

SACSCOC Focused Report 2018

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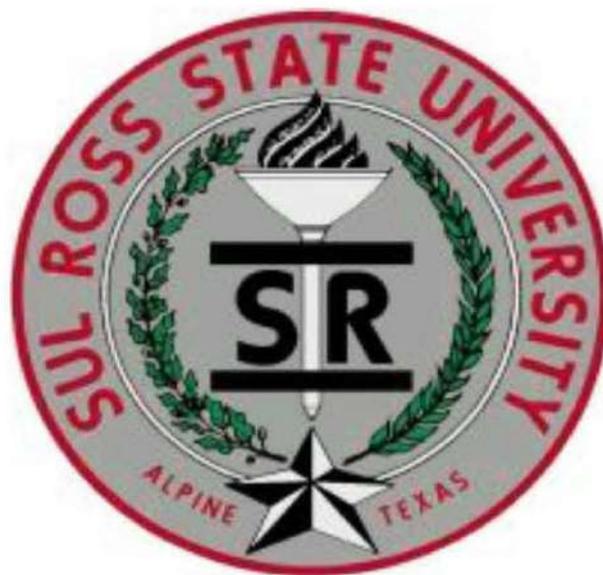
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Sul Ross State University

Focused Report

Submitted to
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on
Colleges



February 2018

Sul Ross State University

A Member of the Texas State University System

Alpine, TX



Navigating the Site

The sections of the site are labeled at the top of the page. Each section contains a navigation menu with links on the left side. Below you will find detailed information about navigating the site. A legend of commonly used icons is provided. This Focused Report is presented within a static website portfolio.

Focused Report

This section of the site provides access to Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards that were designated Non-Compliant by the SAC/COC Off-Site Committee. The Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards have their own tabs located at the top of the portfolio. Click on the tabs to access information. Then click on each link on the left hand side. The electronic file of the Focused Report document, with all support documentation, is on the flash drive included in the packet. Please insert the flash drive to a computer or laptop and open the file.

Legend

The legend provides an overview of the various icons used throughout this site. Please review these items carefully as they provide a visual indication of the types of items that you will encounter while using this site.

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Core Requirement 2.5 - Institutional Effectiveness

The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. **(Institutional effectiveness)**

Non-Compliance

The institution has developed three strategic plans over the past ten years: 2008-13, 2013-18, and 2017-22. Only the 2017-22 strategic plan was included in the documentation. It lists a broad cross-section of campus participants on the committee and subcommittees which developed the plan. Campus stakeholders also participated in the plan's development through focus groups and a blog. The narrative states that a "baseline scorecard will be produced in August 2018," but no information was provided on targets and expected outcomes. In the narrative the institution documented only one outcome each for 2008 and 2013 (i.e., dual credit students and distance education), but provided no strategies or context for these outcomes within the strategic plans. Without these previous plans and documentation of campus-wide results, it is difficult to conclude that the institution used a systematic review of outcomes that resulted in continual improvement of institutional quality, not just within individual departments. The section on "Resource Allocation" claims that assessment reports feed into the budgeting process, but no documented evidence is provided. The example of raising salaries was described as being in alignment with the "2014-18 Strategic Plan" for objective #1, goal #1. Yet, a 2014-18 plan was not described previously; it was described as 2013-17. Also, it is unclear how assessment data informed the decision to raise salaries. Although the reader is referred to CR 2.11 for more details on the university budget process, the information provided in CR 2.11 does not describe how assessment data are a part of budgeting decisions.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University is committed to following a systematic review of university-wide strategic outcomes that results in continual improvement of institutional quality. We have made great strides to become more unified since 2008, when [SRSU](#) had its own strategic plan and [RGC](#) (off-site campuses) had its own strategic plan, with some common goals. With the installation of Dr. Kibler, the new president in 2014, and the creation of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in 2015, administrative leadership surveyed the existing [2014-2018 Strategic Plan](#) (jointly developed by RGC and Alpine staff and faculty) and decided to update the planning and evaluation process. As an indicator of Dr. Kibler's commitment to the continual improvement of institutional quality, he convened a Strategic Planning Committee in 2016 (with representatives from RGC and Alpine), and charged them to create a plan for the entire university to embrace. The first step was to review the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. To clarify confusion identified by the Off-Site Committee, the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan was published in 2013 and first implemented in 2014. The official title is 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. The [workflow](#) for developing a new strategic plan called for an analysis of the goals, objectives, strategies, and metrics and a review of what a strategic plan should be.

The Strategic Planning Committee retained four of the five goals from the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan in modified form to continue into the [2017-2022 Strategic Plan: Strategies for the Second Century](#). The new Strategic Plan has 19 objectives and 88 strategies to assess the implementation of the five goals.

Table 1. Continuity between Strategic Plans

2017 – 2022 Strategic Plan	2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan
Goal 1: Promote Growth in Academics, Research, and Artistic Excellence	Goal 1: Academic Excellence
Goal 2: Target Recruiting: Maximize Retention & Increase Graduation Rates	Goal 2 Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention
Goal 3: Strengthen a Sustainable & Diversified Financial Base while Ensuring Affordable Access	Goal 5: Solid, Diversified, and Sustainable Financial Base
Goal 4: Recruit, Retain and Develop Faculty, Staff, and Student Employees	
Goal 5: Unify and Enhance the Image and Visibility of Sul Ross	Goal 3: Enhanced Brand Identity
	Goal 4: Community Engagement

Goal 1 for the *Strategies for the Second Century Strategic Plan* addressed the dimensions of academic excellence; similar to goal 1 in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. Goal 2 took a more focused approach to student enrollment than

goal 2 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. Goal 3 in both the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan and the 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan supported the university's financial base. Goal 5 somewhat addressed the fourth goal from the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan that was *Community Engagement*. The 2017-2022 Planning Committee added goal 4 *Recruit, Retain, & Develop Faculty, Staff and Student Employees*, because the Committee believed that the successful implementation of the [SRSU Mission Statement](#) and strategic plan depend upon committed, quality employees.

Systematic Review of Outcomes

Institutional effectiveness implements the planning and evaluation process throughout the university at all levels, including the Administrative Units. Using the Administrative Reports, the following examples demonstrate the alignment of outcomes with the goals and objectives of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. Complete summaries for Administrative Reports may be viewed in Comprehensive Standards 3.3.1.2 – 3.3.1.5 of the Compliance Certification.

- Career Services and Testing Center: In 2015, an annual Career Fair was introduced which has grown each year to include 30 companies and hundreds of participating students. (2014-2018 Strategic Plan goals 1 and 3)
- Human Resources and Payroll: In 2016-2017, 100% of all new employees were enrolled in health and retirement benefits within 30 days through an orientation to enhance the onboarding experience. (2014-2018 Strategic Plan goal 3)
- Area 207: In 2015-2016, this technology training center introduced Collaborate in the online course platform, Blackboard. By 2016-2017 over 8,000 faculty and students (repeat users) have used Collaborate to enhance academic excellence. (2014-2018 Strategic Plan goal 1)
- Office of the Vice President for Enrollment Management: In 2017, introduced Degree Works as a measure to promote student retention. (2014-2018 Strategic Plan goal 2)
- Child Care and Family Support Center: In 2016-2017, the Center advertised low cost and high quality child care for students, staff, and community by using Facebook. (2014-2018 Strategic Plan goal 4)
- Accounting Services: In 2016, to monitor transactions for compliance with budget and regulatory requirements, the Accounting Services Unit updated Argos reporting software for financial managers. (2014-2018 Strategic Plan goal 5)

Resource Allocation

The Strategic Plan is an integral part of the university-budget process as well. Sul Ross State University's strategic planning and biennial appropriations request processes provide the foundation, direction and logic for funding requests. The [2017-2018 adopted budget](#) aligns all budget items with the goals from the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. Several examples are provided to demonstrate that assessment data does inform budgetary decisions. At the university level, raising salaries in 2016-2017 can be linked to Goal 1, Objective 1 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, *Support, improve, and recognize excellence in teaching and research*. President Dr. Kibler met with the Faculty Council and the Executive Council for Faculty assembly ([Minutes, section III](#)) to explain the commitment to faculty support through the pay raise. The decision for the pay raise was funded by a tuition and fees increase that was approved by the Board of Regents ([News Release- November 13, 2015](#)). Minutes ([April 21, 2015. Section IV D](#)) from the President's Executive Cabinet demonstrate a deliberative approach to that decision to support faculty through a pay raise. Another example of assessment data influencing financial decision making is found in the renewing purchase of Smarthinking software (a tutoring program available to all students). Minutes ([Section J. c.](#)) from the President's Executive Cabinet indicate that the Executive Vice President and Provost assessed faculty regarding their use of Smarthinking for students. The final decision to purchase Smarthinking is reflected in [minutes](#) from the President's Executive Cabinet on October 3, 2017. With the implementation of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, budgetary decisions will continue to be informed by available assessment data to support the goals and objectives.

2017-2022 Strategic Plan: Strategies for the Second Century

To successfully [implement](#) the new strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Committee identified 19 objectives and 88 strategies for the five goals. Over 40 administrators, staff and faculty have taken responsibility for one or more of the strategies. Considering budget constraints and other variables, 58 of the 88 strategies will be reported for the 2017-2018 academic year.

A monitoring system also has been put in place to assure full implementation of the Strategic Plan. The President's Executive Cabinet reviews progress each semester and recommends adjustments or corrective action to keep the university moving forward. In a recent [report](#) to the President's Executive Cabinet and documented in the [minutes](#), there are measurable results for ten of the strategies, and progress is reported on the remaining 48 strategies scheduled for the 2017-2018 academic year. Those strategies with measurable results are outlined in the following table and references when appropriate are made to earlier efforts towards the same goals in the 2014-2018 strategic plan. All 58 strategies will be reported in the Annual Scorecard in August 2018. A draft of the [Annual Scorecard](#) displays the goals, objectives, strategies, and accomplishments (meet or not meet the targets set). A budget report and highlighted projects will be included in the annual report with the scorecard.

Table 2.

Goal & Objective	Strategy	Activity	Contact(s)
G 1, Obj. 1 Promote Growth in Academics, Research, and Artistic Expression (Building Upon: Goal 1 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S2 Promote high quality teaching by establishing a faculty discussion series "Pedagogy and Practice" Target: Minimum 4 per year	QEP Communication Seminars for faculty: Oct. 27, 2017 - RGC > Nov. 1, 2017 - Alpine Total attendance: 30 Seminar evaluations: - 100% agree they learned new skills	Dr. Dan Foley, Professor of Biology, Department of Natural and Behavioral Sciences, Rio Grande College Dean April Aultman Becker, Dean of Library and Information Technologies
G 1, Obj. 1 Promote Growth in Academics, Research, and Artistic Excellence (Building Upon: Goal 1 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S6 Improve technical support in distance learning to include online/web based learning and teleconference instruction Target: 70% or more of responders on the Annual Satisfaction Survey report level of satisfaction to be somewhat to extremely satisfied	Online Distance Education Standing Committee created on Aug. 1, 2017 Results of 2017 Satisfaction Survey for level of satisfaction with technical support: 45% extremely satisfied 25% somewhat satisfied 26% neutral 2% somewhat dissatisfied 2% extremely dissatisfied	Tim Parsons, Title V PPOHA-Instructional Designer & Media Technologist
G 1, Obj. 2 Promote Growth in Academics, Research, and Artistic Excellence (Building Upon: Goal 1 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S2 Create department-level programs that engage the student community around shared experiences Target: Each Academic Department offers one program each year.	The Education Department sponsored the 2017 National Teacher of the Year Sydney Chaffee keynote speaker for university and community on December 6, 2017	Dr. Jimmy Case, Provost
G 1, Obj. 3 Promote Growth in Academics, Research, and Artistic Excellence (Building Upon: Goal 1 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S2 Create opportunities for both funded and unfunded research at the graduate and undergraduate level with associated opportunities to present or publish, including growing	Faculty Research Committee convened (Oct 5, 2017) to begin planning for a spring 2018 research symposium for undergraduate	Dr. Theron Francis, Assistant Professor of English, Department of Languages and Literature Dr. Sharon Hileman, Dean of College of

	the current undergraduate research symposiums and creating a graduate student symposium Target: A minimum of 25 students participate in the Research Symposium each year	and graduate students on April 23 rd .	Graduate Studies
G 1, Obj. 5 Promote Growth in Academics, Research, and Artistic Excellence (Building Upon: Goal 1 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S2 Create opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to learn about available grants and write grant proposals Target: 1 workshop per semester	Held grant-writing workshop in Nov. 2017.	Dr. Rob Kinucan, Dean of Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences Marilyn McGhee, Director of Sponsored Programs
G 2, Obj. 2 Target Recruiting: Maximize Retention & Increase Graduation Rates (Building upon Goal 2 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S1 Engage nationally recognized retention experts and apply their best-practices Target: 60% or better freshmen cohort retention	Ruffalo Noel Levitz retained	Mary Beth Marks, Vice President for Enrollment Management
G 3, Obj. 2 Strengthen a Sustainable & and Diversified Base while Ensuring Affordable Access (Building upon goal 5 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S5 RGC campus master plan Target: TBD	Assessed Castroville campus viability and decided to close. Closure approved by Board of Regents in November, and letter of substantive change submitted to SACSCOC in December 2017	Dr. Jimmy Case, Provost
G 4, Obj. 2 Recruit, Retain and Develop Faculty, Staff, and Student Employees (Building upon goal 3 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S4 Provide additional development in online pedagogy for faculty who teach online courses Target: 4 sessions per year	Brown Bag training sessions were held in Alpine and RGC during fall 2017 semester	Tim Parsons, Title V PPOHA-Instructional Designer & Media Technologist
G 5, Obj. 1 Unify and Enhance the Visibility of Sul Ross (Building upon goal 3 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S4 Install a conformance testing process to monitor print authorization and branding	Distributed "We are Sul Ross" for university marketing in December 2017 to entire	Yvonne Realivasquez, Director of Administration, Office of the President

	guidelines across the university Target: 100% compliance as evidenced by random checking	university community	
G 5, Obj.3 Unify and Enhance the Visibility of Sul Ross (Building upon goal 3 of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan)	S4 SRSU becomes a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education Target: All Sustainability Council members can list the benefits of that membership	Joined the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education in August and paid for two members of the university's Sustainability Council to attend an association sponsored conference in October	Dr. Bibi Gutierrez, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences

Sul Ross State University selected full-time faculty members for additional duties, to work in Institutional Effectiveness, as [Coordinator](#) and [Assistant Coordinator](#), for the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan to assure that progress is ongoing. The coordinator is on the Alpine campus, and the assistant coordinator works with the Rio Grande College campuses. These coordinators reach out to the contacts for each strategy to gather data and provide support. The coordinators compile the annual scorecard ([Sample SRSU Strategic Plan Scorecard](#)) to be published each August to inform the SRSU community about the continuing progress as well as challenges. By reviewing the annual scorecard and report, the university can determine if any changes or modifications are needed and celebrate successes.

The 2017-2022 Strategic Plan builds upon the legacy of past strategic plans going back to 2008-2013. In the university Strategic Plan 2008-2013, for example, Goal 4 stated, *Establish our role as a leader in higher education*. Objective 1 called for more educational, outreach, and public service programs, to be implemented by strategy 3: *strengthening dual and concurrent enrollment programs*. Through the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, the dual enrollment programs have continued to increase to serve our community. A commitment to the use of technology to better serve students (Goal 5. Objective 1, Strategy 5 in the SRSU 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, and Goal 3, Objective 1, Strategy A in the RGC 2008-2013 Strategic Plan) continues to be supported through the Office of Information Technology.

Summary

The university is in compliance with Core Requirement 2.5. Academic programs and administrative units follow their written plans for student learning or operations, and they embrace the Mission Statement and support the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Annual reports are available in TracDat, the university's tracking and reporting system, and Sul Ross State University does use all available institution-wide research to continually improve institutional quality and accomplish its mission. Implementation progress is reviewed each semester by the President's Executive Cabinet to review outcomes and achievements.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Assistant Strategic Plan Coordinator](#)

[Budget Summary Aligned with 2014-2018 Strategic Plan](#)

[Executive Cabinet Minutes 1.2.18](#)

[Fall 2017 Strategic Plan Report](#)

[Implementation Plan for Strategic Plan](#)

[RGC Strategic Plan 2008-2013](#)

[Sample SRSU Strategic Plan Scorecard](#)

[Strategic Plan Contacts](#)

[Strategic Plan 2017-2022](#)

[Strategic Plan 2014-2018](#)

[Strategic Plan Kickoff](#)

[Strategic Plan Workflow](#)

[Strategic Plan Coordinator](#)

[Strategic Plan Mid-Year Report](#)

Core Requirement 2.7.1 - Program Length

The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification for all degrees that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit.

Compliance

The University offers bachelors and master's degrees and uses the standard definition for a credit hour. The institution requires 120 credit hours or more for undergraduate programs and a minimum of 30 hours for graduate programs. The concurrent dual degree graduate programs in Criminal Justice/Public Administration and in Homeland Security/Public Administration allow students to earn a combined degree with a minimum of 54 graduate credits. It is unclear whether students in these programs earn two graduate degrees, or one degree with curricular requirements from two academic disciplines. If students actually earn two graduate degrees, the institution failed to provide a rationale for awarding two graduate degrees to students who have not completed thirty graduate credits in each degree.

