



**Enhance, Engage, Excel:
Changing the Retention Paradigm
at Life University**

A Quality Enhancement Plan

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I. Executive Summary

Enhance, Engage, Excel: Changing the Retention Paradigm at Life University is designed to engage students in co-curricular and academic services to increase retention. To do so, the institution will **enhance** the tools and strategies it uses to identify and meet students' unique academic and co-curricular expectations, needs, and interests. Moreover, it will proactively seek to **engage** all students in opportunities and resources that foster a sense of belonging and connection to the University community. In doing so, the University will ensure current and future students **excel** in their journey at Life University.

The University identified the topic for its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) through an exhaustive examination of existing institutional data and initiatives tied to student success, as well as a thorough analysis of quantitative and qualitative data resulting from institution's strategic planning process. From this review, LIFE established three goals for **Enhance, Engage Excel**:

Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging for all students

Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources

Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus

To achieve these goals, the University will implement several broad activities aimed at promoting student belonging, including the development and promotion of campus-wide traditions and the establishment of a mentoring program. To increase student's engagement with academic and co-curricular resources, LIFE will use an early alert process designed to monitor students' progress and alert faculty and staff when a student is experiencing difficulty in a course or in the campus community. The University will also monitor student participation in and use of academic and co-curricular resources and implement strategies to engage non-involved and at-risk students. Lastly, the University will centralize these initiatives under a cross-functional team and implement processes, including a retention data governance program, designed to improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused initiatives.

To measure the success of **Enhance, Engage, Excel**, Life University developed a comprehensive assessment plan to monitor the overall progress of the project and its planned outcomes. Assessment will be ongoing throughout the implementation of the QEP over the next five years, and the University will use the resulting data to continuously refine and improve the project and its associated strategies. Direct measures, including participation in co-curricular events and percentage of students receiving early alerts, will be assessed along with indirect measures, such as student satisfaction and engagement with the campus community. Additionally, LIFE will use two key performance indicators, retention and student engagement, and associated assessments to monitor progress toward the overall goal of the plan.

Life University's mission is to empower each student with the education, skills, and values to maximize the perfection within, based upon a vitalistic philosophy. In promoting this mission, LIFE University seeks to provide each student with a life-changing experience; one that allows them to achieve optimum personal performance and the wisdom to become transformational leaders in an increasingly diverse, global, and dynamic world. The University's QEP supports LIFE's mission by building a retention paradigm that supports and meets each student's academic or co-curricular needs and contributes to their ongoing success during their transformative journey at Life University.

II. Institutional Overview

Life University is a private, not for profit educational institution, founded as a College of Chiropractic in 1974 by a group of prominent and influential chiropractors, including Dr. Sid Williams, who would become its first president. The college was founded on two main principles:

Lasting Purpose: To Give, To Do, To Love, To Serve – Out of a Sense of Abundance
Vitalism: The understanding and respect for the innate intelligence in all living organisms giving them the ability to be conscious, self-developing, self-maintaining and self-healing.

The University has been accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since 1986. Additionally, its College of Chiropractic has been accredited by the Council on Chiropractic Education since 1985 and the College of Undergraduate Studies Dietetics' program has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetic Education since 2005.

Located in Marietta, Georgia and just 14 miles from downtown Atlanta, the University has the distinction of being Georgia's only accredited chiropractic college and boasts degree programs in the fields of biology, business administration, computer information management, life coaching, nutrition, psychology, sport health science, human ecology, and healthcare continuing education programs. The University offers a student to faculty ratio of 16:1. Of LIFE's 2,736 currently enrolled students, 888 are undergraduate, while 1,848 are pursuing graduate or professional degrees. The University also enjoys a diverse student body with a wide range of ages and ethnicities, and more than 50 countries are represented by our international students.

From its founding in 1974 as a college of chiropractic, Life University has embraced the idea that humans are spiritual beings whose lives are directed by universal laws including the natural, vitalistic, innate ability to develop, heal and adapt as long as the body is kept free of interferences. The approach has been to graduate highly skilled chiropractors who can correct those interferences and can educate their patients to accept responsibility for their own good health. Today that vision of Life University is sustained in its chiropractic, undergraduate, and master's degree programs, each one committed to excellence in teaching, learning, research and the overall student experience - offer a vision and the promise for a meaningful life, the proficiencies necessary to achieve optimum personal performance and the wisdom to become transformational leaders in an increasingly diverse, global and dynamic world.

Mission

The mission of Life University is to empower each student with the education, skills and values to maximize the perfection within, based upon a vitalistic philosophy. Life University is committed to a global vision and excellence in teaching, learning and research, providing an exceptional student experience leading to a life of Integrity and Lasting Purpose.

Strategic Plan

In support of its mission, Life University recently established the following priorities as part of its 2040 Strategic Plan:

- Institute Transformational Organizational Practices
- Strengthen Embodiment of our Values
- Provide World Class Academic Programs
- Create an Exceptional Student Experience
- Achieve and Maintain Financial Health
- Expand LIFE's Influence in the Chiropractic Profession
- Create and Execute a Formidable Research Program

III. Process to Develop

At a campus-wide professional development event in early 2019, Dr. Rob Scott, President of Life University (LIFE), announced the start of the University's reaffirmation process and shared that development of the school's next QEP would start later in the year. As part of his update, he noted that the upcoming QEP would focus on promoting student success at LIFE by pursuing topics related to improving student retention. The University's decision to limit the scope of potential topics for the QEP, he shared, supported the LIFE's ongoing efforts to improve student retention and completion rates.

Retention and Completion Rates

As with many higher education institutions, undergraduate student retention represents a significant challenge for Life University. Based on data reported to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System between 2014 and 2018 the year one to year two retention rate for full-time, first-time undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies (CGUS) at LIFE averaged 64% (Table 1). The retention rate was similar (65%) for all new undergraduates during the same time period as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Year 1 to Year 2 Retention Rates for Undergraduate Students

	Cohort (fall quarter)					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average
Year 1 to Year 2 Retention	62%	74%	59%	62%	65%	64%

	Cohort (fall quarter)					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average
Year 1 to Year 2 Retention	66%	67%	60%	67%	65%	65%

Low undergraduate retention rates at LIFE have adversely affected the completion rates of both full-time, first-time freshmen and new undergraduates. The four-year graduation rate (100% of time) for first time, full-time students who entered the University in the fall quarter between 2010-2014 averaged 12%, while the graduation rate for all undergraduates averaged just 27% (Table 2). The six-year graduation rate (150% of time) increased to 25% for first time, full-time undergraduates, and to 40% for all undergraduates (Table 3). At 200% of time, the graduation rate for first time, full-time students increased to 33% and for all undergraduate students the rate was 40% (Table 4).

Table 2: Graduation Rate (100% of time) for Undergraduate Students

	Cohort (fall quarter)					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Average
First Time Full-Time	13%	10%	17%	12%	8%	12%
All Undergraduates	27%	28%	22%	20%	38%	27%

Table 3: Graduation Rate (150% of time) for Undergraduate Students

	Cohort (fall quarter)					Average
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
First Time Full-Time	20%	28%	18%	33%	28%	25%
All Undergraduates	45%	38%	42%	39%	37%	40%

Table 4: Graduation Rate (200% of time) for all Undergraduate Students

	Cohort (fall quarter)					Average
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
First Time Full-Time	40%	24%	35%	23%	40%	33%
All Undergraduates	44%	50%	42%	45%	42%	45%

Retention and completion rates for graduate students at LIFE are also lower than desired. The year one to year two retention rate averaged just 59% for graduate students who entered LIFE between 2014 and 2017 (Table 5). The two-year graduation rate (100% of time) for graduate students averaged just 33% (100% of time) (Table 6) and the three-year graduation rate (150% of time) increased to 37% (Table 7).

Table 5: Year 1 to Year 2 Retention Rates for Graduate Students

	Cohort (all quarters)					Average
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Year 1 to Year 2 Retention	41%	71%	52%	68%	61%	59%

Table 6: Graduation Rates (100% of time, 8 quarters) for Graduate Students

	Cohort (all quarters)					Average
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Graduate Students	28%	24%	41%	30%	40%	33%

Table 7: Graduation Rates (150% of time, 12 quarters) for Graduate Students

	Cohort (Fall quarters)					Average
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Graduate Students	35%	30%	49%	30%	40%	37%

While retention rates for students in the Doctor of Chiropractic Program (DCP) have been consistently higher than those of undergraduate and graduate students (Table 8), completion rates for the program posed a challenge for the University. In 2019, the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE), the program's accreditor, placed the DCP on probation for failing to maintain the required program completion rate of 70% within 150% of program duration. To address retention and completion rates, LIFE engaged in a variety of actions aimed at improving DCP student success. As a result, completion rates (150% of time) for students who entered the institution in 2016 increased to 84% (Table 9).

Table 8. Year 1 to Year 2 Retention Rates for DCP Students

	Cohort (all quarters)					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Average
Year 1 to Year 2 Retention	79%	80%	78%	90%	93%	84%

Table 9: Completion Rate (150% of time) for DCP Students

	Cohort (all quarters)					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Average
DCP Students	72%	76%	78%	74%	84%	77%

As demonstrated by the data provided above, retention and completion rates, especially in the undergraduate and graduate programs, represented a significant challenge for Life University and its students at the onset of planning for the LIFE's next QEP.

Formation of the QEP Management Team

In September 2019, the University appointed a QEP Management Team charged with designing, implementing, and managing a QEP designed to build upon existing student success initiatives and centered on improving student retention. The team, composed of faculty and staff representing a variety of expertise from across the University (Appendix A), began its work by reviewing SACSCOC guidelines and expectations for developing and implementing a QEP. The team also discussed potential steps it could take to select a topic focused on promoting student retention. As a first step, the team engaged in an examination of existing institutional data tied to student retention, as well as a review of current institutional initiatives focused on student success. These efforts were followed by a careful assessment of broad-based feedback provided by the LIFE community through the University's strategic planning process.

