	Credit Underloads +4.5 months	

The making of a six-and-a-half year degree

Multiple DFWs

Part-Time Term +2.6 months | +4 months

Stop Out +17 months

$8,000+ added debt

2+ years missed salary

Description and Baseline

Description: Establish clear pathways to timely completion of courses that count, reducing the time (and cost) to graduate. Clarify the co- and extra-curricular activities recommended by departments and programs and use the opportunity of map creation to seek out potential curricular improvements based on key student success metrics.

Baseline: UWM has been working on academic maps for a few years, with a significant interruption imposed by the pandemic. We have a few dozen programs that have recently evaluated their 120-credit pathways to graduation, and many others that have curricula on their websites but not in a chronological academic map. To date, no programs have comprehensive lists of co- and extra-curricular activities. We do have an academic map template that we can populate as we gather the relevant data.

Goals

Help students see a clear path to graduating in 120 credits (some select programs are longer) that includes the outside-the-classroom work that will enable them to be more well-rounded and successful once they have graduated. The maps should work equally well whether the student comes in as a new freshmen or whether they transfer into the major from another campus or switch into the major from elsewhere on campus.

Data and Metrics for Implementation:

- Process Metrics: Major changes outside of starting meta-major or academic map; Major changes after earning 60 credits; Percentage of students by meta-major or academic map completing 9 credit hours related to their major in their first year.

- Outcome Metrics: Average and median excess credits upon completion by academic map; Graduation rate (100% and 150% of time) by academic map; Time-to-degree by academic map.

Improving Outcomes for Courses with High DFW Rates

About

Improving Course Outcomes was a practice initiated in January 2022. We set out to use Navigate data to find a student population in need of support, create a tailored intervention strategy, deliver support, and assess the impact of our intervention.

Initial Focus Population: Students enrolling in courses with greater than 20% DFW rates in select majors

- How We Found This Population: Emerged as a result of looking at low six-year graduation rates across majors on campus, mindful of racial and ethnic differences among students

- Why We Selected This Population: Interest in closing the graduation gaps between underrepresented and majority white students.

Process Metrics:

- Engaged various schools/colleges/units in identifying and validating courses with 20% or higher DFW rates over 5–10-year period.

- EAB extracted grade information for these courses by section over a 5-year period.

- UWM Registrar's Office provided course delivery method (online, face-to-face) by section for these course sections over a 5-year period.

Impact (preliminary):

- Elevated awareness of the role math courses and courses satisfying general education requirements have on student progress to degree.

- Campus summit hosted over 40 academic leaders and detailed data analytics tools and resources to investigate course outcomes from a student success lens.

- Action Plan created tracking course-level interventions and strategies underway.

- New Progress Report campaign for Fall 2023 focused on courses with high DFW rates during previous fall semester.

Process Details

- Analysis began by using the Historical Population Analytics dashboard to identify the 10 majors on campus with the lowest 6-year graduation rates since 2011.
- Looked at demographic differences in degree attainment in these majors, and underrepresented students graduated at lower rates than white majority students in these majors.
- Colleagues participated in discussions and further analysis among these majors.
- Courses with 20% or higher DFW rates were identified for these academic programs using 5-10 year periods of time employing the Historical Course Analytics dashboard.
- Courses were validated through discussions with advising units to determine alignment with major requirements, program changes, and number of attempts.
- Heatmap was created to identify courses that affected three or more majors in scope of analysis.
- Courses were sent to EAB to identify grade distributions per section for a 5-year period.
- Resulting section data was sent to UWM Registrar's Office to identify course delivery method.
- Section-level analysis identified themes that inform intervention strategies and student support initiatives.
- Scaled DFW rate analysis to all majors and courses with 20% or higher from Fall semesters 2017-2021. Resulted in 62 courses in updated scope of project.
- Hosted representatives connected to these 62 courses at a campus summit, providing data literacy coaching, detailing campus resources, and showcasing student success strategies.
- Additional strategies underway for Fall 2023 include a new Progress Report campaign specifically for courses with high DFW rates in the previous fall, and data collection on causes of DFW grades in the College of General Studies.

Moon Shot for Equity in the Vision of the College of General Studies

Desk of Dean Simon Bronner

The College of General Studies (CGS), with campuses at Washington County and Waukesha, emphasizes the access mission of UWM and the values placed on fostering student success, community engagement, a caring, compassionate, and collegial environment, and "diversity in all of its definitions." Dean Simon Bronner proclaims the college's commitment to creating a "close familiar environment where one can build a life-affirming sense of belonging…and equipping you for success." Apropos of that promise, CGS aligns well with the goals of Moon Shot for Equity that are evident in the campuses and programs as "places to grow," not only academically, but socially and emotionally with the change management and equity leadership that is instilled in the operation of the college since it was launched in 2018.

The College's name indicates the offering of a wide variety of educational options especially suited for students finding their career and life pathways with the most affordable tuition in the UW System. To meet students' needs, CGS has especially been active in the Moon Shot for Equity's practices of:

- Offering metamajor pathways for undecided freshmen or sophomores to take classes in related subject that they might be interested in pursuing further as majors while making sure those classes count toward their degrees.
- Bolstering support services for students, building their confidence and a sense of belonging, and taking a proactive approach to advising.
- Offering an innovative First-Year-Bridge, CGS builds students' confidence through a cohort model for peer support and success coaching in addition to required advising sessions. Based on the Milwaukee campus, the First-Year-Bridge program is slated for expansion to the branch campuses as it has well met the goals of student retention and serving underrepresented groups.

CGS not only forges community ties and philanthropic support through different campus foundations, but also engages in the local connections on and off the campus of faculty and staff with students. A Campus Climate Committee has initiated climate surveys and projects such as the Wisconsin Humanities funded grant to bring awareness of the Native American communities to the public and campus in Waukesha. CGS's ongoing cultural visibility projects and activities embrace the concept of equity and inclusion of all students who come together to learn and grow. The Moon Shot for Equity provides the framework, mindset, technology, and practices to erase equity gaps in education through a communitywide and holistic response to support student success.