Focused Response

Although the Off-Site Committee members did rate this Core Requirement as compliant, they raised questions regarding the concurrent dual degree graduate programs in Criminal Justice/ Public Administration and Homeland Security/ Public Administration. The Off-Site Committee findings recommended either providing a rationale for awarding two degrees to students who have not completed 30 graduate credits in each degree or increasing the credit requirements to 30 graduate credits for each degree.

The deans and department chairs of these respective programs reviewed the [Criminal Justice/ Public Administration](#) degree plan and the [Homeland Security/ Public Administration](#) degree plan, and they decided to discontinue the practice and require 30 credits or more for each of the degrees to be effective Fall 2018 semester.

This program change was presented to the President's Executive Cabinet and approved in the [minutes of February 13, 2018](#) (Section IV c).

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[President's Executive Cabinet Minutes 2.13.18](#)

[MS CJPA Dual Degree Plan 2014-2016](#)

[MS HSPA Dual Degree Plan 2014-2016](#)

Core Requirement 2.8 - Faculty

The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of each of its academic programs.

Non-Compliance

The institution indicates that it employs 193 faculty, 76 of which are full-time faculty resulting in 39% of the faculty being classified as full-time. Data are provided to show that most of the programs employ full-time faculty; however, three of the programs (Animal Science, Industrial Technology and Natural Resource Management) employ no full-time faculty. It was unclear to the Off-Site Committee how the coordination, quality and integrity of these degree programs is ensured without the employment of full-time faculty. The Off-Site Committee also found no evidence to demonstrate that the institution employs an adequate number of faculty to meet the non-instructional responsibilities expected of faculty. Finally, the Off-Site Committee found no evidence to demonstrate that the institution employs an adequate number of full time faculty to support academic programs at its off-campus instructional sites.

Focused Response

Full-time Faculty

The data presented in the 2018 Compliance Certification defined a full-time faculty member based exclusively on instructional load. If faculty taught four or more courses, they were reported as full-time. If faculty taught less than four courses, they were labeled part-time. In short, the data provided in the 2018 Compliance Certification reported on teaching loads and not on terms of employment.

However, teaching loads do not always reflect employment status. For example, a department chair who is employed full-time at SRSU will teach less than four courses during the semester; thereby allowing him/her to attend to non-instructional responsibilities such as student advising, research, service, etc. In the 2018 Compliance Certification, those individuals were incorrectly reported as part-time, since they taught less than four courses, even though they were, in fact, full-time employees.

To address the Off-Site Committee's findings of non-compliance for Core Requirement 2.8, new calculations were completed based on full-time/part-time employment status (FTE); rather than teaching loads. Table 1, shows that **the full-time faculty on the main campus is 62%, and the full-time faculty for RGC is 57%. The overall SRSU/RGC full-time faculty is 61%** (compared to 39% reported in the 2018 Compliance Certification and based solely on the definition of teaching load).

Table 1. Faculty by College/Degree Program, and Full/Part-time Employment (FTE) Status, Fall 2016

College/Department	Full-time Headcount	Full-time Percent	Part-time Headcount	Part-time Percent
College of Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences				
Animal Science	4	80%	1	20%
Natural Resource Management	7	78%	2	22%
College of Arts and Sciences				
Academic Center for Excellence	6	60%	4	40%
Behavioral & Social Sciences	8	35%	15	65%
Biology, Geology & Physical Sciences	11	55%	9	45%
Fine Arts & Communications	14	74%	5	26%
Languages & Literature	10	77%	3	23%
Computer Science & Mathematics	5	83%	1	17%
College of Education & Professional Studies				
Business Administration	4	80%	1	20%
Homeland Security and Criminal Justice	4	57%	3	43%
Education	9	60%	6	40%
Industrial Technology	2	67%	1	33%
Kinesiology and Sports Science	7	58%	5	42%
MAIN CAMPUS TOTALS	91	62%	56	38%
Rio Grande College Off-Site Campuses				
Natural & Behavioral Sciences	7	64%	4	36%
Business Administration	4	57%	3	43%

Education	10	83%	2	17%
Humanities	5	31%	11	69%
RGC TOTALS	26	57%	20	43%
SRSU/RGC TOTALS	117	61%	76	39%

***Full-time faculty if employment appointment (FTE) equal or greater to 1.**

By using FTE for calculations, the three programs named by the Off-Site Committee for appearing to show no full-time faculty, in fact, have large shares of full-time faculty:

Animal Science: 80% FT, 20 PT
 Industrial Technology: 67% FT, 33% PT
 Natural Resource Management: 78% FT, 22% PT

As means of providing more evidence that SRSU employs an adequate number of full-time faculty, Table 2 shows full-time and part-time faculty by rank and campus.

Table 2. Full-time and Part-time Faculty, by Rank and Campus

Full-time Faculty						
Rank	ALP		RGC		Total	
Professor	22	11%	14	7%	36	19%
Associate Professor	12	6%	5	3%	17	9%
Assistant Professor	26	13%	5	3%	31	16%
Other faculty	31	16%	2	1%	33	17%
Total	91	47%	26	13%	117	61%
Part-time Faculty						
Rank	ALP		RGC		Total	
Professor	3	2%	1	1%	4	2%
Associate Professor	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%
Assistant Professor	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Other faculty	48	25%	19	10%	67	35%
Teaching Assistant	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%
Total	56	29%	20	10%	76	39%

Adequate Number of Full-time Faculty at Alpine and Off-Campus Instructional Sites

In addition, the SRSU student-faculty ratios reported to the Texas Legislative Budget Board serve as evidence of adequate faculty levels at the institution. The most recently available data show the student-faculty ratio at the Alpine campus is 14 students per faculty, and 10 students per faculty at the Rio Grande College Campus.

Fiscal Year	ALP	RGC
FY 2017	14	10
FY 2016	16	17
FY 2015	15	15

Non-instructional Responsibilities

Given that 61% of all faculty are full-time, faculty do have time for the important [non-teaching duties](#) such as service ranging from judging public school science fairs to providing stress intervention services to the Marfa and Presidio Customs and Border Patrol to [research](#).

Summary

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Core Requirement 2.8.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence:

[BRI Research Appointments](#)

[Departmental Service Initiatives](#)

Core Requirement 2.11.1 - Financial Resources and Stability

The institution has a sound financial base and demonstrated financial stability to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services.

The member institution provides the following financial statements: (1) an institutional audit (or Standard Review Report issued in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a system-wide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or Standard Review Report) guide; (2) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and (3) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board.

Non-Compliance

The institution has a sound budgeting process in place that culminates with the annual budget being approved by the Board. Revenue has been increasing in recent years, while expenses have remained manageable. However, an institutional financial audit report, as well as other required documents, was not made available for review in the documentation submitted for the Off-Site Review.

Focused Response

The institution has a sound financial base and demonstrated financial stability to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services.

The member institution provides the following financial statements: (1) an institutional audit (or Standard Review Report issued in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a system wide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or Standard Review Report) guide; (2) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and (3) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board. Audit requirements for applicant institutions may be found in the Commission policy "Accreditation Procedures for Applicant Institutions."

The Off-Site Review committee determined that Sul Ross State University is non-compliant with this core requirement. The committee writes in its report "The institution has a sound budgeting process in place that culminates with the annual budget being approved by the Board. Revenue has been increasing in recent years, while expenses have remained manageable. However, an institutional financial audit report, as well as other required documents, was not made available for review in the documentation submitted for the Off-Site Review."

As a Texas state agency, Sul Ross State University's financial information is audited as part of the annual Texas statewide audit. Our most recent fiscal year ended on August 31, 2017. We awarded a contract to BKD CPAs & Advisors to perform required work and provide a [Standard Review Report](#) in accordance with AICPA Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services for this fiscal year.

The Standard Review Report and an institutional [management letter](#) has been prepared and submitted for the year ended August 31, 2017, our most recent fiscal year, by this independent auditor. In addition, a [statement of financial position](#) of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt has been completed and submitted in conjunction with the Independent Accountant's Review Report. This report indicates that no issues were identified in the review and supports our compliance with the requirements of this core requirement.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Independent Accountant's Review Report Overview](#)

[Management Letter](#)

[SRSU 2017 Financial](#)

[Assets, Liability, and Net Position](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.1 - Governance and Administration: CEO Evaluation/Selection

The governing board of the institution is responsible for the selection and the periodic evaluation of the chief executive officer.

Non-Compliance

The Board of Regents of the Texas State University System (TSUS) is authorized by the Texas Education Code (section 95.01) to employ and discharge the Presidents of the institutions in the system. The Chancellor of the Texas State University System has the delegated responsibility from the Board of Regents to conduct annual performance evaluations of the president. The institution presented a self-evaluation completed by the President in early 2017, and the narration asserts that subsequent steps occurred in the Board process of evaluation; however, none of these steps was actually documented in the institutional submission for the standard.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University's (SRSU) governing body, the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System (TSUS) is authorized by the [Texas Education Code \(Section 95.06\(b\)\)](#) to employ and discharge the Presidents of the component institutions in the system. Upon recommendation of the TSUS Chancellor, the current president of Sul Ross State University, [Dr. William L. Kibler](#), was appointed by the Board of Regents at the Special Board of Regents Meeting on July 9, 2014 ([TSUS BOR Minutes, July 9, 2014](#)) following a nationwide search conducted from January to July 2014. He assumed the position on August 4, 2014.

The President is answerable to the Chancellor, who has the responsibility of conducting an annual performance evaluation of the president ([TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV, Paragraphs 1, 2.1 and 7.1](#)). The "authority, duties and responsibilities" delegated to TSUS presidents are articulated in the TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV. President Kibler has been evaluated by the Chancellor in February 2015, February 2016, and most recently, in February 2017. Each year, the Chancellor met with the President, one-on-one, discussing the specifics of the latter's performance as stated below. In each case, the Chancellor shared the results of his evaluation with the Board of Regents, which reviewed and approved the evaluation and met directly with President Kibler and the chancellor at the February Board of Regents Meeting each year.

Selection

The current President, Dr. William L. Kibler, was appointed by the Board on July 9, 2014 ([TSUS BOR Minutes July 9, 2014](#)) and assumed his position on August 4, 2014. The Board of Regents' policy for appointing university presidents is prescribed by Board of Regents policy ([TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV, Section 1, Appointment](#)).

Evaluation

The Board of Regents delegates the annual performance evaluation of the President to the Chancellor, who shares with the Board of Regents his evaluation of performance and any presidential response ([TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV, Paragraph 7.1, Evaluation](#)). The evaluation includes an assessment of institutional performance at the system level and an assessment of the president's individual performance related to institutional strategic goals and outcomes. In preparation for the evaluation, the president develops an assessment of the previous year's accomplishments and a plan for the year ahead consistent with institutional strategic goals.

In preparation for the 2017 evaluation, the Chancellor sent a questionnaire with several questions to President Kibler and requested a written response for the scheduled evaluation. The questions and written statement addressed the following topics:

1. Successes and accomplishments during the previous year.
2. Areas for improvement and/or increased focus.
3. What specifically have you done and are you doing to mentor new talent on your campus for leadership positions.
4. Future strategic and operational goals in priority order for the next evaluation period.
5. Updates and changes to the Strategic Plan.
6. General summary and comments.

The President provided the requested evaluation information on January 6, 2017 ([William L. Kibler 2017 Presidential Performance Evaluation](#)). The Chancellor conducted the performance review meeting with SRSU's President on January 24, 2017. The Chancellor responded to the Performance Evaluation in writing to Dr. Kibler ([TSUS Chancellor response to Kibler Performance Evaluation 2-24-17](#)) and submitted the results of the performance evaluation to the Board of Regents at the February 2017 Board Meeting. The President had the opportunity to meet personally with the Board in Executive Session to discuss his performance for the previous year and plans for the coming year.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Texas Education Code, Title 3, Subtitle E, Chapter 95, Subchapter A, Section 95.01](#)

[TSUS BOR Minutes July 9, 2014](#)

[TSUS Chancellor Response to Kibler Performance Evaluation 2-24-17](#)

[TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV, Paragraph 1. Appointment](#)

[TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV, Paragraph 2.1. Authority](#)

[TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV, Paragraph 7.1. Evaluation](#)

[William L. Kibler 2017 Presidential Performance Evaluation](#)

[William L. Kibler Resume](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.3 - Governance and Administration: Board conflict of interest

The governing board has a policy addressing conflict of interest for its members.

Non-Compliance

Texas Government Code Chapter 572 ensures that members of the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System are required to adhere to the conflict of interest statutes. The statutes address personal financial disclosure, standards of conduct, and conflicts of interest for all governing board members. However, the institution provided no evidence of implementation of the conflict of interest policy.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is governed by the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System (TSUS Board), which is a statutorily created board. As such, all TSUS Board members are required to adhere to the conflict of interest statutes set out in Texas Government Code Chapter 572. This chapter addresses personal financial disclosure ([Section 572.001 et sequitur](#)), standards of conduct, and conflicts of interest for all governing board members. The first section of this statute sets forth the "Legislative Intent" of this Chapter: It is the policy of this state that a state officer or state employee may not have a direct or indirect interest, including financial and other interests, or engage in a business transaction or professional activity, or incur any obligation of any nature that is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of the officer's or employee's duties in the public interest ([Section 572.051 et sequitur](#)).

These requirements are set out at the System level through the [TSUS Rules and Regulations Chapter VIII. Ethics Policy for Regents and Employees of the Texas State University System, Section 3. Conflict of Interest](#). This section of the TSUS Rules and Regulations sets rules for filing required financial disclosure statements with the Texas Ethics Commission; describes contracts that board members are prohibited from entering into; requires recusal by board members for certain types of contracts that involve pecuniary interest; requires members of the board to disclose personal or private financial interest; describes potential conflicts of interest of board members; addresses contracts with non-profit corporations; and requires disclosure of board member's interest in property to be acquired.

Section 4 of the TSUS Ethics Policy outlines the Code of Ethics for Board of Regents members, which describes prohibited actions of board members. Prohibited behaviors include accepting of soliciting gifts or services that are intended to influence; accepting employment or business activities that might induce the disclosure of official confidential information; accepting appointments or compensation that might impair the Regent's independence of judgment; allowing the Board to consider any matter that would be personally beneficial; make personal investments that could create a conflict of interest; accepting any gift or benefit for having exercised official duties; commit acts of fraud, dishonesty, or illegality in office. Moreover, the policy prohibits a regent from receiving benefits or engaging in behavior or activities that benefit third parties in who welfare the regent is interested, whether the benefit is pecuniary or non-pecuniary. [Texas Education Code, Section 61.084](#) requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to provide training in ethics and other matters for regents, who, by law, may not vote on a personnel or financial matter until they have completed this training. The ethics portion of this training is attached ([TSUS BOR Ethics Training Materials](#)).

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Texas Education Code, Section 61.084](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 572. Personal Financial Disclosure, Standards of Conduct, and Conflict of Interest](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 572. Section 572.001](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 572. Section 572.051](#)

[TSUS BOR Ethics Training Materials](#)

[TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter VIII. Ethics Policy for TSUS Regents and Employees, Section 3. Conflicts of Interest](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.5 - Board Dismissal

The governing board has a policy whereby members can be dismissed only for appropriate reasons and by a fair process.

Non-Compliance

The Texas State Constitution Article 15. Impeachment and the Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Impeachment and Removal describe the process for removing or dismissing members of the Texas State University System Board of Regents. An additional provision for the removal of members of the BOR is described in the Impeachment and Removal by the House of the Texas Government Code (Chapter 665). Section 665.053. Notice and Hearing (a) which provides that the Board Member Notice of the reason for removal must be given to the officer who is to be removed. (b). The Board Member must be allowed to appear at a hearing before the vote for removal is taken. And (c). The cause for removal shall be stated and entered in the journal of each house. The Off-Site Committee found that the policy outlines a reasonable and fair process, but found no evidence on whether the policy has been implemented or enforced.

Focused Response

The State of Texas dictates the process for removing or dismissing members of the Texas State University System Board of Regents in the [Texas State Constitution Article 15. Impeachment](#) and the [Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Impeachment and Removal](#). Article 15 says "that the governor who appoints an officer may remove an officer with the advice and consent of two-thirds of the members of the senate present." The other provision for the removal of members of the Board of Regents is described in the Impeachment and Removal by the House chapter of the Texas Government Code (Chapter 665).

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.002](#), entitled [Individuals Who May Be Impeached](#) states that "An individual may be removed from an office or a position by impeachment in the manner provided by the constitution and this chapter if the individual is: (3) a member, regent, trustee, or commissioner having control or management of a state institution or enterprise. The chapter describes the procedures for impeachment if the house is in session and when the house is not in session.