Review of Institutional Assessment Data

The QEP Management Team began by reviewing data from the University's ongoing planning and evaluation process. Annually, Life University students participate in a student satisfaction survey designed to measure their perceptions of the quality of service they encounter at the University. On the survey, students rank items on both their importance to the student and their level of satisfaction. Using this data, the University conducts a gap analysis to track its progress in meeting students' expectations. The QEP Management Team reviewed data from surveys conducted from 2017-2019 to better understand areas that may be affecting student retention. In its review, the team identified the following themes:

The University is not meeting most students' expectations as it relates to their experiences on campus.

For the three-year period examined, the team found a large disparity between the importance students place on their expectations for campus experiences and how successful LIFE has been in meeting those expectations. In the surveys, 82% of students assigned a high level of importance to their experiences on campus, while just 45% believed the University had been successful in meeting their expectations for those experiences. Moreover, only 52% felt the support they received on campus had

contributed to creating a student-centered environment, and just over 59% reported satisfaction with feeling a sense of belonging at LIFE. When asked if they would choose Life University again if starting their education over, only 53% of students indicated yes.

A review of students' comments on the surveys reveals specific issues that may be affecting their perception of campus experiences. Many students suggested there is a sense of disconnection in undergraduate students, as they feel the University gives preferential treatment to those enrolled in the DCP.

Students report dissatisfaction in their relationships with faculty members.

The team's analysis revealed large discrepancies between importance and satisfaction ratings for items related to faculty engagement. In the period examined, 88% of students placed high importance on relationships with faculty members, with only 57% feeling there was good rapport between instructors and students. Not surprisingly, students placed the highest importance (91%) on faculty members concern for their academic success. This item had one of the largest discrepancies between importance and satisfaction for the period examined (33.7%) with just 57% of students reporting satisfaction with faculty members' concern for their academic progress.

The University's faculty and staff need to improve their efforts to serve and support its students.

On the survey, students provide feedback on the quality of the service and support they encounter at LIFE by assessing employees' practice of the University's guiding principle, Serving Lasting Purpose (SLP). This principle is based on the idea that service to your community and fellow peers is just as important as academic pursuits. Life University encourages each employee to practice this principle in their daily work by demonstrating four core customer-service behaviors: an attitude of helpfulness, a willingness to manage to the best solution available, showing a commitment to building relationships, and creating a service environment that is user friendly.

In analyzing data from the survey, the team found that faculty and staff have room for improvement in their use of SLP in their support of students. For the three-year period, just 59% of students agreed when asked if they had observed faculty and staff engaged in aspects of SLP on campus. Of the four core behaviors, students observed faculty and staff demonstrating an attitude of helpfulness (64%) and creating a service environment that is user friendly (60%) the most. They reported fewer observances of employees showing a commitment to building relationships (57%) or practicing a willingness to manage to the best solution (56%).

Review of Institutional Initiatives Tied to Student Success

To ensure potential QEP topics built upon existing student success programs, the team reviewed plans, data, and findings from existing Life University initiatives focused on student

success, including the University's work with the Gardner Institute and the DCP Completion Project.

Gardner Institute

In early 2019, LIFE partnered with the Gardner Institute, a non-profit organization that works with institutions to address issues related to teaching, learning, retention, and completion. Through that partnership, the University is participating in the institute's Retention Performance Management (RPM) program. This taskforce-based process engaged Life University faculty and staff working on academic and co-curricular teams. These teams were guided by Gardner's student success experts in the development and execution of an evidence-based plan for improving undergraduate student retention and completion rates. To ensure this process would inform the development of the University's QEP, several members of the QEP Management Team served on the teams participating in the RPM. The QEP director met regularly with the University's RPM liaisons, Dr. Jana Holwick, Dean of CGUS, and Dr. Janna Bredeson, Dean of Students, to discuss overall progress and findings.

Retention Performance Management

Staff from the Gardner Institute introduced the RPM process to LIFE employees during a University-wide professional development program in Summer 2019. As part of the presentation, LIFE faculty and staff participated in focus groups and provided feedback on potential opportunities the University could leverage to improve student retention in both the College of Chiropractic (CoC) and CGUS (Appendix B). The QEP Management Team reviewed results from the focus groups and identified the following themes:

Faculty and staff need to build better relationships with students.

Participants noted several areas tied to improving faculty and staff members' relationships with students, including being consistent in communications with students, taking the time to meet with those who are vulnerable and stressed, acknowledging cultural and language barriers, empowering students when they ask questions, and speaking to students in their own environment.

Faculty and staff need to provide better service and support.

Participants noted a need for LIFE to provide better customer service. Areas that were identified as opportunities for improvement included: faculty and staff knowledge and familiarity with other areas of campus, expressing empathy and compassion for students, working to anticipate students' needs, and following up with students to ensure their needs are met. Participants identified several opportunities for the University to provide better academic support to students, including implementing a mentoring program designed to prepare students for post-collegiate life, implementing a process for identifying at-risk students, providing professional development for faculty and staff, and implementing high-impact practices in daily work.

Retention Analytics Inventory

As part of school's work with the RPM, the University's institutional research team compiled nine years of data for the Retention Analytics Inventory (RAI). This inventory includes historic retention and completion data disaggregated into various demographic categories: ethnicity/race, gender, age, first-generation status, veteran status, student athlete status, need-based aid receipt, merit-based aid receipt, state/country of origin, resident hall status, major, conditional admissions status, remedial status, prior credits, high school origin, high school GPA, and previous college enrollment. The inventory also includes information on student performance in high-enrollment courses and on the effectiveness of existing retention efforts and student support services. As a rich source of retention and completion-related data, the QEP Management Team conducted an extensive review of the RAI to identify key issues or themes. In its review, the team found the following items:

Students leave the undergraduate program before earning a GPA.

In analyzing voluntary departure rates for undergraduate students who began their first year at Life University in fall 2013, the team found that over 24% left the undergraduate program without a GPA (Appendix C). The team concluded that the students likely left early in the term and before they earned a GPA. Team members noted that the large number of early departures revealed a need for the institution to closely monitor student progress, especially during the first few weeks of the term. The team also found that a large number of students voluntarily leave the undergraduate program while in good academic standing. In reviewing retention rates for the cohort, nearly 19% of students with a GPA between 3.0-4.0 and 13% of students with a GPA between 2.0-2.99 voluntarily departed LIFE at the end of year one. In discussing potential reasons for the departures, the team noted that many students enroll in the undergraduate program to complete prerequisites for the Doctor of Chiropractic Program (DCP) and then move on to the DCP before earning an undergraduate degree.

First-generation students need more support.

The team found that the retention rate in years one and two for first-generation undergraduate students had fallen below that of non-first-generation students in recent years. For the fall 2016 term, the retention rate for students who identified as first-generation was 4% lower than that of their peers and it was 8% lower for the 2017 cohort (Appendix C). Given the number of first-generation students has increased in the past few years, the team concluded there is an opportunity to engender a sense of belonging and academic confidence among the students in this category

Non-traditional students need more support.

The retention rate for traditional students (age 22 and under) is higher than that of non-traditional students (age 23-30) who make up the University's second largest undergraduate population. Between 2013-2017, the year one and year two retention rate

averaged 61% for traditional age students and only 36% for non-traditional students (Appendix C). The team concluded that this discrepancy revealed a need for LIFE to examine its outreach and support for students who fall beyond the traditional college age.

Efforts with student athletes offer insight into what is working.

Team members found that the overall retention rate in year one and year two for student athletes was higher than the institutional aggregate for first-year students (Appendix C). In discussing factors that contribute to the higher retention rates for athletes, the team identified several potential causes, including the use of specialized academic support services for LIFE's athletes, and the fact that athletics are team-based and by their nature promote a sense of belonging to the University community. Members also noted that while the exact strategies used to support athletics may not be appropriate for first-generation or non-traditional students, their success did underscore the potential in developing differentiated strategies based on the unique needs of various populations.

Retention-related data processes need improvement.

In general, the team's analysis of the University's data in the RAI revealed a need for LIFE to improve its retention-related data processes in order to better illuminate issues impacting retention at the University. As an example, LIFE reported 5 retention programs and services on campus, but no data was captured regarding the number of students participating in the programs or on progress toward anticipated outcomes for the initiatives (Appendix C). Additionally, the team discovered in its review of institutional data that LIFE has not tracked high school GPA for incoming students, making it difficult to determine how a student's previous academic standing relates to their progress at Life University.

RPM Retreat

After gathering and analyzing retention-related data throughout 2019, members of academic and student services leadership, along with cross-departmental representatives from Life University and members of the QEP Management Team, met with the Gardner Institute representative, Dr. Stephanie Foote, for a two-day RPM retreat in March 2020. At the retreat, participants discussed findings from the analysis of the University's data and identified opportunities LIFE should pursue to improve student retention and completion rates. After the retreat, members of the QEP Team who participated in the event shared findings with those who did not attend. The findings included:

Life University needs to improve its value proposition to undergraduate students.

Participants noted an opportunity to improve Life University's value proposition for undergraduate students by providing additional career pathways and additional degree programs tied to those opportunities. The participants also considered

the undergraduate curriculum and concluded that it needs to be more flexible and responsive to local, regional, and national needs. Next, financial assistance emerged as a concern; it was determined that, with a large portion of the undergraduate student population falling into a needs-based funding category, the University should explore additional funded scholarships targeted at undergraduate students. Finally, participants identified a need to forge a unique undergraduate identity at Life University.

Institutional processes need improvement.