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665.003](#) describes the impeachment procedures when the house is in session. [Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.004](#) describes the impeachment procedures to be followed when the house is not in session. [Texas Government Code Chapter 665.005](#) describes the powers of the house during the impeachment proceeding. When conducting an impeachment proceeding, the house or a house committee may:

- (1) send for persons or papers;
- (2) compel the giving of testimony; and
- (3) punish for contempt to the same extent as a district court of this state.

If the house of representatives prefers articles of impeachment against an individual, the senate shall meet as a court of impeachment in a trial of the individual in the manner provided by Article 15 of the Texas Constitution. ([Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.021](#)).

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.022](#) describes the procedures for the court of impeachment when the senate is in session. Section 665.023 describes the procedures for the court of impeachment when the senate is not in session. [Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.027](#) describes the powers of the senate meeting as a court of impeachment. The senate may:

- (1) send for persons, papers, books, and other documents;
- (2) compel the giving of testimony;
- (3) punish for contempt to the same extent as a district court;
- (4) meet in closed session for purposes of deliberation; and
- (5) exercise any other power necessary to carry out its duties under [Texas State Constitution Article 15. Impeachment](#).

The senate may employ assistance to enforce and execute the lawful orders, mandates, writs, process, and precepts of the senate meeting as a court of impeachment.

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.052](#) lists the causes for removal:

- (1) willful neglect of duty;
- (2) incompetency;
- (3) habitual drunkenness;
- (4) oppression in office;
- (5) breach of trust; or
- (6) any other reasonable cause that is not a sufficient ground for impeachment.

In this section, "incompetency" means:

- (1) gross ignorance of official duties;

- (2) gross carelessness in the discharge of official duties; or
- (3) inability or unfitness to discharge promptly and properly official duties because of a serious physical or mental defect that did not exist at the time of the officer's election.

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.053](#) contains the due process notice and hearing procedures:

- (a) Notice of the reason for removal by address must be given to the officer who is to be removed.
- (b) The officer must be allowed to appear at a hearing in the officer's defense before the vote for removal by address is taken.
- (c) The cause for removal shall be stated at length in the address and entered in the journal of each house.

Finally, [Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.054](#) stipulates that the governor shall remove from office a person on the address of two-thirds of each house of the legislature.

The long serving Texas State University System Vice Chancellor and General Counsel and Counsel to the Board has affirmed that over the last 30 years, no dismissal process has been initiated against any regent of the Texas State University System. He also affirms that regents are informed, as a part of their orientation, that they may not be removed from office other than by impeachment as authorized by the Government Code ([TSUS General Counsel memo re. Board Dismissal](#)).

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Impeachment and Removal](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.00](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665.003](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.004](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665.005](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.021](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.027](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.052](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 665. Section 665.053](#)

[Texas State Constitution Article 15. Impeachment](#)

[TSUS General Counsel memo re. Board Dismissal](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.13 - Institution Related Entities

For any entity organized separately from the institution and formed primarily for the purpose of supporting the institution or its programs, (1) the legal authority and operating control of the institution is clearly defined with respect to that entity; (2) the relationship of that entity to the institution and the extent of any liability arising out of that relationship is clearly described in a formal, written manner; and (3) the institution demonstrates that (a) the chief executive officer controls any fund-raising activities of that entity or (b) the fund-raising activities of that entity are defined in a formal, written manner which assures that those activities further the mission of the institution.

Non-Compliance

The agreement between the University and the affiliated Sul Ross University Foundation Inc. ("Foundation), provides clear lines of demarcation, and also clarifies that the Foundation will look to the University for identification of specific needs for which the Foundation may consider soliciting funds. The Foundation is a separate 501c3, and in its bylaws it states that the SRSU president, through the University's Chief Development Officer, is responsible for oversight of the Foundation's fundraising efforts.

There is also another support foundation, Friends of the Center for Big Bend Studies ("FCBBS"), which raises funds to support the Center for Big Bend Studies, and it is a legally separate entity, although directors are appointed by the University president. Its operating agreement with the University states that FCBBS shall look to the University for identification of specific needs for which it may assist in fundraising.

There is also a separate 501c3 association, ANRS and Rodeo Exes Association of Sul Ross State University, and the narrative appeared supportive of compliance. However, the institution did not include the recent operating agreement referenced in its narrative, which may have supported the assertions made.

Focused Response

Agricultural and Natural Resource Science (ANRS) and the Rodeo Exes Association of Sul Ross State University (SRSU) and Sul Ross State University are affiliated for supporting the institution and its programs. As requested, the recent [operating agreement](#) (dated 9/1/2017) between the Rodeo Exes and ANRS has been provided.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Operating Agreement Rodeo Exes](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 - Institutional Effectiveness

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas:

*3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

Non-Compliance

The institution has implemented a way to generate pride and enthusiasm for academic assessment by selecting and advertising the Top Ten Assessment Reports annually. Peer review of reports is also a good practice that the institution conducted in 2015-16. The description of the assessment process is sound, but the evidence does not show that a broad range of academic programs are using assessment to improve the student learning. For instance, the sample program assessments presented in the narrative do not include a column for the use of results for improvement.

The examples of assessment planning, results reporting, and “closing the loop” demonstrate that the institution is in its early stages of using student data to drive curricular change. Although several programs’ comments under “Use of Results” refer to assessment method changes (e.g., changes in targets, scoring rubrics), rather than curricular changes, other programs are actually making revisions within course curricula using the assessment data. However, some of the documentation is unclear. For example, in the BA in English 2014-15 report the addition of a capstone course is planned, but by 2016-17 the capstone is still referenced as being in the future. A review of the annual program reports fails to demonstrate the purposeful and consistent analysis of assessment data as a basis for the identification of actions to improve student achievement of the stated desired outcomes.

Focused Response

This narrative is providing additional information to address the Off-Site Committee’s findings that a broad range of academic programs are not using assessment to improve the student learning and the sample program assessments presented in the narrative do not include a column for the use of results for improvement.

Use of Results

The Use of Results was provided at the bottom of the table for each of the sample programs in the Compliance Certification. The two programs featured in the Compliance Certification are presented below with the Use of Results column added to provide more detailed information; while keeping the reported Use of Results from the original document.

Table 1. 2016-2017 Academic Assessment Report: [BS Animal Science 16-17](#)

Student Learning Outcome	Assessment Methods	Results	Use of Results
SLO 1: Students will demonstrate the basic skills of analyzing and interpreting information gathered in a research setting.	<p>a) Student research project to synthesize a review of current scientific literature pertaining to a problem in animal science</p> <p>Target: all students earn “acceptable” and 20 percent earn “above average” on scoring rubric</p> <p>b) Embedded questions on statistics exams</p> <p>Target: 85 percent of students will answer all of the questions correctly</p>	<p>The target was met.</p> <p>44 percent of students answered all questions correctly. Many of the students may have missed only one step.</p>	<p>Faculty plans to revise the assessment for SLO 1b from embedded questions to a project-based assessment to give a better snapshot of what students are learning.</p>
SLO 2: Students will apply critical thinking skills to deal with potential challenges in diverse animal sciences and relates industries.	<p>a) Series of 10 critical reflection papers over contentious issues in the agriculture industry.</p> <p>Target: all students</p>	<p>Target was not met.</p> <p>36.6 percent of students achieved an “acceptable” rating on 7 out of 10 reflections; while only 13.3</p>	<p>Faculty note improvement in students’ abilities to draw conclusions and make recommendations.</p>

	<p>earn “acceptable” and 20 percent earn “above average” on scoring rubric.</p> <p>b) Students’ research papers with focus on conclusions and recommendations section</p> <p>Target: all students earn “acceptable” and 20 percent earn “above average” on scoring rubric.</p>	<p>percent of students earned an “above average” rating.</p> <p>Target was met. 100 percent of students achieved an “acceptable” rating, and 100 percent of students achieved an “above average” rating.</p>	
<p>SLO 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate through written, spoken, and graphical methods in the content areas.</p>	<p>a) Animal breed project and oral presentation of findings in ANSC 1419.</p> <p>Target: all students earn “acceptable” rating and 90 percent will receive an “above average” rating on the rubric.</p> <p>b) Students will present their findings of their crisis communication plan with visual aids.</p> <p>Target: all students earn “acceptable” rating and 90 percent will receive an “above average” rating on the rubric.</p> <p>c) Students will write a research paper in manuscript format.</p> <p>Target: all students will earn “acceptable” rating and 90 percent will receive an “above average” rating on the rubric.</p>	<p>No data were collected.</p> <p>Target was met. 100 percent of students achieved an “acceptable” rating, and 83 percent of students achieved an “above average” rating on scoring rubric.</p> <p>Target was met. 100 percent of students achieved an “acceptable” rating and 100 percent of students achieved an “above average” rating on scoring rubric.</p>	<p>Faculty note improvement in students’ abilities to draw conclusions and make recommendations.</p>

Use of Results: Faculty have plans to revise the assessment for SLO1b from embedded questions to a project-based assessment to give a better snapshot of what students are learning. For SLO2 and SLO3, faculty are noting improvement in students’ abilities to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

Table 2. 2016-2017 Academic Assessment Report: [B.S. Kinesiology and Sports Science 16-17](#)

Student Learning Outcome	Assessment Methods	Results	Use of Results
<p>SLO 1: The Kinesiology and Sport Science students will understand the principles of motor learning; understand the practice for developing motor skills; apply knowledge to biomechanical principles; apply knowledge of individual and teams sports and understand the principles of dance, personal performance activities, recreational activities and outdoor pursuits (Movement Skills and Knowledge Domain).</p>	<p>a) Embedded items in comprehensive exam. Target: 90 percent of the students will score 80 percent or higher on their comprehensive exam.</p> <p>b) Students will compile a portfolio to be evaluated by faculty, using a scoring rubric. Target: 90 percent of the students will score 80 percent or higher on their portfolio.</p>	<p>Target was met. Course average score was 82 percent, and more than 90 percent of students scored above 80 percent.</p> <p>Target was met. 95 percent of students were able to exhibit and explain the projects that exemplified the five competencies in Domain I with over 80 percent accuracy.</p>	<p>Faculty concluded that students' performance using the portfolio met the targets with few exceptions. Faculty plan to expand the portfolio to include additional assignments to provide a more comprehensive overview of students' learning.</p>
<p>SLO 2: The Kinesiology and Sport Science students will understand major body systems, principles of physical fitness and benefits of a healthy lifestyle; understand the principles and activities for developing cardiovascular endurance; understand principles and activities for developing and maintaining flexibility, muscular strength and endurance; and understand health and wellness concepts (Health-Related Physical Fitness Domain).</p>	<p>a) Comprehensive exam with embedded questions. Target: Ninety percent of the students will score 80% or higher on their comprehensive exam.</p> <p>b) Students will compile a portfolio to be evaluated by faculty using a scoring rubric. Target: 90 percent of the students will score 80 percent or higher on their portfolio.</p>	<p>Target was met. More than 90 percent of students correctly answered 80 percent of the Domain Two comprehensive exam questions.</p> <p>Target was met. 90 percent of students were able to exhibit and explain the projects that exemplified the five competencies in Domain II with over 80 percent accuracy.</p>	<p>Faculty concluded that students' performance using the portfolio met the targets with few exceptions. Faculty plan to expand the portfolio to include additional assignments to provide a more comprehensive overview of students' learning.</p>
<p>SLO 3: The Kinesiology and Sport Science students will know how to use</p>	<p>a) Comprehensive exam with embedded questions.</p>	<p>Target was not met. Course average was 78 percent.</p>	<p>Faculty concluded that students' performance using the portfolio met the targets with few</p>

effective instruction and assessment to prepare physically educated individuals; understand factors relevant to learning and performance in physical education and use knowledge to promote students' development; understand the structure and purposes of physical education programs; and understand legal issues and responsibilities of physical education teachers (The Physical Education Program Domain).	<p>Target: 90 percent of the students will score 80 percent or higher on their comprehensive exam.</p> <p>b) Students will compile a portfolio to be evaluated by faculty, using a scoring rubric.</p> <p>Target: 90 percent of the students will score 80 percent or higher on their portfolio.</p>	<p>Target was met. 94 percent of students were able to exhibit and explain the projects that exemplified the four competencies in Domain III with over 80 percent accuracy.</p>	<p>exceptions. Faculty plan to expand the portfolio to include additional assignments to provide a more comprehensive overview of students' learning.</p>
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Use of Results: Faculty concluded that students' performance using the portfolio met the targets with few exceptions. Faculty plan to expand the portfolio to include additional assignments to provide a more comprehensive overview of students' learning.

Closing the Loop

One additional program is featured below to demonstrate continuous improvement based on the analysis of assessment data.

Table 3. 2016-2017 Academic Assessment Report: [B.A. English \(RGC\) 16-17](#)

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods	Results	Use of Results
SLO1: Students will be able to construct essays that demonstrate clear topic/thesis, development, organization, and appropriate language.	a) Faculty will assess student performance on this outcome through written assignments in three literature courses: ENGL 3310, 3311, 3314, and one writing course: ENGL 3312. Student scores will be measured on the "Development" section of the English Program Written Communication Rubric. The assessment tool is a 4-point rubric measuring five dimensions: (1) Thesis, (2) Development, (3) Organization, (4) Language, and (5) Documentation.	Target met. 78% of students earned a score of 3 or 4 in the area of "Development" on the English Program Written Communication Rubric in four literature courses: English 3309, 3311, 4308, and 4320, and in one writing course: English 3312.	English program faculty were pleased that plans made in the last cycle may have contributed to the 10% increase in students' ability to develop the thesis in essays. An increased focus on library resources, assigned annotated bibliographies, and tutor training should have strengthened students' ability to develop ideas. For the next cycle, the English program will build on last year's plans with the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Humanities Department August and February morning coffee/lunch meetings for faculty, Writing Center staff, and librarians to

<p>Target: The targeted level of performance for this learning outcome is for 70% of students across the English program curriculum to earn a score of 3 or 4 in the area of “Development” on the English Program Written Communication Rubric.</p> <p>b) Faculty will assess student performance on this outcome through written assignments. Student scores will be measured on the “Language” section of the English Program Written Communication Rubric.</p>	<p>Target met. 75% of students earned a score of 3 or 4 in the area of “Language” on the English Program Written Communication Rubric in four literature courses: English 3309, 3311, 4308, and 4320, and in one writing course: English 3312.</p>	<p>critique and enhance current strategies for helping students with development;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise the English Program's Libguide and have it linked to English courses; • Urge all English program faculty to provide frequent feedback to students using sequenced assignments with formative feedback for revisions, peer feedback, writing center feedback, general feedback in Blackboard Announcements; • Train Writing Center tutors to guide students' research for and development of thesis. <p>The increase in students' language scores from 43% to 75% earning 3 or 4 on the</p>
<p>Target: The targeted level of performance for this learning outcome is for 70% of students across the English program curriculum to earn a score of 3 or 4 in the area of “Language” on the English Program Written Communication Rubric.</p>	<p>Target met. Two out of three English majors scored above 70% in Domain III (Written Communication) of the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) English Language Arts and Reading 8-12.</p>	<p>rubric was heartening, and faculty agree that increased formative feedback and revision helped students improve usage, grammar, and mechanics. English program faculty will build on last cycle's strategies with the following plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide formative feedback designed to help students recognize and revise one or two patterns of error in literature courses; • Provide formative

	<p>c) Faculty will assess student performance on this outcome through scores on the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) English Language Arts and Reading 8-12 Domain III (Written Communication).</p> <p>Target: The targeted level of performance for this learning outcome is that 90% of students should earn a passing score in Domain III (Written Communication).</p>		<p>feedback designed to help students recognize and revise patterns of error in the sequence of revisions in the writing class, ENGL 3312 Advanced Composition;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train Writing Center tutors to help students identify and revise patterns of error in their writing. <p>Sixty six percent of students scored above 70% in Domain III (Written Communication) of the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) English Language Arts and Reading 8-12; however, only three students took the test. Low numbers aside, English program faculty will complete the study and workshop program begun in 2016 to help students succeed on this TExES test. English program faculty will offer periodic review workshops on Domain III Written Communication and on writing constructed responses for this TExES exam; these reviews will be archived in Blackboard for student access. While these reviews will focus on the TExES exam, they will provide complementary feedback for English majors writing practice.</p>
<p>SLO 2: Students will be able to select, evaluate, and synthesize primary and secondary sources and correctly document those sources.</p>	<p>a) Faculty will assess student performance on this outcome using final arguments in English 3312, Advanced Composition. Specifically, faculty will use scores for the "Development"</p>	<p>Target Met 90% of students in ENGL 3312, Advanced Composition, earned a score of 3 or higher for "Development" on the English Program Written Communication</p>	<p>The increase from 77% and 76% to 90% in the current cycle of English 3312 students earning scores of 3 or higher in "Development" for final arguments in English 3312 suggests that last year's actions</p>

<p>dimension of the English Program Written Communication Rubric that measures students' ability to evaluate and synthesize sources. The assessment tool is a 4-point rubric measuring five dimensions: (1) Thesis, (2) Development, (3) Organization, (4) Language, and (5) Documentation.</p> <p>Target: The targeted level of performance for this learning outcome is that 70% of students should earn scores of 3 or higher in area of development on the English Program Written Communication Rubric for final arguments in English 3312.</p> <p>b) Faculty will assess student performance on this outcome using final arguments in English 3312, Advanced Composition.</p>	<p>Rubric for final argument essays.</p> <p>Target Met 73% of students in ENGL 3312, Advanced Composition, earned a score of 3 or higher for "Documentation" on the English Program Written Communication Rubric for final argument essays.</p>	<p>helped. Specifically, students' early efforts at researching and producing annotated bibliographies, faculty feedback in the form of early-semester comments on bibliographies and conferences with students, and tutor training have played a role in enhancing students' ability to develop the thesis. For the next cycle, English faculty will build on last year's action plans with the following efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all ENGL 3312 instructors participate in Humanities Department August and February meetings to critique and enhance current strategies for helping students with development; • Review and revise the current ENGL 3312 Library Guide and have it linked to all ENGL 3312 courses; Urge all ENGL 3312 faculty to provide frequent feedback to students using sequenced assignments with formative feedback for revisions, peer feedback, writing center feedback, and global feedback in Blackboard Announcements; • Train Writing Center tutors to guide ENGL 3312 students' research and their strategies for developing thesis and paragraph topics.
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	<p>Specifically, faculty will use scores for "Documentation" on the English Program Written Communication Rubric that measures this outcome. The assessment tool is a 4-point rubric measuring five dimensions: (1) Thesis, (2) Development, (3) Organization, (4) Language, and (5) Documentation.</p> <p>Target: The targeted level of performance for this learning outcome is that 70% of English 3312 students should earn scores of 3 or higher in area of "Documentation" on the English Program Written Communication Rubric for final arguments in English 3312.</p>		<p>Fourteen percent more students earned scores of 3 and 4 for "Documentation" this cycle over last cycle, which faculty attribute to the annotated bibliography assignment and students' use of library database bibliographic tools such as JSTOR's. Responding to the disappointing 2015-16 cycle results for "Documentation," English faculty had planned to explore Blackboard's adaptive release to urge students to master documentation, but lacking Blackboard training, the plan was not implemented. However, Blackboard training was provided in Spring 2017 enabling faculty to discover how to control the release of course materials to students until they score 70% or higher on the Annotated Bibliography. This will encourage students to demonstrate mastery of documentation and thus allow them to proceed in the course.</p>
<p>SLO 3: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of a variety of literature, of elements of literature, and of literary genres.</p>	<p>a) Faculty will assess performance on this learning outcome through scores on cumulative final exams in English 3311.</p> <p>Target: The targeted level of performance for this learning outcome is that 70% of students should achieve a 70% or higher on cumulative final exams in English 3311, Children's and Adolescent Literature.</p>	<p>Target Met 76% of students in English 3311 achieved a 70% or higher on cumulative final exams.</p>	<p>Student success in demonstrating knowledge of literature has steadily increased from 58% to 63% to 76% of them achieving a 70% or higher on cumulative final exams. Faculty attribute students' improved knowledge of literature to increased opportunities for students to evaluate authorial strategies and explore literary themes both informally in discussions and brief quizzes and formally in presentations, essays, and exams. Further, it</p>

b) Faculty will assess student performance on this learning outcome through scores on the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) English Language Arts and Reading 8-12 Domain II "Literature, Reading Processes, and Skills for Reading Literary and Nonliterary Texts"

Target: The targeted level of performance for this outcome is that 100% of students should earn passing score in Domain II (Literature)

Target Met
One out of three students earned a score of 70% or higher in Domain II (Literature and Reading Processes) on the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) English Language Arts and Reading 8-12.

is assumed that instructors' ongoing review of literary elements, genres, movements, and works of literature and their assigning series of tests, each test of which is cumulative, have also contributed to students' success. Since 2015, English program faculty have been improving reviews of literature in online courses by posting more handouts, presentations, and videos and by assigning online discussions for which students are evaluated according to how effectively they explain authors' literary strategies. For the next assessment cycle, faculty will continue to engage students in retaining literary knowledge through repeated low-stakes assignments requiring mastery of literary knowledge such as discussions and brief quizzes and through the formal essays, presentations, and exams to which the earlier low-stakes assignments should contribute.

That one of three students who took the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) English Language Arts and Reading 8-12 earned a score of 70% or higher in Domain II is disappointing; however, it is less discouraging than the previous cycle's one in six earning 70% or higher. To address students' inability to demonstrate

		<p>knowledge of literature, English program faculty will complete a collection of TExES resources to help students review literature and literary elements and devices. Also, English program faculty will offer periodic review workshops on Domain II which will be accessible to students. Of course, as stated in 3a, faculty also will continue to engage students in retaining literary knowledge through repeated low-stakes assignments requiring mastery of literary knowledge such as discussions and brief quizzes and through the formal essays, presentations, and exams to which the earlier low-stakes assignments should contribute.</p>
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Ongoing training is provided to academic program coordinators to demonstrate examples of assessment planning, results reporting and “closing the loop”. At a recent [meeting](#) for program coordinators, the B.A. English, Rio Grande College report was summarized over time. Program coordinators reviewed Table 4 below to see how continuous progress was recorded. They were then given time to review their own programs and evaluate the documented progress or lack of progress.

Table 4. B.A. English, Rio Grande College: Closing the Loop – Progress over Time

Outcomes	Progress Over Time
SLO 1: Students will be able to construct essays that demonstrate clear topic/thesis, development, organization, and appropriate language.	<p>a) Using scored writing assignments, students in 2014-2015 did meet the target. Faculty changed the curriculum by adding a peer critique component and collaborating with tutors in the Writing Center.</p> <p>In 2015-2016, students met the target, and faculty built upon the Writing Center collaboration, added faculty lunches for discussion, and reached out to librarians.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, students met the target, and faculty decided to continue collaboration together, with the Writing Center tutors and librarians.</p>
	<p>b) Using the writing rubric domain of Language Usage, students in 2014-2015 did not meet the target. Faculty changed the curriculum by providing more feedback to students and providing editing software.</p> <p>In 2015-2016, students did not meet the target, and faculty reached out to tutors in the Writing Center to address the Language Usage component of the writing rubric.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, students met the target, and faculty provided increased formative feedback to students for this component.</p>

<p>SLO 2: Students will be able to select, evaluate, and synthesize primary and secondary sources and correctly document those sources.</p>	<p>a) Using the writing rubric domain of Development, students in 2014-2015 did meet the target. Faculty decided to meet to discuss ways to support students more.</p> <p>In 2015-2016, students did meet the target, and faculty decided to develop an Advanced Composition Guide for student support.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, students did meet the target, and faculty decided to provide more individual feedback for students.</p> <hr/> <p>b) Using the writing rubric domain of Documentation, students in 2014-2015 did meet the target. Faculty decided to encourage students to expand sources in their bibliography.</p> <p>In 2015-2016, students did not meet target. Faculty decided to introduce peer editing workshops.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, students did meet the target. Faculty did not have training to set up the peer editing plan from the previous year, but they did decide to introduce additional library data bases for students,</p>
<p>SLO 3: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of a variety of literature, of elements of literature, and of literary genres.</p>	<p>a) Using the final exam, students in 2014-2015 did not meet the target, so faculty changed the instructional strategies to include handouts, videos, and daily writing.</p> <p>In 2015-2016, students continued to not meet target, so faculty changed formative assessments to include more questions over literature to assess their understanding.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, students did meet the target, and faculty decided to continue periodic reviews of literature.</p> <hr/> <p>b) Using the TExES Content Exam, students in 2014-2015 did not meet the target, so faculty decided to collaborate with Education faculty to identify key content for the state test to reinforce.</p> <p>In 2015-2016, students continued to not meet the target, so faculty addressed the areas of need and added them to cover in the syllabus. They also started to offer workshops for students.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, students did meet the target, and faculty decided to include periodic reviews of key content in the courses.</p>

Curricular Changes for B.A. English Program

The Off-Site Committee cited the academic assessment report for the B.A. in English at Alpine as unclear regarding the implementation of the capstone course introduced in the 2014-2015 report. Dr. Payne, the Languages and Literature Department Chair, clarified that confusion by stating that she used the future tense in all three reports (2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017), because she considered the capstone course to be continually evolving. In a detailed narrative, she explained that the capstone course was implemented during the 2015-2016 academic year. Meaningful curricular changes were being made, but the report did not make that clear to the reader. Her narrative, [Summary of Capstone Implementation in B.A. English](#), does provide more clarity.

Summary

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness offers group training sessions and individual support for all program coordinators on an annual basis. Each year during the Peer Review, exemplary academic assessment reports are identified. There is recognition, however, that not all academic assessment reports are exemplary. Over the past three years, twenty-three percent of the original program coordinators from 2014-2015 are no longer at Sul Ross State University or are no longer serving in that capacity. To provide greater support for all program coordinators, in addition to the [SACSCOC Faculty Liaison](#), the Office of Institutional Effectiveness has formed an [Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee](#) composed of program coordinators to meet regularly to promote broad-based participation in the assessment process. Committee members will serve as mentors and work collaboratively to refine their own programs and assist other program coordinators in their assessment efforts.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[BS Animal Science 16-17](#)

[BS Kinesiology and Sports Science 16-17](#)

[BA English \(RGC\) 16-17](#)

[Administrative and Academic Coordinators' Meeting](#)

[Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee](#)

[Faculty Liaison Job Description for Assessment](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.2 - Administrative Support Services

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in the following area: administrative support services.

Non-Compliance

The Use of Results sections of several assessment reports show reflection and intended action of the units on what they listed as their continuous improvement outcomes. The Off-Site Committee, however, was confused about what the institution's mission and goals were during the assessment reporting periods from 2014-15 to 2016-17. In the first sentence of the narrative for this standard, the institution states that it "seeks to be a national and international leader in achieving excellence among universities in the areas of Education, Research, Social Mobility, Service, Affordability, and Shared Governance." However, that statement is the "Vision" in the linked document adopted in May 2017, not the "Mission." It is unclear whether the May 2017 mission was the same as in 2013-18. The institution's narrative lists the five strategic plan goals, but the reports do not explain to which campus goal(s) the unit is aligning its continuous improvement efforts. Many units listed outcomes to meet deadlines and submit budgets/reports, which are departmental functions, not outcomes. In assessment reports, outcomes are more than functions. They are expectations for continuous improvement, not just meeting responsibilities at a clerical level. Therefore, based on the documentation provided, it is difficult to evaluate whether assessment results improved administrative support services to further the mission and goals of the institution, particularly if the mission is to become "a national and international leader in achieving excellence." The 2017-22 strategic plan explains that administrative units "have or will develop their own plan to implement this plan as it applies to their operation" (p. 22). However, the institution did not provide evidence that this alignment of plans occurred

Focused Response

This narrative is providing a clear view of the Sul Ross State University's interfacing of the mission statement and strategic plan with the Administrative Support Services plans. Undoubtedly, it was confusing for the Off-Site committee, because the 2017-2022 Mission Statement and Strategic Plan were inadvertently posted in the Compliance Certification narrative instead of the 2014-2018 Mission Statement and Strategic Plan. It also addresses the Off-Site Committee's concern that the outcomes reported by the administrative units were more outputs rather than outcomes.

Sul Ross State University Mission Statement Infused in 2014-2017 Administrative Reports

The Off-Site Committee raised questions about which mission statement and strategic plan influenced the Administrative Assessment Reports that were implemented during the 2014-2017 academic years. The mission statement for those years is provided below from the [2014-2018 Strategic Plan](#):

Sul Ross Mission:

- 1) To enable optimal teaching and learning through quality faculty and staff, exceptional facilities, technology, and instructional resources, and effective student-support services;
- 2) To support research which advances knowledge, enriches teaching, encourages professional development, and utilizes the distinctive environment of the Big Bend and Middle Rio Grande areas of Texas; and
- 3) To serve as a resource for the enrichment of the cultural, intellectual, social, and economic lives of citizens of the region.

Administrative Assessment reports included links to the 2014-2018 mission statement. An example of alignment with the 2014-2018 mission statement is found in the **Administrative Assessment for the Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library 2015-2016**. The Statement of Purpose section indicates: *The mission of the Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library is to provide the learning resources and services (linked to 1 above) necessary to support the educational, research, and informational needs (linked to 2 above) of the University, the Alpine Community, and the Big Bend Area (linked to 3 above).*

Sul Ross State University Strategic Plan Infused in 2014-2017 Administrative Reports

The goals from the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan include:

- 1) Academic Excellence
- 2) Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention
- 3) Enhanced Brand Identity
- 4) Community Engagement
- 5) Solid, Diversified, and Sustainable Financial Base

Administrative Assessment reports supported the goal(s) of the strategic plan. An example is found in the **Administrative Assessment for the Sul Ross State University Upward Bound Program**. Each of the three outcomes address goal 2 Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention and goal 3 Enhanced Brand Identity, and Goal 4 Community Engagement:

Outcome 1: Upward bound encourages participants to complete high school with a rigorous secondary school program of study.

Outcome 2: Upward Bound assists participating students to enroll in post-secondary education.

Outcome 3: Upward Bound tracks graduated high school students who enroll in post-secondary education for six years.

Administrative Support Services Outcomes

The Off-Site Committee raised questions about outcomes and concluded that some were basic office operations rather than initiatives to provide "continuous improvement". Although the Administrative Assessment Reports are at various levels of refinement, several programs are highlighted below that do demonstrate "continuous improvement". These summaries highlight the administrative outcomes as more than basic departmental functions being carried out by units.

Table 1. 2016-2017 Outcome Administrative Assessment Report Human Resources

Outcome	Assessment Method/ Tool	Assessment of Results/ Summary of Findings	Use of Results/ Action Plan
<p>2 -The office of Human Resources enrolls staff and faculty into health and retirement benefits.</p>	<p>Target 2a. Faculty/Staff must have their benefits elections form completed and return to the Assistant Director of Human Resources within 30 days of their first active duty date.</p> <p>2a. Benefits Enrollment All new employees will attend new benefits eligible faculty/staff orientation conducted by the Assistant Director of Human Resources to review benefits and complete the benefits elections form.</p>	<p>Target Met 97.22% of our employees have been enrolled in insurance benefits within their first 30 day eligibility window. Thirty-five of the thirty six faculty and staff were enrolled in benefits within 30 days of employment.</p>	<p>Human Resources will continue to monitor, orientate and enroll our new faculty and staff in insurance benefits within the 30 days of their first active duty date. The On Boarding product was implementing during the Fall semester 2016 further streamlining the On Boarding processes. The benefits enrollment form is one of the forms pushed out to the employee during the On Boarding Process. One employee's paper work was received in the office and filed before distributing to be input into the Employees Retirement System of Texas and Banner. New faculty and staff orientations or under design and implemented to include Human Resources, Budget, and Finance to enhance the new faculty and staff members</p>

			onboarding experience.
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[2016-2017 Department of Human Resources](#)

Table 2. 2016-2017 Outcome Unit 1a. Administrative Assessment Report Athletics

Outcome	Assessment Method/ Tool	Assessment of Results/ Summary of Findings	Use of Results/ Action Plan
<p>1 - The Athletics Department promotes students' academic success.</p>	<p>Target: 1a. The 3 year eligibility/progress toward a degree rate will be higher than the previous 3 year rate.</p> <p>1a. Eligibility/Progress towards a degree The Director of Athletics and the Compliance Officer reviews academic progress toward a degree, for each student athlete. These reviews occur prior to the start of the appropriate sport season for each student athlete.</p>	<p>1a. Target Met In the past our athletes have attended study hall to help them be as successful in the class room as they are on the field. Our athletes have attended team study halls in order to help our under-achieving academic student athletes. In the beginning, these study halls were held in the green room and the big meeting room in the Gallego Gym. In the Fall of 2014 the athletic department felt we could better serve our athletes by holding team study halls in the Academic Center for Excellence building where they had access to the Sul Ross tutors. The department started with the football, women's soccer, and the volleyball team meeting in the ACE building during the Fall of 2014. Then in the Spring of 2015 we continued with baseball, softball, and tennis holding their team study halls in the ACE building where they had access to the academic tutors. We identified the athletes that were academically challenged (GPA's below 2.75) with the aid of the new compliance report. These students had</p>	<p>1a. This plan has helped our student athletes prepare for classes and improve their GPA's. There was a 3.5% improvement in our athletes' progress towards degree in the past three years. These strategies improved the academic performances of the majority of our student athletes. The best display of this progress is in the increase in the number of Academic All Americans in the last three years. Sul Ross had 19 Academic All-Americans in 2014. This number increased after just one year under this plan, to 28 Academic All Americans. This year we had a record 47 Academic All-Americans athletes.</p>

		mandatory study hall.	
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[2016-2017 Department of Athletics](#)

Summary

The experience of the Administrative Assessment program coordinators varies. To provide more support to administrative units, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness has formed a group, Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee. This committee will meet regularly to collaborate and serve as advisors in assisting other units and programs in our efforts to improve campus-wide assessment. The Advisory Committee meetings will help improve the quality of Administrative Assessment reports as we align them with the new 2017-2022 Mission Statement and Strategic Plan.