Retreat participants cited a quality of process concern and noted an opportunity for the University to better document and execute data collection processes as they relate to undergraduate students. These concerns spanned from the initial, pre-enrollment stage through graduation. In addition, data concerns emerged as a significant issue for the University across all departments. Participants concluded that departmental leaders are unsure of what they have, what they need, and what to do with data related to undergraduate students. To move forward the University needs to embrace the importance of gathering, analyzing, and communicating quality data to inform the decision-making process.

The University needs to break down institutional silos.

The final finding focused on a need for a culture shift within the Life University community. It was noted that, to move forward, the University needs a shift in culture away from siloed efforts and toward total engagement of all constituents and improved communications across all segments of the University.

DCP Completion Project

QEP Team Members also examined student success initiatives designed for Doctor of Chiropractic Program (DCP) students. In the past few years, the DCP had struggled to meet the Council on Chiropractic Education's (CCE) accreditation standard requiring institutions to demonstrate a two-year average completion rate of at least 70%, calculated at 150% of the time established for completion of the Doctor of Chiropractic degree. To address student retention and increase completion rates, the CoC initiated the DCP Completion Project in 2017. Through this project, the CoC implemented a variety of student success initiatives that have had a positive impact on both student retention and completion rates, including:

- **Administrative At-Risk Advisement (ARA)**

The CoC initiated the Administrative At-Risk Advisement (ARA) project as a targeted and high-impact way to immediately augment advising for students in need of additional assistance to progress through the program. The process was developed to address an identified gap in advising while the restructuring of University Advisement and Faculty Advisor training occurred. The DCP's first step was to determine that a student must

complete a minimum of 18 credit hours per quarter in order to complete the program within 21 quarters (150% of the time designated for completion of the degree).

- **Remediation and Retesting**

The CoC provides a variety of remediation and retesting opportunities for its students. The essence of remediation and retesting is based on the principles of competency-based education. The remediation and retesting process allows students the ability to have multiple opportunities to demonstrate competency of the course content and not be held to one or two high-stakes exams such as a mid-term and final. The process gives the faculty the ability to identify at-risk students and either provide them with the necessary resources or refer them to Academic Support Services for assistance.

The foundation of the remediation and retesting process provides that if a student fails a designated midterm summative examination and the student would like the opportunity to take a retest of the material, the student is required to meet individually with the primary instructor or a designated secondary instructor to review missed questions from the student's midterm examination; discuss the student's study habits or other issues related to the failed assessment; schedule the student for a group review session of the most missed questions on the midterm; schedule a time for the student to take the retest; and, participate in appropriate Supplemental Instruction (SI) session(s) that will complement the student's remediation and studying of the course material in preparation for the retest.

- **University Advisement**

The CoC re-engineered the structure and organization of the University Advisement Center (UAC) in early 2017, changing the advisement model from a decentralized to a more centralized one. The CoC now provides a model of advising which is a more centralized and high-touch approach; personnel delivering advising services are: Progressive Advising for Student Success (PASS) advisors, Specialized Professional Advisors (SPA) and Alternative Admissions Track (AAT) Success Coordinators, faculty advisors/mentors, and clinic advisors. PASS advisors are hired and trained with expertise in specific curricular content students are exposed to in quarters one through five. Then, as cohorts move through the curriculum, the CoC assigns DCP faculty advisors trained with expertise in the DCP curriculum to work with students specifically in quarters six through ten. Once the student reaches the clinical aspect of their DCP education, they are also assigned a clinic advisor to monitor and help navigate through the clinic system and to co-manage the student through the rest of their educational career to graduation.

Changes implemented in the UAC have allowed more direct student contact between advisor and student. Additionally, the changes increased the number and type of touchpoints with students, specifically students at risk, such as scheduling regular email and phone and in-person communications with students outside of regular advising appointments, which has also helped with first and second-year retention. Further, UAC changes have created a more seamless flow in advisor assignments and transition for students between the UAC and faculty advisors. Continuous relationship-building between the faculty advisors and the UAC along with increased and focused training of faculty has

also improved the consistency of information delivered to students and their understanding of the processes they must follow while assigned to either the UAC or a faculty member.

- **Academic Policies (DCP Progression Policy and Redefining of Academic Standing)**

To support progress through the program, the CoC has modified the DCP academic standing policies, which included the creation of the DCP Progression Policy and the redefining of Academic Standing, effective Fall 2018. The DCP Progression Policy, along with the other DCP completion projects, work together to help keep students from reaching the Academic Probation status so that they can stay on track in their progression through the program.

The CoC implemented the DCP Progression Policy as part of its comprehensive work to ensure that students are supported to progress through the program at a pace sufficient to graduate within 150% of normal time of completion. It originally required students to register for an average of 18 credit hours per quarter. It addressed DCP students who had completed 4, 8, and 12 quarters in residence to determine if they have successfully completed an average of 18 credit hours per quarters to complete the DCP within 150% of the time normally designated for completion of the degree.

- **DCP Pre-requisite Restructure**

CoC leadership reviewed the DCP pre-requisite structure and recognized that the number of pre-requisite courses required, as well as its complexity were unnecessarily creating progression obstacles thus slowing down students' progression through the program, with no evidence that the requirements were positively impacting student learning outcomes. CoC faculty and administration undertook the pre-requisite course review process in 2017 and 2018, resulting in a reduction of the number of required pre-requisite courses of 44.8% (270 down to 149).

- **Academic Support Services**

Academic Support Services has created processes to provide a more robust and intentional support for the DCP students. During the last three academic years, Academic Support Services has increased the number of Supplemental Instruction (SI) session offerings. The increase in sessions is based on feedback from students, advisors, and DCP faculty and administrators, and is designed to support retention and academic success in the first and second year of attendance. Finally, based on demand, course performance data, students' requests and referrals received, the Director of Academic Support has increased the number of sessions offered throughout the week for selected 1st-3rd quarter courses.

Academic Support Services and University Advisement collaborated to create a Referral Program/Early Action Warning System and Alternative Admissions Track and Contract Educational Workshops. In Winter 2019, the Early Action Warning System was implemented; this system allows advisors to be proactive, supportive, and involved in facilitating the academic components of student retention through early detection and intervention of students who are experiencing problems. The Academic Support Services

function will allow the College of Chiropractic faculty to be able to submit early action alerts to the Academic Support team. SSC Academic Support will also utilize Accademia's Referral Program option to help with this tracking. By using this option of the software, it will allow the advisors to provide a reason why the student is being referred. The administrator can create a list of services to be offered for the referred students under the staff portal.

While serving all students, Academic Support Services also provides support to minority student's success in the DCP. A new initiative created in Winter 2019 is the African American Leaders Pursuing Higher Achievement (AALPHA) program. The Academic Support Professional (ASP) hired to address the needs of the African American students created this initiative to focus on first-year retention and academic support for this special population. AALPHA assists with closing the gap in educational achievement by supporting improved retention and graduation rates for African American students.

- **Peer Mentoring**

The CoC also developed and implemented a formal peer mentor program to increase 1st year retention of all DCP students. This program utilizes the 1st quarter student's engagement and connectedness with the 8th quarter student's leadership and communication skills. The DCP pairs mentors from an 8th quarter Human Development course with mentees from a 1st quarter Osteology course. The 1st quarter and 8th quarter faculty member from each course work together to create the connection.

The STARS Peer Mentoring Program pairs a 5th quarter or above student mentor volunteer, with first- and second-quarter students during orientation and the first two weeks of each quarter. A table is set up at the first quarter student orientation along with information about the program. The 1st quarter students have an opportunity during orientation to sign up to be a mentee or if not, they can stop by Student Success Center to sign up later.

- **Minority Group Meetings**

The CoC created a focused initiative to expand its awareness of the specific challenges that minority students have in completing higher education programs. The Dean reaches out to minority students regularly to maintain open communication and address any issues or challenges that may hinder their academic success. She has held town hall meetings with minority students to express the CoC's support in a face-to-face setting, and to solicit their feedback related to their experiences in the program.

The Dean meets quarterly with the president of the Student American Black Chiropractic Association (SABCA), the president of Student Council, and the president of the Hispanic Club. These meetings have allowed the Dean to build a rapport with the organizations and keep a pulse on what is happening at the student level. As a result, more students are reaching out to the Dean, Associate Deans, and African American faculty within the DCP whenever issues arise, or they are in need of support or guidance.

The initiatives outlined above have been successful in promoting student retention. Before LIFE implemented the initiatives outlined above, the year one to year two retention rate for DCP

students averaged 79% (Table 10). After the University implemented the initiatives, the year one to year two average retention rate increased to 91.5% (Table 11).

Table 10: Year 1 to Year 2 Retention Rates for DCP Students (Pre-Student Success Initiatives)

	Cohort (all quarters)			
	2015	2016	2017	Average
DCP Students	79%	80%	78%	79%

Table 11: Year 1 to Year 2 Retention Rates for DCP Students (Post-Student Success Initiatives)

	Cohort (all quarters)		
	2018	2019	Average
DCP Students	90%	93%	91.5%

In reviewing the strategies implemented by the CoC, the QEP Management Team noted that the success of the programs likely stemmed from their focus on specific at-risk groups, including minorities, new students, and those not on track to finish within 150% of time. The CoC monitored those at-risk students, and when appropriate, engaged them in the use of resources and programs designed to help them with their individual needs, interests, or challenges. The team felt other students at LIFE, including undergraduates, would likely benefit from similar approaches.

Review of the 2040 Strategic Planning Process

Life University's QEP development process coincided with the creation of the University's new 2040 Strategic Plan. As the previous strategic plan was set to end in 2020, the University began efforts on its new plan in January 2019 by asking the LIFE University community to participate in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, a qualitative data collection method where participants identify internal and external factors impacting the organization's future. During the SWOT activity, LIFE University faculty, staff, students, alumni, and members of the Board of Trustees recorded internal attributes they considered to be strengths or weaknesses and noted external factors they felt represented potential opportunities or threats to the University's continued effectiveness and growth.