Summary Documentation and Evidence

[2016-2017 Athletics](#)

[2015-2016 Athletics](#)

[2014-2015 Athletics](#)

[2016-2017 Human Resources](#)

[2015-2016 Human Resources](#)

[2014-2015 Human Resources](#)

[Sul Ross State University Mission Statement](#)

[Strategic Plan 2017-2022](#)

[Administrative and Academic Coordinators' Meeting](#)

[Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee](#)

[Sul Ross State University 2014- 2017](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3 - Academic and Student Support Services

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in the following area: academic and student support services.

Non-Compliance

The Off-Site Committee's confusion about the mission statement explained above in the comment for CS 3.3.1.2 continued with this standard. Again, alignment of unit outcomes with the mission statement and goals was not explicitly stated; however, the "Use of Results" sections in most of the reports, particularly for the student support units, contained evidence of analysis used to guide the next year's efforts. Several departments under the Colleges and the Units identified routine maintenance activities, like tracking inventory and completing state reports on-time without errors, as one or more of their top three continuous improvement outcomes that will advance the department and the institution. Unless the departments had severe problems with lost inventory or completing state reports (which was not documented), it is difficult to categorize these activities as continuous improvement outcomes. Again, meaningful unit outcomes should be more than merely completing basic functions.

Focused Response

In response to the off-site committee's findings, this narrative will present the 2014-2018 Mission Statement that guided the development of the Administrative Assessment Reports from 2014 to 2017. The narrative also will address the rigor found in the use of results for the Administrative Assessment Reports.

Sul Ross State University Mission Statement Infused in 2014-2017 Administrative Reports

The Off-Site Committee raised questions about which mission statement influenced the Administrative Assessment Reports that were implemented during the 2014-2017 academic years. The mission statement for those years was from the [2014-2018 Strategic Plan](#):

Sul Ross Mission:

- 1) To enable optimal teaching and learning through quality faculty and staff, exceptional facilities, technology, and instructional resources, and effective student-support services;
- 2) To support research which advances knowledge, enriches teaching, encourages professional development, and utilizes the distinctive environment of the Big Bend and Middle Rio Grande areas of Texas; and
- 3) To serve as a resource for the enrichment of the cultural, intellectual, social, and economic lives of citizens of the region.

An example of alignment with the 2014-2018 Mission Statement is found in the Statement of Purpose for the **Administrative Assessment Report for the Department of Kinesiology and Human Performance**: *The mission of Kinesiology and Human Performance is to create an environment of research (link to 2), academic excellence (link to 1), and effective community service (link to 3).*

Use of Results

This narrative also is providing additional information to address the Off-Site Committee's findings that student support service units do not contain meaningful unit outcomes. Career Services and Testing's assessment report shows evidence of outcomes that are not just departmental or basic functions being performed and assessed. The program coordinator has developed an innovative approach to career development by offering a career fair each semester. For example, the program coordinator uses results from the survey assessment to make plans to further enhance the career fair by selecting another day, different hours, and incorporating a resume competition and a best-dressed professional contest at the career fair.

Table 1. Unit Outcome 1a. 2016-2017 Administrative Assessment Report for Career Services and Testing.

Outcome	Assessment Method/ Tool	Assessment of Results/ Summary of Findings	Use of Results/ Action Plan
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<p>1a. The office of Career Services and Testing facilitates career development for all students attending Sul Ross State University as well as alumni.</p>	<p>Survey of students will measure their satisfaction with the career fair. Participation counts will measure the program impact of the career fair.</p> <p>Target: 1a. Annual Career Fair in Spring -reach 200 students to meet with a minimum of 30</p> <p>1a. Career Fair Attendance A Career Fair for all Sul Ross students as well as community high school students will be given in the spring prior to graduation to help students meet with recruiters from different companies to learn about job opportunities. The career fair will be held on campus in the University Center building during the week when students are attending classes.</p>	<p>Target Met The second Fall Career Fair was on October 25, 2016, which had a participation of 262 individuals (66 of those being high school students from the area) and 30 companies. The Spring Career Fair on April 4th, had 192 attending the event with no high school students attending, and 44 companies recruiting. The department had their first resume contest at the Spring Career Fair and the winner was announced at the event. The department also has a "best dressed professional contest" for the students to participate, which has increased the quality of their attire for the event. New companies attending the event are TruSource Labs from Austin, attended both the Fall and the Spring, Holland Hotel in the Fall, Big Bend Telephone Company had not participated in years and was part of the Fall Career Fair. The Small Business Development Center also attended for the first time in the fall. The Spring Career Fair tends to be rich in School District participation, since they are looking for teachers for the upcoming school year. The career fair has been changed from Wednesdays to Tuesdays and from 10 am to 2 pm instead of till 3:00 pm. Students and recruiters are surveyed.</p>	<p>Overall surveys are positive from both the students and recruiters. Now with the new day (Tuesday) and four hour scheduled event, instead of five hours we are seeing students throughout the day participating and the recruiters stay to the end of the event and not packing up early to leave since students continue to arrive throughout the career fair time slot. The career fair is scheduled a month before graduation, which allows students the opportunity to connect with potential job employers. Now with the incorporation of the resume contest and best dressed professional contest we are seeing a better quality of student participation occurring at the career fair. Students are better dressed and better prepared to visit with recruiters. Plus the resume contest helped to promote the department and more students are asking for assistance with their resumes. Students request companies for the event through the surveys and the department reaches out to the requested companies for the career fair. Some are able to attend, while other companies are unable to</p>
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			participate due to distance or budget.
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[2016-2017 Report for Career Services and Testing](#)

Summary

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3. The 2014-2018 Mission Statement is evidenced in Administrative Assessment reports. The Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness offers individual trainings and workshops to support all administrative coordinators to analyze their data and develop meaningful uses of the results. To provide more guidance to administrative units, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness has formed a group, [Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee](#), which is comprised of both administrative and academic coordinators. This group will meet regularly to collaborate and serve as advisors in assisting other units and programs in our efforts to improve campus-wide assessment. The Advisory Committee meetings will help improve those units with more peer review for the Administrative Assessment Reports for 2017-2018.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Career Services and Testing 2016-2017](#)

[Career Services and Testing 2015-2016](#)

[Career Services and Testing 2014-2015](#)

[Sul Ross State University Mission Statement](#)

[Administrative and Academic Coordinators' Meeting](#)

[Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee](#)

[Strategic Plan 2017-2022](#)

[Strategic Plan 2014-2018](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.6 - Practices for Awarding Credit

The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode or delivery.

Compliant

Additional Observations Regarding Strengths and Weaknesses of the Institution

The narrative for 3.4.6 states that the University does not award academic credit for experiential learning. However, narratives for 3.4.4 and 3.4.8 include statements to the contrary. Additionally, the Transfer and Award of Academic Credit policy addresses Credit for Prior Learning. The institution did not appear to be consistent in its representation of this issue. For subsequent reporting, the institution may wish to remedy this issue to minimize confusion.

Focused Response

As cited by the Off-Site Committee findings, standards 3.4.4, 3.4.6, and 3.4.8 presented contradictory statements regarding awarding credit for prior learning. This institution appreciates the opportunity to correct this inconsistency that emanates from stated policy at Rio Grande College.

It is stated in 3.4.4:

Students admitted to the Bachelor of Applied Science program at the SRSU Rio Grande College may obtain college credit for relevant work experience. Relevant experience is defined as previous learning suitable for submission as Prior Learning Experience (PLA) yielding at least nine semester hours of credit through LearningCounts.org or an online portfolio assessment service provided by Council of Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) or equivalent recognized assessment process.

It is stated in 3.4.8:

The Rio Grande College of Sul Ross State University offers a Bachelor of Applied Science degree which awards academic credit for coursework taken on a non-credit basis. As an admission requirement for Bachelor of Applied Science in Organizational Leadership or Bachelor of Applied Science in Child Development, a student may utilize a minimum of ten years of relevant work experience in lieu of an earned Associate of Applied Science degree or equivalent.

However, it is stated in 3.4.6: *The university does not award academic credit for experiential learning*

Resolution of Inconsistency

This inconsistency was placed on the agenda for the SACSCOC Planning Committee on February 5, 2018. Dean Veronica Mendez attended the meeting representing RGC. She explained that this provision has never been used by any student at Rio Grande College. Furthermore, she said that it would be a very cumbersome process to validate those credits either through LearningCounts.org or the Council of Adult and Experiential Learning. She concluded by saying that Rio Grande College would remove that provision from its publications to be aligned with practice at Sul Ross State University in Alpine. The [February 5, 2018 minutes](#) confirm that decision by the SACSCOC Planning Committee to remove all references to earned credit for experiential learning.

The recommendation of the SACSCOC Planning Committee was presented to the President's Executive Cabinet on February 13, 2018, and the decision to remove all references to earned credit for experiential learning was approved per the [minutes](#). All references to credit for experiential learning have been removed and the [Administrative Policy: Transfer and Awarding of Academic Credit](#) has been updated to provide consistency across the Alpine campus and the RGC campuses.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[APM Transfer and Award of Academic Credit Revised](#)

[President's Executive Cabinet Minutes 2.13.18](#)

[SACSCOC Planning Committee Minutes Excerpt 2.5.18](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1 - General Education Competencies

The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them.

Non-Compliance

The institution identifies six general education competencies that are developed through its 42-hour general education program, with two competencies being assessed each year on a rotating basis using the ETS Proficiency Profile and the National Survey of Student Engagement. The assessments were used for the first time in 2016. Summary ETS data are presented in table form in the institutional narrative to document the extent to which graduates attain some of the identified competencies; however, no assessment data reports from ETS are provided as evidence of actual assessment data.

Other information contained in the narrative documents the extent that students achieve three of the outcomes: communication, critical thinking, and quantitative competencies. However, incomplete information was provided for the personal and social responsibility outcomes. A few departments showed some general education assessment; however, there was no evidence of campus-wide assessment. A writing assessment used by faculty in the Behavioral and Social Science Department was described to have resulted in students reaching a 75% target in the social responsibility competency, but not enough information was provided about the assessment tool, numbers of students, or their results. No evidence was provided that the teamwork competency has been assessed.

Focused Response

Beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year, faculty, teaching the core curriculum, have been focusing on two of the six core curriculum skills each year. Team work and communication skills were evaluated in 2014-2015. Critical thinking and empirical and quantitative skills were evaluated in 2015-2016, and social responsibility and personal responsibility skills were evaluated in 2016-2017.

Table 1. Core Objective Assessment Cycle

2014 - 2017		
Skill Objective	Academic Year to Be Assessment	Assessment Data Collection
Team Work	2014-2015	Fall/Spring
Communication	2014-2015	Fall/Spring
Empirical and Quantitative	2015-2016	Fall/Spring
Critical Thinking	2015-2016	Fall/Spring
Social Responsibility	2016-2017	Fall/Spring
Personal Responsibility	2016-2017	Fall/Spring

Campus-wide, four assessment methods are used to measure students' skills. The methods include an internally-developed student self-reflection survey, an embedded assessment designed by faculty who teach the core courses, the [National Survey of Student Engagement 2016](#), and the [ETS Proficiency Profile](#).

Table 2.

Summary of Internally and Externally Developed Assessment Techniques for Core Curriculum Skill Objectives		
Skill Objective	Assessment Techniques/Instruments	Year To Be Administered
Communication	Internally developed student self-reflection survey (Internal, Indirect) Embedded assessments (Internal, Direct) ETS Proficiency Profile (External, Direct) National Survey of Student Engagement (External, Indirect)	2014-2015 ETS Proficiency and NSSE not implemented Scheduled for 2016-2017
Team Work	Internally developed student self-reflection survey (Internal, Indirect) Embedded assessments (Internal, Direct) National Survey of Student Engagement (External, Indirect)	2014-2015 NSSE not implemented Scheduled for 2016-2017
Empirical and Quantitative	Internally developed student self-reflection survey (Internal, Indirect) Embedded assessments (Internal, Direct) ETS Proficiency Profile (External, Direct) National Survey of Student Engagement (External,	2015-2016

	Indirect)	
Critical Thinking	Internally developed student self-reflection survey (Internal, Indirect) Embedded assessments (Internal, Direct) National Survey of Student Engagement (External, Indirect)	2015-2016
Social Responsibility	Internally developed student self-reflection survey (Internal, Indirect) Embedded assessments (Internal, Direct) National Survey of Student Engagement (External, Indirect)	2016-2017
Personal Responsibility	Internally developed student self-reflection survey (Internal, Indirect) Embedded assessments (Internal, Direct) National Survey of Student Engagement (External, Indirect)	2016-2017

ETS Proficiency Profile Reports

The ETS Proficiency Profile was first administered in spring 2016 to students in general education courses by their instructors during English classes. Empirical and Quantitative Skills and Critical Thinking Skills scores were the instructional focus, although writing scores were noted as part of the Communication Skills objective from the 2014-2015 academic year. The performance target was set for 60% of students to score proficient. The [ETS Profile Report](#) indicated that 0% of students were proficient in critical thinking, 33% were proficient in Math Level I, and 36% were proficient in Writing Level I. Therefore, none of the targets were met for Empirical and Quantitative Skills and Critical Thinking Skills as measured by the ETS Proficiency Profile.

Campus-wide Assessment Results

In response to the Off-Site committee findings that incomplete information was provided for personal and social responsibility outcomes, and no evidence was provided for teamwork, the following table provides complete assessment data for all skills from the campus-wide measures of the Student Self Reflection Survey and the Embedded Assessments. Although most targets were met using these internal measures, the action plans indicate instructional strategies to implement.

Table 3. Communication and Team Work Assessment Results

Date	Assessment	Results	Action Plan
2014-2015	Student Self Reflection Survey on Communication Target: 60% of students will report improvement in communication skills.	No survey was administered in Fall 2014. The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 7 items, and student responses ranged from 61.4% to 77.4% for Spring 2015 . Target was met.	Students expressed less confidence in oral communication experiences. The 2018 Quality Enhancement Plan will address oral communication skills.
2014-2015	Student Self Reflection on Teamwork Target: 60% of students will report improvement (agree to strongly agree responses combined) in communication skills.	No survey was administered in Fall 2014. The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 5 items, and student responses ranged from 68.6% to 75.7% for Spring 2015 results. Target was met.	Students expressed less confidence in team work experiences in class. Faculty will try to incorporate more cooperative learning activities in class.
2014-2015	Embedded Assessments on	100% of students demonstrated	Data analysis shows that

	<p>Communication</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will show evidence of improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment.</p>	<p>improvement between the pre assessment and the post-assessment. The improvement ranged from 10.5% to 100% in the 101 course sections reported for Fall 2014. Target was met.</p> <p>100% of students demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. The improvement ranges from 8.0% to 96% in the 89 course sections reported in Spring 2015. Target was met.</p>	<p>students met and exceeded the set target of 60% of students demonstrating evidence of improvement from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. This was true for both Fall 2014 and Spring 2015. The 2018 Quality Enhancement Plan will address communication skills.</p>
2014-2015	<p>Embedded Assessments on Team Work Skills</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will show evidence of improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment.</p>	<p>100% of students demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post assessment. The improvement ranges from 47% to 94% in 45 course sections reported in Fall 2014. Target was met.</p> <p>100% of students demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. The improvement ranges from 13% to 100% in Spring 2015. Target was met.</p>	<p>Data analysis shows that students met and exceeded the set target of 60% of students demonstrating evidence of improvement from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. This was true for both Fall 2014 and Spring 2015.</p>

Table 4. Critical Thinking and Empirical and Quantitative Skills

Date	Assessment	Results	Action Plan
2015-2016	<p>Student Self Reflection Survey on Empirical and Quantitative Skills</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will report improvement (agree and strongly agree responses combined) in empirical and</p>	<p>The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 5 items, and student responses ranged from 61.5% to 65.1% in Fall 2015. Target was met.</p> <p>The Student Self-</p>	<p>Students expressed less confidence in research design and distinguishing scientific fact. Faculty will provide more experiences in</p>

	quantitative skills	Reflection Survey had 5 items, and the student responses ranged from 76.4% to 82.4% in Spring 2016 . Target was met.	these areas in class.
2015-2016	<p>Student Self Reflection Survey on Critical Thinking Skills</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will report improvement (agree to strongly agree responses combined) in critical thinking skills</p>	<p>The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 7 items, and student responses on improvement ranged from 68.4% to 71.9% in Fall 2015. Target was met.</p> <p>The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 7 items, and student responses on improvement ranged from 78.3% to 81.5% in Spring 2016. Target was met.</p>	Students expressed less confidence in analyzing findings and evaluating findings. Faculty will provide more experiences in these areas in class.
2015-2016	<p>Embedded Assessments on Quantitative and Empirical Literacy Skills.</p> <p>Target: 60% of students in courses will show evidence of improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment.</p>	<p>100% of students in courses demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post assessment. The improvement ranges from 25% to 100% in 37 course sections reported in Fall 2015. Target was met.</p> <p>100% of students in courses demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. The improvement ranges from 7% to 57% in 30 course sections in Spring 2016. Target was met.</p>	Data analysis shows that students met and exceeded the set target of 60% of students demonstrating evidence of improvement from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. This was true for both Fall 2015 and Spring 2016.
2015-2016	Embedded Assessments in Critical Thinking Skills.	100% of students in courses demonstrated	Data analysis shows that students met

	<p>Target: 60% of students in courses will show evidence of improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment.</p>	<p>improvement between the pre-assessment and the post assessment. The improvement ranges from 10% to 100% in 99 course sections reported in Fall 2015. Target was met.</p> <p>100% of students in courses demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. The improvement ranges from 29% to 100% in 83 courses in Spring 2016. Target was met.</p>	<p>and exceeded the set target of 60% of students demonstrating evidence of improvement from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. This was true for both Fall 2015 and Spring 2016.</p>
2015-2016	<p>ETS Proficiency Profile for Critical Thinking</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will score proficient.</p> <p>ETS Proficiency Profile for Empirical and Quantitative skills</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will score proficient.</p>	<p>N = 211</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0% scored proficient on critical thinking - 4% scored marginal on critical thinking - 96% scores not proficient on critical thinking. <p>Target was not met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 33% scored proficient on Mathematics Level 1 - 36% scored marginal on mathematics level 1 - 32% scored not proficient on mathematics level 1. <p>Target was not met.</p>	<p>More instructional time will be allocated to critical thinking skills as identified in the ETS Proficiency Profile. More instructional time will be allocated to empirical and quantitative skills as identified in the ETS Proficiency Profile.</p>
2015-2016	<p>National Survey of Student Engagement for Critical Thinking</p> <p>Target: 70% of students' responses will be "quite a bit" or "very much" for each measured item.</p> <p>National Survey of Student Engagement for empirical and quantitative skills</p> <p>Target: 70% of students' responses will be "quite a bit" or "very much" for each measured item.</p>	<p>79% of students reported "very much" or "quite a bit" for item, "<i>Thinking critically and analytically</i>". Target was met.</p> <p>60% of students reported: "very much" or "quite a bit" for item, "<i>Analyzing numerical and statistical information.</i>" Target was not met.</p>	<p>Faculty will allocate more instructional time for empirical and quantitative skills in the classroom.</p>

Table 5. Personal and Social Responsibility Assessment Results

Date	Assessment	Results	Action Plan
2016-2017	<p>Student Self Reflection Survey on Personal Responsibility skills.</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will report improvement (agree to strongly agree responses combined) in Personal Responsibility skills.</p>	<p>The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 6 items, and student responses ranged from 62.2% to 76.7% in Fall 2016. Target was met.</p> <p>The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 6 items, and student responses ranged from 69.9% to 76.7% in Spring 2017. Target was met.</p>	<p>Students expressed less confidence in identifying basic ethics in the course. Faculty will provide more experiences in this area in class.</p>
2016-2017	<p>Student Self Reflection Survey on Social Responsibility skills.</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will report improvement (agree to strongly agree responses combined) in Social Responsibility skills</p>	<p>The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 7 items and student responses ranged from 59.0% to 75.0% in Fall 2016. Target was not met. The Student Self-Reflection Survey had 7 items, and student responses ranged from 63.7% to 72.7% in Spring 2017. Target was met.</p>	<p>Students expressed less confidence in their ability to “engage effectively in my regional, national, and global communities”. Faculty will provide more experiences in this area in class.</p>
2016-2017	<p>Embedded Assessments in Social and Personal Responsibility skills (Faculty combined the two skills into one assessment, so only one report is available.)</p> <p>Target: 60% of students will show evidence of improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment</p>	<p>100% of students demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. The improvement ranges from 18% to 100% in Fall 2016. The target was met.</p> <p>100% of students demonstrated improvement between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. The improvement ranges from 25% in Spring 2017. The target was met.</p>	<p>Data analysis shows that students met and exceeded the set target of 60% of students demonstrating evidence of improvement from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. This was true for both Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. Separate assessments will be used when these skills are highlighted in the next teaching cycle.</p>
2016-	National Survey of	68% of students	Faculty will

2017	<p>Student Engagement: Personal Responsibility</p> <p>Social Responsibility</p> <p>Target: 70% of students' responses will be "quite a bit" or "very much" for each measured item.</p>	<p>reported "very much" or "quite a bit" for item, "<i>Developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics</i>".</p> <p>The target was not met.</p> <p>65% of students reported "very much" or "quite a bit" for item, "<i>Understanding people of other backgrounds</i>".</p> <p>The target was not met.</p>	<p>provide more experiential opportunities in this area for students in their classes.</p>
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Embedded Assessment Example from Behavioral and Social Science Department

Faculty design the embedded assessments based on their course content. In the Compliance Report, an example from the Behavioral and Social Science Department of a writing assessment to measure social responsibility was included, and more information was requested by the Off-Site Committee. The instructor's description of the measure details the quotation used, the [assessment tool](#), and [results](#). All Core Curriculum Assessment Forms for Instructors for each of the embedded assessments are kept by the chair of each academic department.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Social Responsibility HIST 1301 Embedded Assessment Fall 2016](#)
[Communication Embedded Assessment Fall 2014](#)
[Communication Embedded Assessment Spring 2015](#)
[Core Curriculum Embedded Report- Personal Social Responsibility- Spring 2017](#)
[Critical Thinking Embedded Assessment Fall 2015](#)
[Critical Thinking Embedded Assessment Spring 2016](#)
[Critical Thinking Survey Fall 2015](#)
[Critical Thinking Survey Spring 2016](#)
[Embedded Assessment Teamwork Spring 2015](#)
[Embedded Assessment Teamwork Fall 2014](#)
[ETS Proficiency Profile](#)
[Behavioral and Social Science Social Responsibility Embedded Assessment](#)
[National Survey of Student Engagement 2016](#)
[National Survey of Student Engagement 2017](#)
[Personal Responsibility Survey Fall 2016](#)
[Personal Responsibility Survey Spring 2017](#)
[Quantitative and Empirical Embedded Assessments Fall 2015](#)
[Quantitative and Empirical Embedded Assessments Spring 2016](#)
[Quantitative and Empirical Survey Fall 2015](#)
[Quantitative and Empirical Survey Spring 2016](#)
[Social Responsibility Embedded Assessment Spring 2017](#)
[Social Responsibility Embedded Assessments Fall 2016](#)
[Social Responsibility Survey Fall 2016](#)
[Social Responsibility Survey Spring 2017](#)
[Social Responsibility HIST 1301 Embedded Assessment Fall 2016](#)
[Teamwork Embedded Assessment Fall 2014](#)
[Teamwork Embedded Assessment Spring 2015](#)
[Teamwork Survey Spring 2015](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.5.2 - Institutional Credits for a Degree

At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree.

Non-Compliance

The institution indicates that the minimum number of credit hours required for an undergraduate degree is 120 hours. An evaluation process is described to ensure that students earning the bachelor's degree must complete at least 30 hours at the institution. The narrative indicates that an audit is conducted for all graduates to ensure that they are in compliance with this residency requirement; however, no substantiating evidence is supplied to demonstrate that this audit process actually occurs.

Focused Response

As stated in the Compliance Certification, the degree plan of each graduate is audited by the office of the academic college. All colleges have established processes to ensure that students earning the bachelor's degree must complete at least 30 hours at the institution, as well as other requirements. In the attached document [Procedures for Degree Audits](#), the processes followed by each college are described in detail. The process below followed by the College of Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences serves as an example of degree and residency auditing.

Degree Audit Process for the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

(process for Fall 2017 and previous semesters)

- Print degree plan and transcript; fill in degree plan during the semester prior to the student's last semester.
- Ensure the student has met all of the requirements noted in the ANRS degree audit form.
- Make note of any perceived deficiencies and present those to the student's advisor as items to be addressed before the last add/drop date of the student's last semester.
- Create graduation list based of all students who have met all graduation requirements listed on the ANRS degree audit form.
- Have an audience with department chairs to review degree plans and audit forms. Obtain signature from the chair for the audit forms and degree plans if any were not already signed.
- Remove any students from graduation list who were flagged by a chair as not meeting graduating requirements (if there are any).
- Review degree plans and audit forms with the dean and have him/her sign audit forms and degree plans if any were not already signed.
- Review students' final grades on the final day of classes of the students' last semester to ensure all students passed and have met all criteria.
- Submit final graduation list to the office of the provost, registrar, graduate student services center, department chairs, dean, and others.

To serve as evidence of these audits being performed, the following redacted documents are included:

[College of Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences Graduation Checklist Form](#)

[College of Arts and Sciences Graduation Checklist Form](#)

[College of Education and Professional Studies Graduation Checklist Form](#)

[RGC Degree Audit](#)

[RGC Letters to students from Dean's office regarding graduation status](#)

[Summary](#)

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.5.2.

Comprehensive Standard 3.6.1 - Post-baccalaureate Program Rigor

The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs.

Non-Compliance

The institution offers graduate degrees in the following areas: Master of Agriculture, Master of Arts, Master of Business Administration, Master of Education, and Master of Science. Dual graduate degrees are offered in Master of Science/Master of Arts in specific programs. The institution states that graduate students are required to complete assignments validating their achievement of skills in oral and/or written comprehensive exams, public thesis defense, public exhibition, performance, or recital. However, examples of these assignments were not provided.

The institution provided evidence that students must meet advanced admission requirements. The institution also provides statements regarding smaller class sizes and physical learning environments for graduate coursework. However, no evidence was provided to support the achievement of advanced content through examples of graduate student learning outcomes or course syllabi.

The institution did not provide sufficient documentation to reflect differentiation between undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Focused Response

The Off-Site Committee requested additional information about Sul Ross State University's graduate programs to demonstrate rigor in skill sets and content. This response includes evidence of 1) assignments validating skill sets in oral and/or written comprehensive exams, public thesis defense, public exhibition, performance or recital; 2) advanced content validated by graduate student learning outcomes or course syllabi; and 3) differentiation between undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Assignments to Validate Skill Sets

Several documents are provided to demonstrate the rigor in graduate program assignments.

[Oral Comprehensive Exam Rubric Political Science](#)

[Written Comprehensive Exam English Program](#)

[Master of Science Oral Evaluation](#) and [Master of Science Oral Exam Questions](#) (A thesis defense is done orally, each program different questions, the end product is a Thesis.)

[Public Art Exhibition](#)

[Video Production Rubric](#)

Graduate Student Learning Outcomes and Syllabi

Student Learning Outcomes are presented in the following sample syllabi. High expectations for graduate student performance are indicated in the Student Learning Outcomes for each course.

[Animal Science 5308](#)

[ED 5316 Diversity in Public Education](#)

[English 5306](#)

Differentiating Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

Several undergraduate programs and graduate programs demonstrate the increasing rigor of student learning outcomes at the graduate level.

[English B.A. \(Alpine\)](#)

Undergraduate students will demonstrate that they can

SLO 1: Construct essays that demonstrate unity, organization, coherence, and development.

SLO 2: Analyze literary works by applying principles of literary criticism or theory.

SLO 3: Produce research papers that demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of acceptable sources, employ them effectively through quotations or paraphrases, integrate them smoothly into the writer's own prose, and document them correctly using MLA format.

SLO 4: Demonstrate creativity or originality of thought in written or multimedia projects.

SLO 5: Compare/contrast and analyze major works and periods within World, English, and American literature.

[English M.A. \(Alpine\)](#)

The Student Learning Outcomes from this graduate degree program demonstrate the increased rigor of the master's program.

Students will demonstrate that they can

SLO 1: Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of major authors, literary works in different genres, and

definitive literary movements in British and American literature.

SLO 2: Explicate literary works representative of two periods or genres in British literature and two periods or genres in American literature.

SLO 3: Employ methodology and terminology used in creative writing or linguistics.

SLO 4: Conduct substantial research to support original interpretations of literary works, provide original applications of literary or linguistic theories, or present literature reviews of authors or genres that have inspired creative writing projects.

[Homeland Security B.S.](#) (Alpine)

The Student Learning Outcomes from this undergraduate degree program are reported:

SLO 1: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the history and evolution of homeland security, including the Department of Homeland Security, within the political and social systems of the United States.

SLO 2: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the magnitude and scope of terrorist threats to the United States, including the motives and methods of different international and domestic terrorist organizations.

SLO 3: The student will be able to identify and demonstrate an understanding of the significant legal issues in the Homeland Security domain.

[Homeland Security M.S.](#) (Alpine)

The Student Learning Outcomes from this graduate degree program demonstrate the increased rigor of the master's program.

SLO 1: The student will be able to identify, assess, and evaluate legal challenges to the laws and policies of the Homeland Security domain.

SLO 2: The student will be able to assess, evaluate, and develop appropriate policies that affect the overall operation and effectiveness of the Homeland Security domain.

SLO 3: The student will be able to develop a working knowledge of the process and application of the methods of scientific research, including the ability to critique a piece of research based on its methodology and develop the ability to apply research to Homeland Security policy.

Summary

In conclusion, the increased rigor of the graduate programs is reflected in the assignments provided and the student learning outcomes that distinguish between the graduate and undergraduate programs.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Animal Science 5308](#)

[Art 5304 Exhibit Contract](#)

[ED 5316 Diversity in Public Education](#)

[Embrey Prospectus for Podcast Project](#)

[English 5306](#)

[Homeland Security Student Learning Outcomes](#)

[MA Studio Art Degree Plan](#)

[MAG Degree Plan](#)

[Martinez Prospectus for Illustrated Poetry](#)

[Megan Wilde's Documentary Award](#)

[MS Biology](#)

[Oral Comprehensive Exam Questions and Rubric](#)

[Reed Prospectus for Directing a Play](#)

[Student Learning Outcomes Undergraduate and Graduate Animal Science](#)

[Student Learning Outcomes Undergraduate and Graduate English Alpine](#)

[Video Production Rubric- Documentary](#)

[Visual Arts Rubric for Liberal Arts](#)

[Waggoner Prospectus for Photography Exhibit](#)

[Written Comprehensive Exam Questions](#)

[MS Oral Evaluation](#)

[MS Biology Oral Examination Questions](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.6.2 - Graduate Curriculum

The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences.

Non-Compliance

The institution currently offers five categories of graduate degrees and a dual degree option through its three colleges - College of Agricultural and Natural Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education and Professional Studies. The university offers concurrent dual degree graduate programs in Master of Science in Criminal Justice and Public Administration, and the Master of Science in Homeland Security and Public Administration.

The narrative provides a listing of programs and required courses within each program that prepare students to engage in research and/or professional practice. It provides a link to the university library webpage as well as sample titles of capstone projects. Student research theses are uploaded into ProQuest, and a sample of a student thesis is provided as evidence.

While the narrative provides a list of the courses, it is not evident how the knowledge of the literature of the discipline is incorporated into the curriculum requirements by individual programs. Documentation such as copies of syllabi would be beneficial to demonstrate compliance.

Current examples were not provided. The two theses provided as examples are from 2008 and 2010.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University offers five categories of graduate degrees and a dual degree option through the four different colleges. In response to the Off-Site Committee's request, additional evidence, such as course syllabi and more recent examples of graduate theses, is presented below. (Note revisions to dual degree option reported in CR 2.7.1).

Syllabi and Curriculum Requirements

[Animal Science 5327](#) lists the Student Learning Outcomes and outlines major projects that build the students' skills sets and content understandings to become proficient in each of the SLO's. For example, the term paper assignment listed in the syllabus promotes students' mastery of SLO 4 - Students will have the ability to discuss the endogenous control of metabolic pathways and how diet variations can affect nutrient flow. In the Schedule of Class Sessions, multiple lectures are listed to promote students' content knowledge for SLO 4., as well.

Additional syllabi are provided in the Supporting Documentation and Evidence section.

Examples of Theses

The Off-Site Committee requested current examples of theses. Several more current examples are provided.

[Range and Wildlife Management Thesis 2017](#)

[Julia Elizabeth Green Biology 2016](#)

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

Syllabi:

[NRM 5302 Syllabus](#)

[ANSC 5327 Syllabus](#)

[NRM 5320 Syllabus](#)

[PS 5310 Syllabus](#)

[COMM 5304 Syllabus](#)

[CJ 5322 Syllabus](#)

[ANSC 5308 Syllabus](#)

Theses:

[Cynthia McAlister Biology Thesis 2012](#)

[Robert Allcorn Range & Wildlife Management Thesis 2015](#)

[Justin Hoffman Range & Wildlife Management Thesis 2015](#)

[Grant Lawrence Range & Wildlife Management Thesis 2017](#)

[James Russell Woodburn Geology Thesis 2014](#)

[Julia Elizabeth Green Biology Thesis 2016](#)

[Richard A. Temple Jr. Range & Wildlife Management Thesis 2014](#)

[Asher Jacob Lichtig Geology Thesis 2015](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 - Faculty Competence

The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty. (See Commission guidelines "Faculty Credentials.")