The QEP Management Team conducted an extensive review of the responses collected during the SWOT analysis as they provide insight into larger areas of concern for both Life University students and the Life University community at large. Since the responses from the participants were numerous and varied, the team organized them into categories based on the nature of the responses. The categories used for the analysis included: Campus, Culture, Academics, Athletics, Research, Financial/Marketing, Employment, and Administration. The team tabulated the results to identify which categories had the highest percentage of responses for each area of the analysis, and then examined the feedback provided by participants for those categories. The team identified the following themes from its analysis of the participants' feedback:

Strengths

- Diversity of the student body, faculty, and staff.
- Dedication of LIFE U faculty and staff
- Diversity of chiropractic techniques offered
- LIFE Leadership Weekend (a recruiting event for CoC)

Weaknesses

- Limited focus and attention on undergraduate and graduate students
- Undergraduate students are not encouraged to be involved
- Division between the CoC, the CGUS, and athletics.
- Low graduation rates
- Lack of effort focused on retention

Opportunities

- Create international internships for chiropractic students
- Establish programs for undergraduates with local area schools
- Create internships and partnerships with local businesses
- Create connections between chiropractic and other health care providers

Threats

- Limited marketing efforts dedicated to graduate and undergraduate students
- Rising cost of education
- Rising student debt
- A lack of focus on the undergraduate and graduate programs at LIFE
- Competition posed by local colleges and universities

In discussing its findings, the QEP Management Team noted several of the themes it identified paralleled those found in the Student Satisfaction Survey, including a belief that the University does not dedicate sufficient effort to its undergraduate students.

IV. Identification of Topic

To identify a topic for LIFE University's plan, the QEP Management team conducted an exhaustive examination of existing institutional data and initiatives tied to student success. The team also examined quantitative and qualitative data resulting from institution's strategic planning process. Through its review, the team identified an overarching objective, goals, and areas of need for the University to address through its QEP:

Overarching Objective: Engage students in co-curricular and academic services to increase retention.

Goal 1: *Foster a sense of belonging and community among all students*

Areas of need:

- Students, especially undergraduates, need additional opportunities to connect and integrate with the University community and culture.
- Students need opportunities to build meaningful relationships with peers, faculty, and staff.
- Faculty members need to engage with students outside the classroom.

Goal 2: *Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources*

Areas of need:

- The University must be proactive in identifying and helping students who may be at risk of leaving the institution.
- The University needs to implement strategies designed to identify and support students' unique academic and co-curricular needs and interests.

Goal 3: *Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus*

Areas of need:

- Retention-focused efforts need to be managed through a central entity, such as a leadership position or committee.
- A systematic process is needed for the ongoing collection and management of retention-related data.
- The University must identify essential retention-related data points and take steps to ensure that information is being collected.

The team selected **Enhance, Engage, Excel: Changing the Retention Paradigm at Life University** as the topic for the institution's QEP. In pursuing the overarching objective and goals of the plan, LIFE seeks to transform the retention paradigm at LIFE University. Through this student-success oriented lens, the University will continuously *enhance* the tools and

strategies it uses to identify and meet students' unique academic and co-curricular expectations, needs, and interests. In doing so, it will successfully *engage* all students in opportunities and resources that foster a sense of belonging and connection to the University community. As a result of these efforts, current and future students will *excel* throughout their journey at Life University.

V. Literature Review and Best Practices

The QEP Management Team conducted a literature review to identify best practices relevant to addressing the topics, goals, and areas of need identified through its review of institutional data and initiatives. While the team reviewed numerous research-based practices capable of addressing student retention, members felt the ones discussed below, organized by goal, fit best with the specific needs of the University and its students.

Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging and community among all students

Campus Traditions

Research in student persistence confirms that a key factor in students' successful transition into their institution is the degree to which they form meaningful relationships with peers, staff, and faculty (Tinto, 1987). These relationships within the institution can be cultivated through a variety of areas within the academic and social systems of college, including, but not limited to classrooms, residence halls, student support services, campus activities, and student organizations (Tinto, 1987). When students develop relationships with at least one person at their institution, they are more likely to report a sense of belonging in college and persist to degree completion (O'Keefe, 2013). In analyzing the work of Bollen and Hoyle (1990) on group cohesion, Esau Tovar (2013) described belonging in the college environment as an "individual's sense of identification or positioning in relation to a group within or to the college community that may yield cognitive and affective responses" (p. 35). Tovar has also drawn a link between a sense of belonging and an individual's feelings of being "a part of something greater" than themselves (p. 35).

In contrast, a large contributing factor to student attrition is individual isolation. Students who do not find a sense of belonging within the campus community are more likely to experience isolation and pursue voluntary departure from their enrolled institution (Tinto, 1987). Often, students who experience isolation in college have not had enough contact with peers, staff, and/or faculty that enables them to establish a sense of social and academic membership within the institution (Tinto, 1987). In fact, in drawing from the works of Pascarella and Terenzini (1979), Tinto reported that even beyond background, personality, and academic performance, a lack of contact with other members of the institution is the "single most important predictor of eventual departure" from college (p. 56). Therefore, it is essential that institutions cultivate an environment in which students can form relationships with other individuals at their enrolled institution.

In order to facilitate students' sense of belonging in college and prevent students from experiencing isolation, it is advantageous to encourage student involvement within the campus community. Alexander Astin (1984) defines involvement as the "amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (p. 518). Student involvement can take many forms within the academic and social systems of college, all of which can contribute to a student's identification with their college and subsequently, their sense of belonging (Astin, 1984; Tinto, 1987).

A notable conduit for increasing student involvement and initiating peer-to-peer interaction is the implementation and practice of campus traditions in college. Traditions and rituals create symbols and instill institution-specific values that allow students to participate in structured experiences and identify with their campus community (Kuh et al., 2005). Further, traditions help to establish a recognizable campus culture that can be easily communicated and shared among students, staff, and faculty. The concept of belonging is emphasized with the repetition of traditions, therefore increasing students' commitment to graduating from their institution (Kuh et al., 2005). As such, it is imperative that institutions find ways to develop and implement traditions as part of their campus culture.

Mentoring

Tinto's (1975) model of student retention explains that the transition into higher education is a critical time to make an impression on students and integrate them into the university, both academically and socially. The stronger the academic and social integration, the less likely the student will voluntarily withdraw (Tinto, 1975). Research shows that mentoring can be effective at promoting integration and increasing retention because it forms bridges for students between home life and university, and connection with peers, faculty, and staff. According to a study done by R. Collings, V. Swanson, and R. Watkins (2014), students who participated in mentoring reported higher levels of integration into the university and were less likely to consider leaving the institution than their non-mentored peers.

Mentoring is especially useful at helping at-risk students navigate what is called the hidden curriculum in higher education. Emile Durkheim first introduced the concept of hidden curriculum, which consists of the unspoken "values, dispositions, social and behavioral expectations" that allow students to succeed (as cited in Smith, 2013, p. 59). As Smith notes, low-income students, first-generation students, and underrepresented minorities often have limited exposure to the norms, values, and expectations that guide formal and informal interactions among students, faculty, and staff. As an example, a student who was brought up in a household with parents, relatives, or friends in positions of public authority may feel more comfortable approaching a professor than someone whose parents worked minimum wage jobs (Smith, 2013, p. 59). A mentorship program can be utilized to guide students who may not start off at the same point, or with the same resources, and help them achieve the same success that more privileged students can achieve.

To be effective, Smith (2013) recommends a three-cycle mentoring model consisting of advising, advocacy, and apprenticeship phases. Through this approach, a mentor would advise (tell students the information), advocate (motivate and connect students with resources) and finally foster apprenticeship (empower and show students how to navigate issues themselves) (Smith, 2013, p. 62). This three-pronged approach creates the symbiotic relationship needed for a student to feel integrated into the university culture. Smith also suggests that students work with mentors from different university populations, including faculty, staff, and peers. Each of these mentors, Smith argues, provides a student with different insights needed to navigate an institution's hidden curriculum.

As other authors noted, faculty play an especially crucial role in mentoring. Campbell and Campbell (2000) found, for example, that faculty mentoring is significantly related to students' academic performance as well as students' decision to persist during their first year.

As Colalillo (2007) noted, "Faculty have the ability to influence student success through behaviors that are psychologically supportive, such as caring, encouraging, demonstrating interest, and listening, or through functionally supportive behaviors such as problem solving, planning, communicating expectations, providing feedback, and modeling behavior" (p. 28-29). As noted by these researchers, faculty involvement is essential for a successful mentoring program.

Institutions must be mindful of potential roadblocks and best practices when implementing a mentoring program. For example, it is important to make a mentoring program accessible to all students, as at-risk students are likely to feel stigmatized if they are the only students enrolled in the program. Alternatively, if all students have access, a mentoring program can "level the playing field" for both students identified as at-risk, as well as students who may not have any of the characteristics that indicate risk of failing (Smith, 2013, p.144). St. Clair (1994) identified some features of successful faculty-to-faculty mentorship programs that can be applied to more general mentorship programs. The program must be structured with clear expectations for mentors and mentees, and participation should be voluntary. There must be a specific individual or department responsible for administration, and St. Clair suggests including an incentive for mentor participation. Lastly, as Penner notes, there must be a system for assessment to monitor progress and satisfaction of all members involved (2001). Smith also recommends that an institution develop a mentoring curriculum and create a mentoring handbook with program guidelines, expectations, and resources such as conversation scripts and information about hidden curriculum. Some hidden topics that she recommends mentors discuss during sessions are "faculty/student relationships, classroom conduct/etiquette, strategies for forming peer study groups, time management, note taking/study skills, and racial and social class climate issues" (Smith, 2013, p. 102).

Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources

Early Warning Systems

A student's academic success, especially between the first and second year of college, is impacted by their level of engagement in educationally purposeful activities at an institution. (Kuh et al., 2008). While a variety of effective engagement strategies exists, researchers suggest effective educational practices such as early warning systems and intrusive advising can lead to greater student engagement, satisfaction, and persistence. Kuh et al. suggest students benefit the most from these approaches when the interventions are early, "interconnected," "customized to meet the needs of students," and provide "sustained attention at key transition points" (p. 555-556). In using intervention strategies that include these characteristics, faculty and staff can clarify institutional values and expectations for students and help foster a culture of student success. (Kuh et al.).

Effective early warning systems are “proactive” approaches that “provide the institution and...the student [with] an early indication of difficulty” (Tinto, 1993, p. 170). As researchers note, this “prompt feedback to students and to those who can assist” them is critical to promoting student retention and success. (Tinto, 1993, p. 171). Tinto (2012) suggests that “an environment rich in assessment of students’ performance and in feedback of information about student performance to students, faculty, and staff” is an important condition for student success (p. 54). Feedback is especially important as it provides students, faculty, and staff with the information they need to adjust their behaviors in support of student success. In this type of learning environment students become more involved in their learning and seek to improve their learning strategies and habits (Tinto, 2012, p. 54). The feedback is particularly beneficial for students when it reveals a disparity between what the student thinks about their performance and what the feedback tells them about their performance. This cognitive dissonance can result in significant changes in student behavior. This is especially important during a student’s first year, a time when they are likely adjusting to new academic and social realities (Tinto, 2012, p. 54). As Dwyer et al. (2019) found, an early warning system can have a substantial positive impact for students when it is integrated as a student success strategy for students taking developmental courses.

Researchers have found that the feedback provided by faculty through early warning systems can influence student engagement and expectations. One study of college students who received an academic early warning reported that the notices were effective in motivating students to engage in actions intended to improve their performance in the classroom. Over 60% of students who responded to a survey reported that the notice had been a “wake-up’ call for me to do something” and more than a fifth of respondents indicated they thought they had been doing fine in the course before receiving the notice (Eimers, 2000, p. 9). In a second study of students who received an early warning for excessive absenteeism, researchers found that nearly half of the students who responded when contacted by their advisors passed their courses. Students indicated they were surprised to learn that their attendance was being monitored and that “someone cared enough to contact them and offer guidance and assistance.” (Hudson, 2005, p. 222, 225). Researchers concluded that the early warning and associated intervention “were instrumental in indicating to students the importance of attending class” and likely “reduced the number of students who would have dropped, or failed courses due to a lack of attendance.” (Hudson, 2005, p. 217, 224-225).

Predictive Analytics

The need to improve student retention, student completion metrics and bring more certainty to financial forecasts have led higher education institutions to invest in predictive analytics to better understand completion factors impacting student persistence and completion (Miller & Bell, 2016). According to Baneres, Rodriguez-Gonzalez, & Serra (2019) the current learning management systems collect a wealth of information that can be leveraged for early identification of both online and blended students at risk. When this information is integrated into an early warning system and joined with dashboard visualization tools for stakeholders, it can form an early feedback prediction system that is useful for early identification of at-risk behaviors and the implementation of related interventions (Baneres et al., 2019). More

importantly, analysis of data resulting from this system can guide the institution in developing data-driven strategies capable of supporting current and future students' unique academic and co-curricular needs and interests.

Carmichael et al. (2016) found significant improvements in letter grade and course pass rate over time for high-risk student populations when data driven interventions and assessment techniques are used in retention improvement. In another study, researchers found that monitoring academic data throughout the first-year improved prediction accuracy and identified students who are at risk early (Ortiz-Lozano et al., 2008). Some institutions have expanded their data sets and adopted the use of algorithms to identify at-risk students by incorporating “demographic and personal information and past behaviors with real-time class behaviors and performance.” (Tinto, 2012, p. 60). Purdue University, through its Signals for Student Success Program, uses technology and a “student-success algorithm” to assign students to risk groups. The program allows the institution to monitor students in real-time and provide feedback to students, faculty, and staff early in the term (Tinto, 2012, p. 60). One institution has reported a predictive accuracy of over 70% and has used data from its program to develop and refine intervention strategies (Tinto, 2012, p. 60).

Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus

Centrally aligned initiatives and processes

In *Completing College: Rethinking Institutional Action*, Tinto (2012) suggests many institutions fail to improve student retention because they “treat it as one more item to add to the list of issues to be addressed” (p. 115). The problem, Tinto indicates, is that institutions often implement numerous strategies aimed at addressing student retention, but rarely do they engage in a systematic approach that seeks to consider how these approaches are organized and aligned to one another. Afflicted by “programitis,” these institutions “invest in many programs in the hope that doing so will somehow translate to sizable gains in retention” (Tinto, p. 116). Additionally, institutions often place a single individual, such as a retention coordinator, in charge of retention-related efforts, but fail to provide the individual with the time, authority, and resources required to make programmatic and policy changes. Researchers investigating retention efforts at four-year institutions found 60% of institutions surveyed relied on a retention coordinator, with just one-third working full-time in their roles, and most were given limited to no authority to oversee initiatives or implement new programs. (Tinto, p. 105)

The institutions that are most effective in addressing student retention, according to Tinto (2012), are those that are “intentional, structured, and proactive in their pursuit of student success” (p. 103). To do this, institutions must organize for success by aligning institutional actions “so that those actions and the persons and offices responsible for them work together in a coherent manner” (Tinto, p. 104). Tinto recommends institutions organize their actions under a cross-functional team of faculty, staff, and administrators whose efforts impact student success. Teams are preferable as they promote “alignment and interconnectedness” among “representatives from all areas of a college whose actions impact student success.” (Tinto, p.

105). Tinto also recommends teams be given the authority to initiate actions designed to facilitate and promote the work of others on campus by providing incentives and resources. As Tinto notes, “faculty and staff will support what they create, not necessarily what others create for them.” (p. 121).

Tinto suggests another important role of cross-functional teams is to direct research and assessment activities tied to student retention (2012). Seymour (1990) argued that in order for an institution to solve its problems it must understand the underlying issues affecting the campus community and work continuously to improve the process. While universities often collect enormous amounts of data in support of this need, most fail to utilize it effectively in their decision-making process because efforts are not coordinated or aligned. In other situations, the data needed to assess the effectiveness of retention-related efforts is never collected. Cross-functional teams are uniquely positioned to overcome these challenges in that they centrally align the individuals and departments responsible for implementing and assessing retention-related efforts. Working together, these individuals can undertake a variety of aligned, assessment-related actions designed to improve retention efforts, including: “construct[ing] a detailed inventory of actions on campus directed toward student success, oversee[ing] the assessment of those actions, serv[ing] as a center for sharing information about student success and actions that can be taken to enhance it” (Tinto, 2012, p. 105).

Another action cross-functional teams can take to improve assessment efforts is to develop a systematic process for the collection and use of retention-related data. According to the National Commission on Accountability in Higher Education (2005), systematic processes are needed as they improve performance and accountability by providing stakeholders with real time information in a consumable format for decision making. Effective processes should include a data governance philosophy focused on data centralization, identifying individuals responsible for collecting and managing data, investment in technology to automate reporting, democratizing and communicating the reported evidence, and strategically utilizing predictive analytics (Sudha, 2015). Through the use of cross-functional teams and the implementation of effective processes, institutions are better positioned to effectively manage retention-related data, readily assess the effectiveness of retention-related activities, and quickly develop plans for improving those efforts.

VI. Goals and Outcomes

Using the results from the literature review, the QEP Management Team established outcomes and associated broad activities for each of the goals it identified through the analysis of institutional data and initiatives. Through these goals, outcomes, and broad activities, the University will achieve the overarching objective of LIFE's QEP, which is to engage students in co-curricular and academic services to increase retention.

Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging and community among all students

Outcome 1.1: Students will develop a sense of belonging by engaging in campus traditions.

Outcome 1.2: Students will develop influential and ongoing relationships with faculty and staff.

Broad Activities:

- Design and implement a campus-wide campaign to establish Life University traditions
- Develop and implement a mentoring program to provide students opportunities to develop influential and ongoing relationships with faculty, staff, and peers.

Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources

Outcome 2.1: Faculty and staff will use strategies and tools that contribute to students' academic success.

Outcome 2.2: Students will participate in co-curricular activities that promote engagement with the University community.

Broad Activities:

- Identify, track, and assist at-risk students.
- Create and implement strategies to engage non-involved and at-risk students.

Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus

Outcome 3.1: Faculty and staff will use an assessment process designed to promote the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making regarding programs, strategies, and services related to student engagement and retention.

Outcome 3.2: Faculty and staff will participate in training and development programs to advance their understanding and use of tools and strategies designed to improve the coordination and management of retention-related data.

Broad Activities:

- Establish, monitor, and assess processes for the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making regarding programs/strategies/services related to student engagement and retention.
- Develop and deliver training and resources for faculty and staff using tools and strategies designed to improve coordination and management of retention-related data.

Life University's mission is to empower each student with the education, skills, and values to maximize the perfection within, based upon a vitalistic philosophy. In promoting this mission, LIFE University seeks to provide each student with a life-changing experience; one that allows them to achieve optimum personal performance and the wisdom to become transformational leaders in an increasingly diverse, global, and dynamic world. The University's QEP supports LIFE's mission by building a retention paradigm that supports and meets each student's academic or co-curricular needs and contributes to their ongoing success during their transformative journey at Life University.

VII. Actions to be Implemented

Using the outcomes and broad activities developed through the review of literature and best practices, the QEP Management Team identified the actions required to achieve the goals established for **Enhance, Engage, Excel**. The actions and associated timelines are included below, organized by goal.

Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging and community among all students

Outcome 1.1: Students will develop a sense of belonging by engaging in campus traditions.