Non-Compliance

The University's mission indicates that it is primarily a teaching and learning institution and that qualified competent faculty are recruited, appointed and evaluated to allow the institution to complete this mission. The narrative indicates that the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost maintains files of faculty credentials that include official copies of all degree transcripts, a letter of application, a vita, and documentation of any exceptional qualifications for individuals who lack the terminal degree. While the majority of the faculty appear to be well qualified to teach the courses assigned to them, questions remained about a few. These are noted on the Justifying and Documenting Qualifications of Faculty form located at the end of this report.

Focused Response

The SACSCOC Off-Site Committee requested additional justification and documentation of the qualifications for four Sul Ross State University faculty members.

- Lara Kelly who taught Psychology 2307 and 3308 is no longer teaching for the university. She was replaced by Dr. Alicia Trotman whose credentials are presented in the Faculty Roster.

Sul Ross State University affirms that the other three faculty members are highly qualified to teach their respective courses. Additional information is provided for the other three instructors, Julianna Larrinaga, Rosemary Briseno, and Ryan O'Shaughnessy in the Faculty Roster.

FACULTY NAME (F, P)	DEPARTMENT	COURSES IN QUESTION Including Term, Course Number & Title, Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G)	ACADEMIC DEGREES & COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, Including Institution & Major List specific graduate coursework, if needed	CLARIFICATION OF QUALIFICATION
Lara, Kelly (P) *Courses now taught by Alicia Trotman	Behavioral and Social Sciences	PSY 2307 Introduction to Statistics for Behavioral Sciences , 3 (UT) PSY 3308 Experimental Psychology , 3 (UT)	Degrees for Alicia Trotman: B.A. Computer Science and Applied Psychology/Human Relations, Pace University Ph.D. Learning, Technology, & Culture, with a concentration in Special Education, Michigan State University Trotman Transcripts	These courses are no longer taught by Kelly Lara. They are now taught by Alicia Trotman.
Larrinaga .	Languages and	ENGL 1301	B.A. English, Sul	Transcripts now

Julianna (P)	Literature	English Composition I , 3 (UT)	Ross State University M.A. English, Sul Ross State University Larrinaga Transcripts	provided.
Briseno, Rosemary (F)	Languages and Literature	WS 2301 Introduction to Women's Studies , 3 (UT)	M.A. English, Sul Ross State University Ph.D. 20 th Century American Literature, with a focus on identity politics, Washington State University Briseno Transcripts	16 years of teaching experience in Women's Studies Justification-Rosemary Briseno
O'Shaughnessy, Ryan (F)	Natural Resource Management	AGB 4303 Agri-Business Management , 3 (UT)	B.S. Zoology, University of the Witswatersrand M.S. in Animal, Plant, and Environmental Science, University of the Witswatersrand Ph.D. in Zoology, Southern Illinois University Master of Business Administration, Sul Ross State University O'Shaughnessy Transcripts	Dr. O'Shaughnessy completed an M.B.A in Fall of 2017. In addition, he has 25 years of experience operating agricultural businesses in the private sector in the United States and in Botswana. Justification-Ryan O'Shaughnessy

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.2 - Faculty Evaluation

The institution regularly evaluates the effectiveness of each faculty member in accord with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status.

Non-Compliance

In Fall 2016, 76 full-time faculty and 117 part-time faculty were employed. All faculty members, including both tenure track and non-tenure track, are evaluated annually by the program administrator.

The Faculty Handbook describes the faculty evaluation process based on four criteria: teaching/job effectiveness, scholarly/artistic endeavor, professional growth and activities, and activities supportive of the University. The evaluation process starts in the Spring semester every year with faculty members submitting a Faculty Evaluation Form describing their accomplishments to the Chair who evaluates the faculty member's performance applying the levels of "meritorious," "merit," or "no merit." The Chair's evaluations, along with student course evaluations, are then submitted to the Dean, the Provost, and finally to the President of the University, who makes the final determination which is then communicated to the faculty member. Faculty applying for promotion/tenure are also evaluated by the department, college, and university tenure and promotion committees.

Student course evaluations are completed for every course. While the narrative states that results from student evaluations are published on the university's website each semester, the screen shot to the link does not provide the information.

While part-time faculty are evaluated, the narrative does not clarify how often adjunct faculty are evaluated after their first time teaching a course. The documentation provided did include redacted sample evaluations of faculty in several categories.

Focused Response

In the Off-Site Committee findings, student course evaluations and part-time (adjunct) faculty evaluations were addressed. Additional evidence of these evaluations was requested. This narrative provides more information on both the student course evaluations and the adjunct faculty evaluation process.

Student Course Evaluations

Student course evaluations are completed for every course. Student evaluations are published in a publicly available [website](#) called SR INFO, where any student or interested person can find course evaluation information. The user has the ability to browse by specific courses or by instructors. In this [example of a student evaluation](#) of the course *Current Issues in Agriculture* (ANSC 2312-001) taught by Dr. Estep, specific survey questions and aggregated answers can be seen. This type of information is available for any course or faculty as far back as eleven terms.

Part-Time Faculty Evaluation Process

Part-time faculty (adjunct) are hired to teach on a course-by-course basis. The evaluation process for part-time faculty was reported in the Compliance Certification for the "first time" basis. However, part-time faculty evaluation is an ongoing process each time an adjunct teaches one or more courses during a semester. The evaluation process includes: 1) department chair or a senior faculty member in the department observes and/or mentors the part-time faculty member; 2) department chair reviews part-time faculty's course syllabus (syllabi); 3) department chair reviews part-time faculty's student course evaluation(s); and 4) additional measures determined by the department chair (examples: [Kinesiology Department](#) and [Biology, Geology, & Physical Science](#)). After reviewing the Off-Site Committee's findings, the Executive Vice President and Provost consulted with all department chairs to clarify the part-time evaluation process to make it more consistent across all campuses. Based upon input from department chairs and deans, the Executive Vice President and Provost developed the [Part-time Faculty Evaluation Process](#) that was reviewed by the SRSU Faculty Assembly and Senate and presented to the [President's Executive Cabinet on February 13, 2018](#). The Part-time Faculty Evaluation Process retains provisions 1,2, and 3 in the above paragraph and defines provision 4 as a checklist that is completed at the end of each semester and discussed and signed by both the department chair and the part-time faculty member. This Part-time Faculty Evaluation Process has been implemented for the Spring 2018 semester.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[SRINFO Website](#)

[Biology, Geology and Physical Science Part-time Faculty Evaluation](#)

[Kinesiology- Part-time Faculty Evaluation](#)

[SRSU Policy for Evaluation of Part-time Faculty](#)

[Student Evaluation Example](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.10.3 - Control of Finance

The institution exercises appropriate control over all its financial resources.

Non-Compliance

The institution has adequate policies and procedures governing the various relevant processes such as but not limited to the handling of cash, budgeting, risk management, payroll, and procurement. The Internal Audit office reports directly to the board, and from its quarterly report its audit program appears robust. Finance and administrative staff appear qualified. However, the institutional audit report and management letter were not included in the narrative, which might have provided external validation of the institution exercising appropriate control. The On-Site Committee's review of the 2017 financial audit report will be necessary to confirm current compliance with this standard.

Focused Response

The institution exercises appropriate control over all its financial resources.

The Off-Site Review committee determined that Sul Ross State University is non-compliant with this standard. The committee writes in its report "The institution has adequate policies and procedures governing the various relevant processes such as but not limited to the handling of cash, budgeting, risk management, payroll, and procurement. The Internal Audit office reports directly to the board, and from its quarterly report its audit program appears robust. Finance and administrative staff appear qualified. However, the institutional audit report and management letter were not included in the narrative, which might have provided external validation of the institution exercising appropriate control. The On-Site Committee's review of the 2017 financial audit report will be necessary to confirm current compliance with this standard."

A Standard Review Report, an institutional management letter, and a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt have been completed and submitted for the year ended August 31, 2017, our most recent fiscal year, by an independent auditor, BKD CPAs & Advisors. This report indicates that no issues were identified in the review and thus provides external validation of Sul Ross State University exercising appropriate control over all its financial resources. The [report](#) also supports our compliance with the requirements of this standard.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[SRSU 2017 Financial Report](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.11.2 - Institutional Environment

The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all members of the campus community.

Non-Compliance

The institution has programs in place regarding public safety and mental health and wellness. However, the institutional submission did not provide adequate supporting evidence to demonstrate the safety of its physical facilities and its environmental health and safety programs.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University is committed to providing a safe environment campus-wide for all students, faculty, staff, and community members. To address the Off-Site Committee's request for adequate supporting evidence to demonstrate safety, this narrative will include results from the Fall 2016 and Fall 2017 Satisfaction Surveys, a Student Focus Group, and Crime Data.

Satisfaction Survey Results

The university recognizes the importance of adequate outdoor lighting as a crime prevention factor, so lighting was addressed in the annual Satisfaction Survey that was first implemented in 2016. The survey was administered to all faculty, students, and staff on the Alpine campus and the three Rio Grande College campuses, because the university is concerned about safety for all members of the university community. Survey respondents were asked to rate outdoor lighting on campus. Table 1 shows the results for 2016 and 2017.

Table 1. 2016 and 2017 Satisfaction Survey Ratings for Campus Outdoor Lighting

Respondent Classifications	2016 Excellent/Satisfactory Rating (n = 202)	2017 Excellent/Satisfactory Rating (n = 172)
students	55%	78%
faculty	80%	86%
staff	82%	76%

Using the results of the 2016 Satisfaction Survey, more lighting was added on campus, and it is noteworthy that the reported level of satisfaction increased in 2017.

Student Focus Group

A focus group of SRSU students on the Alpine campus was held on February 8, 2018. Key questions were presented: 1) Do you feel safe at SRSU?; 2) What affects your feelings of safety?; 3) What could be done to increase your sense of safety on campus?; and 4) On a scale of 0 to 10, what is your overall feeling of safety?

Responding to question 1, students in the focus group all stated that they had a relative sense of safety on campus.

Responding to question #2, they said that the three [Emergency Blue Tower Phones](#), recently installed in Alpine, provide immediate assistance from the University Department of Public Safety. They also said that the cameras, strategically-positioned on campus, increase their sense of safety.

Responding to question 3, the primary safety issue with students continues to be the lack of lighting in certain locations on campus at night. The lighting concern has been addressed since 2016, and more lights were added in the central area of campus in fall of 2017. These improvements are reflected in the most recent Student Satisfactory Survey in Fall of 2017 which showed 78 percent of students reported the lighting to be excellent to satisfactory.

Responding to question #4, the focus group reported on a scale of zero to ten, (un-safe to safe) an average rating of 7.5. The range was from a low of 4 (reported by a female student) to a high of 9 (reported by a male student).

Crime Statistics

In the 2017 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report lists crime statistics for all Sul Ross State University campuses: [Alpine](#), [Uvalde](#), [Del Rio](#), and [Eagle Pass](#). The documentation shows a minimal crime rate across the board. Crime statistics were researched at a comparable university, [Fort Valley State University](#) in Fort Valley, Georgia. These equivalent statistics show further evidence of a safe campus environment at SRSU.

Sul Ross State University's Department for Public Safety provides reasonable steps to insure the safety of all students, faculty, staff, and community members. An example of steps taken, are on the University Department of Public Safety's [website](#). The website includes all types of useful information, including safety precautions, safety enforcement, laws and policies, student regulations, crime statistics, etc.

Summary

In conclusion, Sul Ross State University has shown adequate evidence to be a safe environment with its safety programs and with physical facilities.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[2017 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report](#)

[2017 Annual Satisfaction Survey Example](#)

[UDPS Screenshot](#)

[Safety Status Report Example](#)

[Fort Valley State University Crime Statistics](#)

[Focused Group Form Blank](#)

[Exit Card for Focused Group Blank](#)

[Crime Stats Alpine Campus](#)

[Crime Stats Uvalde Campus](#)

[Crime Stats Del Rio Campus](#)

[Crime Stats Eagle Pass Campus](#)

[Emergency Blue Tower Phone](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.11.3 - Physical Facilities

The institution operates and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, that appropriately serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities.

Non-Compliance

From the survey data in the institutional submission, the campus community appears to be satisfied with the physical appearance of the buildings and grounds and there is a capital plan in place. However, there was insufficient evidence regarding current adequacy of classroom space or technology infrastructure in meeting the needs of the campus community and the institution's various programs and services.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University operates and maintains sufficient physical facilities for the institution's programs and services for the Alpine campus and the Rio Grande College (RGC) campuses. In response to the Off-Site Review team's request, additional evidence and documentation have been provided.

Classroom Space

Source: Overview of Space Usage Efficiency (SUE), Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Average Percent Fill

It is necessary to determine the number of seats occupied when a room is in use to determine the appropriateness of use, need for additional facilities, and opportunities for optimization.

As in the utilization measure, the SCHEV study addressed station usage and found 65 percent occupancy was the average standard for classroom occupancy. They found a higher standard in the laboratory category at 77 percent. The points array for percent fill place the Texas standard in line with the findings of the SCHEV study, while keeping the three-point value above the mean of Texas institutions.

Definition from Appendix A, 2009 Report

	Classroom					Class Laboratory				
	Average Percent Fill					Average Percent Fill				
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Statewide	67%	68%	67%	65%	65%	71%	72%	74%	75%	74%
Alpine	48%	46%	48%	48%	50%	47%	47%	49%	50%	48%
Rio Grande College	36%	36%	35%	31%	36%	33%	33%	66%	66%	82%

Diff TX - ALP 19% 22% 19% 17% 15%

Diff TX - ALP 24% 25% 25% 25% 26%

Diff TX - RGC 31% 32% 32% 34% 29%

Diff TX - RGC 38% 39% 8% 9% -8%

Technology Infrastructure

	Media Classroom	Computer Classroom	Computer Lab	DE Classroom	Faculty/Staff
ALPINE					
ACR	ACR 205	ACR 104/203	ACR 106	ACR 204/206	ACR 207
BAB	BAB 304/305/317/318	BAB 302/303	BAB 104		BAB 104/201
MAB	MAB	MAB 200/204	MAB 303	MAB 205/308	MAB 300
LAW	101/102/107/202/206/301/302 LH 201/300/303/309	LH 200	LH 104		LH 104
FRG		FRG 201/203/211/213	FRG 104		
FAB	FAB 100/200	FAB 206/207			
GPC	GP 106/108				
IT	IT 103	IT 105			
RAS	ANRS 126/128/129/130/135	ANRS 136			RAS 124
UC		211			UC 204
WSB	WSB 109/110/201/202/ 209/210/223	WSB 115/308/310		WSB101/107/321	
WML		WML 201	WML 2nd floor; TLC Lab		
BRK			Red Paw Den.		
RGC					

Uvalde	B101/102/109/107	B107
Eagle	D210/116/113/110/111	D101
Pass		
Del Rio	L303/M102/104/111	L302

Classroom Technology

Technology infrastructure at Sul Ross State University consists of 33 classrooms, which contain an instructor station, and an additional 19 classrooms with an instructor station and multiple computer workstations (accommodations ranging from six to 27 computers.) Classrooms are equipped with either generic technology or have customized technology specifically used by the degree program. (For example, GIS software for the Geology program or SPSS for Psychology, Biology or Natural Resource Management.)

Open Computer Labs

All students on the Alpine campus and the off-campus instructional sites have access to nine open computer labs containing from 6 to 21 workstations. The computer labs consist of computer workstations, printers, copiers, scanners, and technology support staff.

Distance Education Classrooms

There are 19 Distance Education rooms which are each equipped with 4-6 viewing screens, (to bring all distant participants to the same space to interact in real time,) a projection screen, an instructor station, document camera, DVD player.

Faculty/Staff Professional Development Labs

There are 7 faculty development labs equipped with multiple workstations, recording facilities, laptops for checkout, and web conferencing capabilities including speakers, microphones, headsets, and web cameras. Various new technologies are piloted for classroom and online use (for example Apple TV or emerging technology such as cloud technology.)

The Lobo Technology Assistance Center provides support to students, faculty and staff; including classroom support, installed software and handling hardware issues. The Network Team supports foundational technology infrastructure including high-speed internet connection, email servers, business process servers, network communications, and wireless access.

Definitions

Media Classroom - The classroom contains a computer workstation, projector, document camera and DVD player.

Computer Classroom - Includes the same equipment as the Media Classroom, but also includes 6 to 27 student workstations.

Computer Lab - Contains 6 to 21 computer workstations, printer, copier, and scanner.

Summary

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.11.3.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Technology Infrastructure Alpine Campus](#)

[Technology Infrastructure Rio Grande College Campuses](#)

[SUE Average Percent Fill for Classroom and Class Labs](#)

[SUE Overall Classroom and Class Lab Scores](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.13.2 - Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures

Applicable Policy Statement. Member institutions are responsible for notifying and providing SACSCOC with signed final copies of agreements governing their joint and dual academic awards (as defined in this policy). These awards must address the requirements set forth in the SACSCOC policy and procedures. For all such arrangements, SACSCOC-accredited institutions assume responsibility for (1) the integrity of the awards, (2) the quality of credits recorded on their transcripts, and (3) compliance with accreditation requirements

Documentation: The institution should provide evidence that it has reported to the Commission all dual and joint awards (as defined in this policy) that included signed final copies of the agreements outlining the awards. In addition, the institution should integrate into the Compliance Certification a discussion and determination of compliance with all standards applicable to the provisions of the agreements.