Broad Activity: Design and implement a campus-wide campaign to establish and promote Life University traditions that facilitate a sense of belonging among students.

Life University is committed to fostering a sense of belonging and community among all students. In support of this goal, the University will design and implement a campus-wide campaign called Eagle Pride to establish and promote Life University traditions. The Eagle Pride Team, a subcommittee of the Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC) and composed of members from key areas across the University, will design, coordinate, and assess efforts associated with the campaign.

During the winter and spring quarters of year zero, the team will compile a database of current and past Life University traditions. For the purposes of the campaign, traditions are defined as activities or events that are repetitive in nature, unique to Life University, and exist to create a sense of unity and pride among the campus community. The team will examine the University archives and conduct interviews with departments and groups across campus to identify traditions that are past or current practices and assess their overall effectiveness. Once the database is compiled, the team will survey the University community to determine the level of familiarity and satisfaction with existing and past traditions, and to solicit suggestions for improving and expanding campus traditions.

During the summer quarter of year one, the team will analyze information and data from past and current Life University traditions and develop several strategies for implementing practices and traditions that will become the foundation of the Eagle Pride campaign. The team will create a comprehensive outline for each strategy, including action items and timelines for implementation. Once complete, the team will coordinate with the marketing department during the fall quarter of year one to develop a plan for promoting the overall Eagle Pride campaign and each of its associated strategies. While the campaign will be marketed to all students, the team will identify several strategies designed specifically for promoting incoming undergraduate students' participation in campus traditions associated with the Eagle Pride initiative. As part of the overall promotional plan, the committee will select quarterly campus-wide events (i.e., athletic events, student affairs events, etc.) to be designated as Eagle Pride events. At these events, the team will implement actions and incentives designed to promote students'

engagement with various Life University traditions. The University will use card readers and/or event check-in apps connected to Campus Labs Engage, LIFE's student engagement platform, to track attendance at these events. The University will also use the Engage platform to inform students of upcoming, Eagle Pride designated events and notate those events on the platform's main page.

The University will formally introduce the Eagle Pride campaign during the winter quarter of year one and begin implementing the program in the spring quarter. The team will introduce the Eagle Pride campaign to faculty and staff during a campus-wide professional development event at the start of the winter quarter. In addition to fostering cross-division knowledge and support of the initiative, the introduction will inform employees about upcoming presentations they will be required to attend. After the event, the team will coordinate with the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students to deliver a required presentation to all Student Affairs division employees as they will be expected to play an active role in sharing Eagle Pride events and traditions with students. During the presentation, the team will share the core strategies of the campaign and discuss upcoming events and expectations for participation by student affairs employees. A recording of the presentation will be made available to those who were unable to participate. Following the session, staff members responsible for new student orientation will deliver a similar presentation to student orientation leaders (OLs). This presentation will prepare OLs to communicate Eagle Pride strategies to incoming students at upcoming orientation sessions, starting with the spring quarter in year one.

The team will continue to implement Eagle Pride strategies throughout years two through five using the timelines established in year one. In year two, the team will begin assessing the effectiveness of the Eagle Pride program and its strategies. Additional information on specific assessments is included in the Assessment Plan portion of this document.

Outcome 1.2: Students will develop influential and ongoing relationships with faculty and staff.

Broad Activity: Develop and implement a mentoring program to provide at-risk students opportunities to develop influential and ongoing relationships with faculty and staff.

Life University will provide students opportunities to forge meaningful connections with members of the University community by developing and implementing a mentoring program called Lifeline, a voluntary, twelve-month mentoring program where faculty and staff serve as mentors to incoming and at-risk students. The Lifeline Team, a subcommittee of the Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC) and composed of members from key areas across the University will design, coordinate, and assess efforts associated with the campaign. The team will collaborate with representatives from STARS, the University's existing peer mentoring initiative, to expand the program into a broader, community focused mentorship program by including opportunities for faculty, staff, and upper-level students to serve as mentors. The team will also gather feedback from other areas of campus, including faculty and campus leaders, regarding potential barriers and opportunities toward implementation.

During year zero, the Team will develop outcomes and a mission statement for the program. Next, the team will identify an overall structure and approach for the mentoring program, which will be based on Smith's three-cycle mentoring model (Smith, 2013, p. 60-73). With a structure identified, the team will develop a standardized curriculum for the program, which will include activities and strategies designed to introduce students to the University's "hidden curriculum," which is defined as "the unwritten norms, values, and expectations that unofficially and implicitly govern the interactions among students, faculty, professional staff, and administrators" (Smith, p. 5). To identify elements of Life University's hidden curriculum, the team will collect data from students and faculty via surveys and focus groups. With the mentoring curriculum in place, the team will develop guidelines and processes for the program, including mentor and mentee roles and responsibilities, mentor recruitment and selection processes, mentor and mentee training, key milestones to be met, and a proposed schedule for planned mentor/mentee meetings and events.

The team will collaborate with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager (QEP ERPM) during the fall and winter quarters of year one to develop training resources for the program. As part of this process, the team will oversee development of a mentoring handbook for mentors and mentees. The handbook will promote a standardized approach to mentoring by outlining the program's mission, mentor/mentee roles and responsibilities, expectations, hidden curriculum elements, timelines, contact information for campus resources, and supporting documentation, such as mentor/mentee commitment contracts and confidentiality waivers. The handbook will serve as the foundation for the development of a training program for mentors and mentees. In addition to providing an overview of the mentoring program and its curriculum, the trainings serve to create a "shared understanding of the purpose and goals of the program," and as a result, mentors and mentees "are more likely to identify themselves as a collaborative team working together on unveiling the hidden curriculum of higher education" (Smith, p. 98).

During the spring quarter of year one the team will work with various groups on campus to prepare for the launch of the Lifeline program. Initially, the program will be limited to incoming undergraduate students. Once the program is established in year two, SERC will review its progress and effectiveness, and determine the feasibility of extending it to include incoming graduate and DC students. In preparation for the launch, the team will coordinate with marketing and student affairs to develop strategies for recruiting mentors and mentees to participate in the program. In support of recruitment for mentors, which will begin the spring quarter, the University will offer a small stipend for faculty and staff who commit to and serve as mentors for a one-year period. As part of the recruitment process for mentees, the team will coordinate with student affairs to include a presentation on the mentoring program for incoming students during student orientation. The team will also create a page for students in Engage, which will serve to advertise the program and store documents, applications, events, and marketing materials for the program. The team will conduct training for the selected mentors during the latter part of the summer quarter, and selected mentees will participate in a Lifeline orientation session during the start of the fall quarter.

Lifeline will launch at the start of the fall quarter in year two, following the curriculum and timeline established by the team. The team will continue to recruit mentees during the first week of each quarter, sending targeted communications to incoming undergraduate students. Starting in the winter quarter of year two, the team will send special outreach communications to incoming undergraduate students who are on academic probation or whose GPA declined during the previous quarter. The team will use information resulting from the analysis of retention-related data to target specific at-risk student populations for the mentoring program.

The team will continue to implement Lifeline and its associated strategies in years three through five using the timelines and curriculum established in year one. The University will begin ongoing assessment of the mentoring program's effectiveness in year two. Additional information on specific assessments is included in the Assessment Plan portion of this document.

Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources

Outcome 2.1: Faculty and staff will use strategies and tools that contribute to students' academic success.

Broad Activity: Identify, track, and assist at-risk students.

As part of the University's efforts to develop strategies and tools to promote student success, Life University will implement an early alert process to provide faculty, staff, and students with feedback that can be leveraged to help students avoid or overcome pitfalls and barriers to their success. The Early Alert Team, a subcommittee of the Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC) and composed of members from key areas across the University, will design, coordinate, and assess efforts associated with the early alert process.

The team will oversee development of an early alert process designed to monitor students' progress and alert faculty and staff when a student is experiencing difficulty in a course or in the campus community. Using the feedback provided by the process, faculty and staff will intervene and provide students with appropriate academic and/or co-curricular resources. Once designed and implemented, the early alert process will be limited initially to monitoring incoming undergraduate students beginning in the spring quarter of year one, and then expanded to include incoming graduate students and DC students in the fall quarter of year two. At first, the process will focus on a select number of academic risk factors and inputs to afford the team an opportunity to identify and resolve potential issues before additional users or factors are added to the process. Once the process is established and beginning in year three, the team will coordinate with the Eagle Pride and Student Engagement Teams, as well as other areas of LIFE, to incorporate additional inputs useful to identifying those who may be at risk, including demographic, economic, and social elements. As the University learns more about the specific factors that are likely to contribute to or impede students' progress, it will explore development of predictive models, attempt to forecast a student's success and provide data-driven resources and support to those who may be at-risk before they encounter difficulty.

The QEP ERPM will be responsible for managing the early alert process and coordinating with those units responsible for collecting data and connecting students with the appropriate support services and interventions. The coordinator will work closely with members of the team and CETL staff in the summer quarter of year zero to develop training programs and resources for the faculty and staff who will implement the early alert process and any related software or tools. Training will start in the winter quarter of year one and continue throughout the QEP as additional faculty, staff, and students are added to the process. At the individual student level, a student's academic advisor will serve as the point person in the process for ensuring that students are directed to the appropriate support areas.

Success of the early alert process requires supporting infrastructure and technology to ensure faculty and staff can efficiently and effectively monitor and connect students with resources and services. During the winter and spring quarters of year 0, the team will research potential software solutions and make a formal recommendation to University leadership. To guide its review and selection, the team will consult with a variety of stakeholders and units across campus to develop a request for proposal (RFP) to share with providers, detailing specific needs and requirements of an early alert system. The team will also develop a rubric aligned to the key items included in the RFP to guide its review of early alert software systems. The team will review external, commercial options, including Starfish and CRM Advise, as well as in-house solutions (likely an open-source alternative or a product developed internally) and make a formal recommendation to the SERC and University leadership at the start of the summer quarter in year one. Once a solution is selected, the team will coordinate with various units on campus, including CETL, Information Technology, and Operations, to manage rollout and of the system. The team will also collaborate with the CETL and the QEP ERPM to develop training and resources for those who will support the early alert process and use the selected software.

Beginning in spring quarter of year one, the University will use the early alert process to monitor the progress of all incoming undergraduate students. In preparation, academic advisors and those responsible for supporting or managing the process will participate in training during the fall quarter, and undergraduate faculty will attend training and development sessions during the winter quarter. In the sessions, faculty members will learn to use the early alert software, discuss potential behaviors or issues that should be entered into the system as alerts, and review expectations for tracking attendance and entering grades in the University's learning management system. Trainings and professional development will be offered to faculty and staff on an ongoing basis each quarter to support the rollout of the initiative to other programs and areas at LIFE.

Once implemented, the early warning software will monitor incoming undergraduate students' attendance and grades in the learning management system and generate an automatic alert when a student misses two or more classes, receives a failing grade on a summative assessment, or their course grade falls below a C (70%) average. Faculty will also have the option of manually entering an alert at any time if they believe a student is at risk for academic or other reasons. When an alert is triggered or entered, the system will send a customized

notification to the student directing them to meet with their professor, meet with their advisor, or to use another resource or strategy. The student's advisor and the faculty member will also receive a copy of the notification. After receiving the alert, an advisor will contact the student to verify they received the communication and to determine what action(s) the student plans take to resolve the concern. Advisors will continue to monitor the students' progress and follow up with them periodically to determine if additional interventions or strategies are needed.

The team will expand the early alert process to monitor incoming graduate and DC students beginning in the fall quarter of year two. Trainings and development sessions for faculty teaching courses with incoming students in those areas will take place in the summer quarter of year one.

The team will begin ongoing assessment of the early alert process' effectiveness beginning in the spring quarter of year one, and the team will use the data resulting from the planned assessments to make ongoing refinements and improvement to the overall early alert process and to adjust the strategies used to identify and support at-risk students. Additional information on specific assessments is included in the Assessment Plan portion of this document.

Outcome 2.2: Students will participate in co-curricular activities that promote engagement with the University community.

Broad Activities: Create and implement strategies to engage non-involved and at-risk students.

Life University will facilitate students' engagement with the University community by promoting their participation in co-curricular activities and events that align with their needs and interests. The Student Engagement Team, a subcommittee of the Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC) and composed of members from key areas across the University, will design, coordinate, and assess efforts associated with this outcome.

In year zero, the Student Engagement Team will coordinate with Student Affairs and the Coordinator of Campus Activities (CCA) to collect all available data regarding student organizations and student participation in co-curricular events during the previous academic year. Through its collection of data, the team will identify the following: how many student organizations are currently active at Life University, the purpose or function of each organization, how many current students are members of a student organization, and how many first- and second-year students have attended a student organization meeting. Using the data, the team will ascertain how many co-curricular events were offered at Life University in the previous year and how many students participated or attended. Additionally, the team will use the information to develop a database of student organizations and campus activities that can be shared with students to help them connect with organizations or events that align with their interests or needs. The team will record any gaps found in the collection of data from student organizations and organizers of events and develop plans for overcoming those challenges

when implementing strategies intended to promote student participation in co-curricular activities.

Tracking student attendance and participation in campus organizations and events will be essential to identifying non-involved and at-risk students and assessing the effectiveness of strategies implemented in support of engaging students. Beginning in year one, Student Affairs will require attendance tracking in Engage for all co-curricular events and conducted by a student or campus organization. The team will coordinate with the CCA and Student Affairs to identify and provide resources, training and card readers for tracking attendance, in support of the requirement. The CCA will pull participation data from Engage quarterly beginning in the winter quarter of year one to assess student involvement in organizations and participation at co-curricular events. The team will coordinate with the Early Alert and Retention Data teams to link participation data from Engage to the data included in the early alert process so that the SERC can develop a richer understanding of the specific academic and/or co-curricular factors impacting student engagement. As factors are identified, the SERC will revise or develop strategies, as needed, to engage non-involved or at-risk students.

In spring quarter of year one, the team will develop a student interest survey to match students to an organization or co-curricular activity that aligns with their needs and/or interests. The survey will ask students specific questions about their interests, needs, and majors, and the information will be used to generate custom recommendations for organizations and/or events that student may be interested in exploring. Using the data collected in year zero, specific student organizations will be pre-selected as matches for responses on the survey. Each quarter, beginning in the fall quarter of year two, the University will send the survey to students who have not been involved in a student organization and/or who did not participate in a co-curricular event during the previous quarter. The survey will be open for the first two weeks of the quarter, and the University will offer students incentives to complete it. Once the survey closes, Student Affairs and the CCA will share the students' information with student organization leaders and campus departments. Student leaders and campus departments will send communications to students whose interest and/or needs were a match on the survey inviting them to attend an upcoming meeting and providing information about their group or event. The team will use data from the survey to determine whether there are areas of interest and/or need among students that existing organizations or events are not meeting. Once identified, the team will formulate recommendations and strategies for addressing the gap.

Since student leaders will be critical to the success of the initiative, in year one, Student Affairs will develop a leadership training program for student organization leaders that will promote team building strategies, traits of effective leadership, and goal setting, so that student organization leaders can further the mission and scope of their organization and increase engagement among new participants. Student Affairs will deliver the training program to student leaders beginning in the fall quarter of year two, and the University will require all student leaders to participate in the annual training.

In year two, the team will begin ongoing assessment of the process and strategies designed to promote non-involved students' participation in the campus organizations and events. The team will use data from the planning assessments to make ongoing refinements and improvements to the process and strategies, and as needed, identify and implement new approaches to increase student engagement.

Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus

Outcome 3.1: Faculty and staff will use an assessment process designed to promote the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making regarding programs, strategies, and services related to student engagement and retention.

Broad Activity: Establish processes for the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making regarding programs, strategies, and services related to student engagement and retention.

As part of the University's efforts to improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts, LIFE will implement strategies and tools to promote the centralized collection and use of retention-related data at Life University. The Retention Data Team, a subcommittee of the Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC) and composed of members from key areas across the University, will design, coordinate, and assess efforts associated with developing and implementing a systematic process for the ongoing collection, management, and use of retention-related data.

In year zero, the team will develop processes and related timelines for the collection and management of retention-related data. As a first step, the team will meet with the Office of Institutional Research to develop a comprehensive understanding of existing retention data collection processes at both the University and departmental levels and to identify potential sources of retention-related data. Next, the team will develop and administer a Retention Data Needs Analysis to units and departments across campus during the fall quarter of year one to determine whether retention- and student-engagement data needs are being met, and to identify potential gaps in data collection, use, and management processes. The needs analysis will also collect information from participants on whether they maintain retention or engagement-related data in their unit or department, and if so, the type of data collected and the frequency of the collection. Using results from its investigation and the survey, the team will formulate and submit recommendations to University leadership in the spring quarter of year one for processes, policies, and timelines in support of implementing a University-wide, retention data governance program. This program will provide a systematic and centralized approach to retention-data management and use by clarifying responsibility for collection and management of data and ensuring it is reliable, consistent, and readily available for analysis and use. Once a data management program is approved, the team will coordinate with the Office of Institutional Research to share expectations and timelines with departments and units responsible for collecting and managing retention- and engagement-related data.

To maximize the use of retention- and engagement-related data across the University, the team will coordinate with the Office of Institutional Research during the spring quarter of year one to develop automated, online dashboards that compile and visualize student success data from a variety of inputs. The dashboards will allow the SERC and those with operational areas tied to student success initiatives to easily monitor, review, and use data to inform decision making regarding programs, strategies, and services intended to advance student retention and engagement. In addition to developing dashboards for each of the QEP's key performance indicators and measures, the team will develop dashboards for the populations targeted through the QEP's actions, including incoming undergraduate students, incoming graduate students, and incoming DC students. The team will also oversee development of dashboards for key data sets identified by department and units through the need's analysis. Once the dashboards are established, the team will coordinate with departments responsible for collecting inputs to share expectations and timelines for reporting data.

The team will begin ongoing assessment of the strategies detailed above beginning in year two. The team will use the data resulting from the planned assessments to make refinements and improvements to the retention data governance process and to identify opportunities for enhancing the effectiveness of the dashboards and other processes designed to promote the use of data to inform decision making for retention- and engagement-focused activities. Additional information on specific assessments is included in the Assessment Plan portion of this document.

Outcome 3.2: Faculty and staff will participate in training and development programs to advance their understanding and use of tools and strategies designed to improve the coordination and management of retention-related data.

Broad Activity: Develop and deliver training and resources for faculty and staff using tools and strategies designed to improve coordination and management of retention-related data.

The Retention Data team will oversee development of a variety of initiatives to support faculty and staff in the use of tools and strategies to improve coordination and management of retention-related data. In spring quarter of year one, the team will work with the QEP ERPM and members of the CETL to develop a handbook for the retention data governance program. The handbook will detail standard operating procedures for the program and include guidelines for personnel and units responsible for collecting, managing, and using retention related data.

During the summer quarter of year one, the QEP ERPM and CETL staff will partner to develop training resources and workshops demonstrating and highlighting key aspects of the retention data governance process. The sessions, which will be held in year two, will review expectations and timelines, share best practices in collecting and managing data, and review how to use and access the dashboards. In year three and beyond, the sessions will address advanced assessment topics and also target deficiencies identified through the annual Retention Data Needs Analysis. While sessions will be open to all faculty and staff at the University, those

departments and units responsible for QEP-related initiatives will be required to attend each year. The team will also coordinate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in the fall quarter of year two to design and deliver a series of trainings and resources for units to assist them in identifying opportunities for leveraging the data managed through the data governance process, including the automated dashboards, to inform annual planning and evaluation processes. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will begin delivering workshops and sessions in the spring quarter of year one.