Non-Compliance

No submission was provided for this standard.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University adheres to the SACSCOC policy statement, [Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures](#), and notifies and provides SACSCOC with copies of agreements governing joint and dual academic awards. Furthermore, SRSU is responsible for the integrity of the awards and the quality of credits recorded on the transcripts.

Notification and Approval Process

Sul Ross State University and Heze University, China entered into a [Cooperative College Education Agreement](#) on November 1, 2016, to develop a plan for dual, undergraduate, academic awards in biology and business. In following SRSU's [Substantive Change Policy](#), the institution notified SACSCOC of this substantive change (March 24, 2017 letter). Documents in Table I demonstrate SRSU's compliance with SACSCOC policies.

Table 1. Dual Academic Award Agreement

Agreement	SRSU Notification: March 24, 2017 SACSCOC Response: July 31, 2017	Approval Pending
Dual Degree Bachelor of Science in Biology and Bachelor of Business Administration	March 24, 2017 July 31, 2017	September 14, 2017

Transcripts

SRSU takes responsibility for the quality of credits displayed on students' transcripts. Following the SRSU [Administrative Policy for Transfer and Award of Academic Credit](#), the Biology, Geology, & Physical Science and Business Administration will evaluate the courses from Heze University for transfer towards the BS in Biology and the Bachelor of Business Administration degrees.

Integrity and Quality of the Programs

The university incorporates the SACSCOC Disclaimer Statement in materials that describe the relationship between SRSU and Heze University.

The [dual undergraduate programs](#) with Heze University follow the same academic assessments and program review processes as the individual programs on the Sul Ross State University campus. The Director of International Studies takes an active role in the curricular and administrative aspects of the agreement to assure the quality of the dual undergraduate programs.

Summary

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.13.2.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[APM Transfer and Award of Academic Credit](#)

[APM Substantive Change Policy](#)

[Cooperative College Education Agreement](#)

[Heze University Response September 14, 2017](#)

[Joint Dual Awards](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.13.3 - Complaint Procedures Against the Commission or Its Accredited Institutions

Applicable Policy Statement. Each institution is required to have in place student complaint policies and procedures that are reasonable, fairly administered, and well-publicized. (See FR 4.5). The Commission also requires, in accord with federal regulations, that each institution maintains a record of complaints received by the institution. This record is made available to the Commission upon request. This record will be reviewed and evaluated by the Commission as part of the institution's decennial evaluation.

Documentation When addressing this policy statement, the institution should provide information to the Commission describing how the institution maintains its record and also include the following: (1) individuals/offices responsible for the maintenance of the record(s), (2) elements of a complaint review that are included in the record, and (3) where the record(s) is located (centralized or decentralized). The record itself will be reviewed during the on-site evaluation of the institution.

Non-Compliance

No submission was provided for this standard.

Focused Response

Sul Ross State University provides clear avenues for students to enter written formal complaints, file grievances, and appeal conduct and other administrative decisions. The Student Grievance Procedure is posted on the university [web site](#) and in the [SRSU Alpine Student Handbook](#) and [RGC Student Handbook](#).

Depending upon the nature of the grievance, various offices have been designated to handle the student complaints. The university has a decentralized record-keeping system that is outlined in Table 1. The comparable process followed at RGC is linked to Table 1, too. All record keeping for on-campus and distance learning students is aligned with FERPA regulations that ensure confidentiality and security of student records.

Table 1. SRSU Complaint and Appeal Process [RGC Complaint and Appeal Process](#)

Type of Complaint or Appeal	Responsible Office	Location of Records
Discrimination of race, color, national or ethnic origin	Dean of Student Life	Dean's Office
Discrimination including sexual misconduct policy	Title IX Coordinator and/or Dean of Student Life	Dean's Office
Students with disability	ADA Compliance Officer	Counseling and Accessibility Services Office
Grades	Executive Vice President and Provost	Executive Vice President and Provost's Office
Faculty conduct	Executive Vice President and Provost	Executive Vice President and Provost's Office
Financial assistance appeals	Office of Financial Assistance & Financial Assistance Appeals Committee	Office of the Vice President for Enrollment Management
Residential Living	Office of Residential Living	Office of the Vice President for Enrollment Management
Other	Dean of Student Life	Dean's Office

The complaint process requires that the student submit details of the action or condition giving rise to the complaint to the responsible university officer. The written complaint should provide full details of the action or condition, names of person involved (if appropriate), times, dates, locations, and relief or action sought by the grievant. The university officer undertakes an investigation and holds a hearing (if necessary). Within five days after the hearing or investigation, the university officer notifies the grievant of his or her decision and the course of action to be taken. This notification shall be in writing. If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may take the complaint to the president whose decision within the university is final. However, nothing in this procedure shall be construed to limit, terminate, or waive any right of a student to seek relief in a court of proper jurisdiction for any student grievance for which a remedy is provided under the laws of the State of Texas or the United States of America. In the case of a financial aid complaint, there is a

standing committee, Financial Assistance Appeals Committee that hears the complaint and makes recommendations.

Summary

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.13.3.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Financial Assistance Appeals Committee Sul Ross State University](#)

[Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

[SRSU RGC Complaint and Appeal Process](#)

[Student Grievance Policy- Website](#)

[Student Grievance Policy- Student Handbook](#)

[SRSU RGC Complaint and Appeal Process](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.13.4 - Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports

***3.13.4.a. Applicable Policy Statement** An institution includes a review of its distance and correspondence education programs in the Compliance Certification. An institution includes a review of all its branch campuses and its off-campus instructional sites.

Documentation In order to be in compliance with this policy, the institution must have incorporated an assessment of its compliance with standards that apply to (1) its distance and correspondence education programs and courses, (2) its branch campuses, and (3) its off-campus instructional sites. The institution should describe its process for incorporating the review and analysis of these programs.

Non-Compliance

No submission was provided for this standard.

Focused Response

Distance learning is an important delivery mode for many academic programs offered at Sul Ross State University. All standards that apply to distance education programs have been addressed in the 2018 Compliance Review for both the main campus and the off-site campuses comprising Rio Grande College. The Office of Information Technology exists for SRSU and its off-site campuses to provide technology support and leadership in the selection, acquisition, application and management of technologies that enhance the university teaching, learning, research, and administrative environments. Each year, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness administers a satisfaction survey to measure compliance with standards for distance learning courses at Sul Ross State University and its off-site campuses.

Distance Education Offerings

Sul Ross State University offers six undergraduate academic degree programs and 14 graduate degree programs with 50 percent or more of the credit hours delivered through the distance learning mode.

Distance Education Inclusion in the Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards and Federal Requirements

CR 2.4

Distance education is addressed in the Administrative Policy Manual [Mission Statement](#) 1.02 section, Who We Are: Sul Ross State University is a public, comprehensive, Master's degree granting, multi-campus university providing on-site and distance education in the Big Bend and the US-Mexico border regions of Texas.

CR 2.7.1

All of the institution's baccalaureate degree programs require 120 credit hours or more. All master's programs require a minimum of 30 credits hours.....Program length for each academic program remains the same, regardless of mode of delivery or program location.

CR 2.8

Faculty in distance education programs must meet the same qualifications and requirements as instructors of traditional face-to-face courses. Most instructors in distance education programs also serve as instructors of face-to-face courses. Distance education courses count toward a faculty member's semester course load in the same way as traditional courses, and class sizes in distance education courses are typically limited to between 20 and 35 students, in order to preserve the low student-teacher ratio. In spring 2017, Sul Ross State University delivered 25% of courses through district education at the main campus and 75% of courses through distance education at the off-campus sites.

CR 2.9

All on-line content is made available through the use of a proxy server that provides easy access to content. To this end, all contracts are negotiated for services and on-line collections to include off-campus sites and distance education students and faculty.

SRSU librarians provide reference services at a traditional in-library information desk, via phone, e-mail, chat or as embedded librarians in Blackboard for distance learning classes.

CR 2.10

Departments interact with students via e-mail, social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter. Smarthinking is an on-line writing and tutoring service available anytime to students. On-line students may receive writing assistance via e-mail request through which documents and papers are exchanged and comments and tutorial critiques are offered.

CR 2.11.2

Distance education courses do not require devoted physical resources at Sul Ross State University. The Office of Information Technology provides the technology infrastructure.

CS 3.3.1.1

Academic Assessment Reports may incorporate distance learning courses as well as face-to-face courses. All student learning outcomes and assessments for an academic program will be the same in distance learning courses or face-to-face courses.

CS 3.3.1.2

The administrative report for Area 207, in the narrative, describes the technical support to faculty and students for Blackboard and related technologies for either on-line programs or face-to-face programs.

CS 3.4.6

Courses taught in non-traditional formats, such as Web-based courses, must have the same course outcomes and expectations regarding student effort as the same course taught in a traditional format. It is expected that the time spent in preparation and course mastery will be equal to that required for a traditional course. Three-hour Web-based courses shall require twelve hours of activity or study time per week during the course of the semester.

CS 3.4.9

Students involved in off-site or distance education programs have full access to the student support services. All course syllabi, offered in distance learning, are required to include a statement for students about how to access the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support.

CS 3.4.11

Many of the program coordinators have experience in teaching distance learning courses.

CS 3.4.12

The university invests in information resources to deliver an advanced technology environment that is appropriate for its academic and research programs and is available to all levels of students, faculty, and staff at all locations, including distance education programs and classes.

CS 3.5.3

Sul Ross State University publishes requirements for each of the undergraduate academic programs on-line. Furthermore, all students have 24 hour access to degrees, academic programs and general education requirements in Degree Works, our degree audit system.

CS 3.6.4

Sul Ross State University publishes requirements for all graduate and post-baccalaureate programs on-line. Furthermore, all students have 24 hour access to degrees, academic programs and general education requirements in Degree Works, our degree audit system.

CS 3.8.1

The SRSU libraries support those at off-campus sites and in distance education programs, thereby supporting the SRSU Mission Statement. The following information is designed to assist students who are enrolled in on-line courses, and it must appear on all District Education course syllabi.

"Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU Web site. Students should submit on-line assignments through Blackboard or SRSU e-mail, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website."

CS 3.8.2

SRSU librarians offer a variety of instructional services for face-to-face and virtual patrons including traditional scheduled classroom instructional sessions, virtual reference services, research consultations, research guides, on-line tutorials, and informal one-on-one instruction at the Info Desk.

CS 3.9.1

Distance education students have access to the same rights (student rights and responsibilities) and are informed through course syllabi as well as other formats. Students can access the student handbook in electronic form on the SRSU Web site.

CS 3.9.2

Sul Ross State University has implemented both technological and procedural security measures to address the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of all student records. Technological protections, combined with appropriate policies and procedures, specify backup and security responsibilities and ensure the protection of students.

CS 3.11.3

The Sul Ross State University Office of Information Technology supports distance learning through Blackboard, the learning management system.

FR 4.2

Sul Ross State University offers a wide variety of graduate programs with some of them available primarily through distance education. By offering these programs on-line, educators throughout the Big Bend and the US-Mexico border region of Texas have access to higher education.

FR 4.3

Sul Ross State University makes academic calendars, grading policies and refund policies readily available to its students and the university community on its Web site.

FR 4.4

For program length, distance education programs must follow the same requirements as traditional face-to-face degree programs.

FR 4.5

The policy regarding student grievances is made available to the university community on-line in the Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and the Administrative Policy Manual.

FR 4.6

Recruitment materials are made available for prospective undergraduate and graduate students in print and on-line for all methods of delivery.

Review and Analysis of Distance Learning Programs Assessments

Starting in [2016](#), each fall, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness emails a survey to all students, faculty and staff in the university to assess their level of satisfaction with the distance learning programs and other related issues. When asked about their level of satisfaction with distance learning courses, responses varied by campus on the [2017](#) survey:

Table 1. Satisfaction Ratings for Distance Learning Courses

Rating	Alpine	Del Rio	Eagle Pass	Uvalde
Extremely Satisfied	49%	42%	54%	22%
Somewhat Satisfied	34%	37%	15%	22%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	15%	0%	8%	11%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0%	11%	15%	22%
Extremely Dissatisfied	2%	11%	8%	22%

To understand the implications of these percentages, staff members from OIT travel to the off-site campuses on a monthly basis, to meet with faculty and staff of RGC. A recurring part of our plan with RGC is to offer training, both on-site and through our various online systems, to ensure they are aware of systems capabilities and have questions answered about how to perform certain tasks within the various solutions we offer to them. In particular, once a semester, we offer face-to-face training for the RGC faculty and staff on tools such as Office 365 and Blackboard. On a recent visit to RGC in November 2017, we had over 20 faculty and staff attend the sessions. For this semester, a number of OIT personnel are holding a face-to-face meeting with RGC faculty and staff in February 2018.

The top priority for the RGC faculty is to stabilize the existing teleconferencing system with a series of firmware and programming code updates that will stabilize twelve of our classrooms on those campuses. We have hired an outside firm, Data Projections, to perform these tasks for us. Our plan is to have these updates completed in the next six to eight weeks. After all the updates are applied and systems are stable, we will continue conversations about the next phase of online instructions for all SRSU campuses. Annually, we will evaluate the Satisfaction Survey data and our own evaluations to measure our progress and best serve our off-site campuses.

Summary

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.13.4a.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Distance Learning Survey 2017](#)

[Distance Education Survey Fall 2016](#)

[SRSU Degree Programs Using Distance Learning Modes](#)

[SRSU Mission Statement](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.13.4 - Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports

3.13.4.b. Applicable Policy Statement If an institution is part of a system or corporate structure, a description of the system operation (or corporate structure) is submitted as part of the Compliance Certification for the decennial review. The description should be designed to help members of the peer review committees understand the mission, governance, and operating procedures of the system and the individual institution's role within that system.

Documentation The institution should provide a description of the system operation and structure or the corporate structure if this applies.

Non-Compliance

No submission was provided for this standard.

Focused Response

The Texas State University System was created in 1911, and it is the oldest and third largest university system in Texas. The Texas State University is under the control of the Board of Regents, which is a nine-member body appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Texas Senate. The Texas Legislature delegated administrative power and authority to the Board of Regents, including the organization, control, and management of the system and each of its institutions including employing and discharging presidents, officers, and other employees. The Texas Education Code defines the roles of the Board of Regents: "...the organization, control and management of the state university system is vested in the Board of Regents,..." ([Texas Education Code, Title 3, Subtitle E, Chapter 95, Subchapter A, Section 95.01](#)). The administration for the system is headed by a Board-appointed chancellor, and the current chancellor is Brian McCall.

Sul Ross State University's Role within the System

The university is one of eight institutions that is governed by the Board of Regents for the Texas State University System (TSUS). These institutions include Lamar University, Sam Houston State University, Sul Ross State University, Texas State University, Lamar Institute of Technology, Lamar State college-Orange, Lamar State College-Port Arthur, and Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College. Each institution is subject to the Texas State University System Rules and Regulations that describe policies and procedures for all institutions to follow. Sul Ross State University, Rio Grande College received authority to grant baccalaureate and master's degrees from the Texas State University System and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, both of which are empowered by the State of Texas.

Summary

Sul Ross State University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.13.4.b.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Texas Education Code Sec. 95.01 Board of Regents](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.13.5 - Separate Accreditation for Units of a Member Institution

***3.13.5.a. Applicable Policy Statement** All branch campuses related to the parent campus through corporate or administrative control (1) include the name of the parent campus and make it clear that its accreditation is dependent on the continued accreditation of the parent campus and (2) are evaluated during reviews for institutions seeking candidacy, initial membership, or reaffirmation of accreditation. All other extended units under the accreditation of the parent campus are also evaluated during such reviews.

Documentation For institutions with branch campuses: (1) The name of each branch campus must include the name of the parent campus—the SACSCOC accredited entity. The institution should provide evidence of this for each of its branch campuses. (2) The institution should incorporate the review of its branch campuses, as well as other extended units under the parent campus, into its comprehensive self-assessment and its determination of compliance with the standards, and indicate the procedure for doing so.

Non-Compliance

No submission was provided for this standard.

Focused Response

The institution certifies compliance. Comprehensive Standard 3.13.5a is not applicable, because we do not have any branch campuses.

Comprehensive Standard 3.13.6 - Institutional Obligations for Public Disclosure

The Institution publishes statements of its goals for student achievement and the success of students in achieving those goals.

Implementation. The institution provides the specific website location where it has published its goals for student achievement and the success of students in achieving those goals.

The Institution Certifies Compliance: Compliant

Sul Ross State University publishes a [Student Achievement](#) webpage on the Institutional Effectiveness web site where the institutional, system, and state goals for student achievement are published. This page also includes the SRSU Mission Statement and provides comprehensive data regarding student achievement. For example, the page includes graduation and retention rates, graduate school and job placement rates, teacher certification rates, achievement metrics of specific support programs and the National Survey of Student Engagement metric for core curriculum skills. The [SRSU Student Achievement webpage](#) can be easily accessed by SRSU students, faculty and staff, and by the public.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

[Student Achievement webpage](#)