The team will begin ongoing assessment of the training and resources described above in year two. The team will use data resulting from the planned assessments to make refinements and improvement to the strategies, as needed, to support faculty and staff in their understanding and use of tools and strategies supporting the coordination and management of retention-related data. Additional information on specific assessments is included in the Assessment Plan portion of this document.

Implementation Timeline

Below are timelines detailing the initial actions and strategies required to refine and implement the strategies outlined in the University’s plan. As the SERC and teams develop detailed plans and additional recurring actions for the various strategies, the timelines will be revised to include those items. For ease of reading, general actions are detailed in the first timeline below, and those associated with the three goals are detailed in the timelines that follow.

General Actions

Quarter	Action	Responsible Parties
Winter 2021 (Year 0)	Establish Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC)	Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Affairs, QEP Director
Spring 2021 (Year 0)	Hire a QEP Student Engagement and Retention Program Manager (QEP ERPM)	QEP Director
	Develop Student Engagement and Belonging Survey	SERC, QEP ERPM
Summer 2021 (Year 0)	Develop Continuous Improvement Cycle Plan for QEP	SERC, QEP ERPM
Winter 2022 (Year 1)	Provide update on QEP’s progress to University community at winter quarter campus-wide professional development event. (Recurring annually)	QEP Director, QEP ERPM
Spring 2022 (Year 2)	Administer Student Engagement and Belonging Survey (recurring annually)	Office of Institutional Effectiveness
Summer 2022 (Year 2)	Assess Continuous Improvement Cycle Plan for QEP and develop action plans to address deficiencies, as needed (recurring annually)	SERC, Teams

Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging and community among all students

Outcome 1.1: Students will develop a sense of belonging by engaging in campus traditions.

Quarter	Action	Responsible Parties
Winter 2021 (Year 0)	Compile a database of current and past Life University Traditions.	Eagle Pride Team
Spring 2021 (Year 0)	Survey University community to determine level of familiarity and satisfaction with existing and past traditions.	Eagle Pride Team
Summer 2021 (Year 0)	Identify traditions and strategies for the Eagle Pride campaign.	Eagle Pride Team
	Develop comprehensive plan for implementing Eagle Pride campaign.	
Fall 2021 (Year 1)	Coordinate with marketing to identify strategies for promoting traditions.	Eagle Pride Team, Marketing Department
Winter 2022 (Year 1)	Introduce Eagle Pride campaign to faculty and staff at a University-wide professional development event.	Eagle Pride Team
	Conduct Eagle Pride presentation to Student Affairs employees	Eagle Pride Team, Vice President of Student Affairs
	Conduct Eagle Pride presentation to Student Orientation Leaders (recurring annually)	Student Affairs
Spring 2022 (Year 1)	Begin implementing Eagle Pride campaign and assessing its effectiveness.	Eagle Pride Team, SERC

Outcome 1.2: Students will develop influential and ongoing relationships with faculty and staff.

Quarter	Action	Responsible Parties
Winter-Summer 2021 (Year 1)	Develop outcomes, mission statement, and overall structure for the mentoring program.	Lifeline Team
	Conduct surveys and focus groups with faculty and staff to identify elements of Life University's hidden curriculum.	

	Develop curriculum and timeline for mentoring program and associated activities.	
Fall 2021 - Winter 2022 (Year 1)	Develop training resources and workshops for mentors and mentees who will participate in the mentoring program.	Lifeline Team, CETL, QEP ERPM
Spring 2022 (Year 1)	Develop strategies for recruiting mentors and mentees.	Lifeline Team, Marketing Department, Student Affairs
	Recruit mentors (recurring annually).	Lifeline Team
Summer 2022 (Year 1)	Select mentors (recurring annually).	Lifeline Team
	Develop Lifeline presentation for incoming students.	Lifeline Team, Student Affairs
	Develop a Lifeline information page in Engage	Student Affairs
	Conduct training for mentors (recurring annually).	Lifeline Team, CETL, QEP ERPM
	Recruit mentees (recurring quarterly).	Lifeline Team, Student Affairs
Fall 2022 (Year 2)	Conduct Lifeline presentation during orientation for incoming students (recurring quarterly).	Lifeline Team, Student Affairs
	Implement Lifeline mentoring program and begin assessing its effectiveness (recurring annually)	Lifeline Team, SERC
Winter 2023 (Year 2)	Send targeted outreach communications to at-risk populations inviting them to participate in mentoring program (recurring quarterly).	Lifeline Team

Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources

Outcome 2.1: Faculty and staff will use strategies and tools that contribute to students' academic success.

Quarter	Action	Responsible Parties
Winter-Spring 2021 (Year 0)	Develop Request for Proposal (RFP) and rubric outlining specific needs and requirements of an early system.	Early Alert Team
	Research and review early alert software options.	Early Alert Team
Summer 2021 (Year 0)	Submit recommendation for early alert software to SERC and University leadership.	Early Alert Team
	Manage rollout of early alert software	Early Alert Team, Information Technology, Marketing

	Develop training and resources for the early alert process and software	QEP ERPM, CETL
Fall 2021 (Year 1)	Academic advisors and other staff participate in training.	QEP ERPM, CETL
Winter 2022 (Year 1)	Undergraduate faculty participate in training.	QEP ERPM, CETL
Spring 2022 (Year 1)	Begin using early alert process to monitor incoming undergraduate students.	Undergraduate faculty, academic advisors
	Begin assessing the effectiveness of the early alert process.	Early Alert Team, SERC
Summer 2022 (Year 1)	Graduate and DC faculty participate in training.	SERP, CETL
Fall 2022 (Year 2)	Begin using early alert process to monitor incoming graduate and DC students.	Graduate faculty, DC faculty, academic advisors

Outcome 2.2: Students will participate in co-curricular activities that promote engagement with the University community.

Quarter	Action	Responsible Parties
Winter-Summer 2021 (Year 0)	Collect data on student organizations and co-curricular events.	Student Engagement Team
	Develop a database of student organizations and campus activities.	
Winter 2022 (Year 1)	Student and campus organizations required to track attendance in Engage.	Student Affairs
	Provide training to student leaders and staff on how to track attendance in Engage.	Coordinator of Campus Activities (CCA), Student Affairs
	Begin developing leadership training program for students.	CCA, Student Affairs
Winter 2022 (Year 1)	Coordinate with Early Alert and Retention Data Teams to link Engage data to early alert process to identify non-involved students.	Student Engagement Team, SERC
Spring 2022 (Year 1)	Develop student interest survey	Student Engagement Team

Fall 2022 (Year 2)	Send student interest survey to non-involved students (recurring, quarterly)	CCA, Student Affairs
	Using survey results, student leaders and campus departments send communications to students (recurring, quarterly)	CCA, Student Affairs
	Identify needs or interests that are not being met by existing organizations or campus events and develop strategies for address the gap (recurring, quarterly)	Student Engagement Team, SERC
	Conduct leadership training for student leaders. (recurring, annually)	CCA, Student Affairs

Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus

Outcome 3.1: Faculty and staff will use an assessment process designed to promote the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making regarding programs, strategies, and services related to student engagement and retention.

Outcome 3.2: Faculty and staff will participate in training and development programs to advance their understanding and use of tools and strategies designed to improve the coordination and management of retention-related data.

Quarter	Action	Responsible Parties
Winter-Spring 2021 (Year 0)	Develop processes and related timelines for the collection and management of retention-related data.	Retention Data Team
Summer 2021 (Year 0)	Develop Retention Data Needs Analysis	Retention Data Team, Office of Institutional Research
Fall 2021 (Year 1)	Administer Retention Data Needs Analysis (recurring annually)	Retention Data Team, Office of Institutional Research
Winter 2022 (Year 1)	Develop proposal for retention data governance program	Retention Data Team
Spring 2022 (Year 1)	Submit proposal for retention data governance program to University leadership	Retention Data Team, SERC
	Develop automated, online dashboards for student success data	Office of Institutional Research, Retention Data Team

	Develop handbook for retention data governance program	QEP ERPM, CETL, Retention Data Team
Summer 2022 (Year 1)	Share expectations and timelines for dashboards with departments responsible for collecting data	Office of Institutional Research, Retention Data Team
	Developing training resources and workshops for retention data governance program.	QEP ERPM, CETL, Retention Data Team
Fall 2022 (Year 2)	Begin conducting reoccurring training sessions in support of retention data governance program.	QEP ERPM, CETL
	Develop training and resources to assist departments and units in leveraging retention-related data as part of their annual planning process.	Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Office of Institutional Research, Retention Data Team
	Begin conducting training sessions on incorporating retention-related data as part of the annual planning process. (recurring, ongoing)	Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Office of Institutional Research

VIII. Institutional Capacity

In order to promote the success of **Enhance, Engage, Excel: Changing the Retention Paradigm at Life University** the QEP Management Team identified an organizational structure and resources required for successful implementation of the plan.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of Life University's QEP is designed for the successful implementation and management of QEP initiatives by promoting broad-based involvement across the University. Moreover, the organizational structure seeks to break down institutional silos by promoting collaboration and coordination between those units responsible for implementing the plan's key actions. The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA) are committed to promoting the collaborative relationships necessary for the success of the University's QEP. An overview of key roles and responsibilities is included below:

QEP Director

The QEP Director, reporting to the VPAA, is responsible for managing the plan, coordinating the actions to be implemented, and reporting on the plan. The QEP Director serves as chair of the Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC). The QEP Director will meet regularly with the VPAA to provide updates on the plan's progress and to request approval for any significant changes to the plan's goals or outcomes. The director, in collaboration with the SERC and the QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager (QEP ERPM), is also responsible for developing an annual Continuous Improvement Cycle Plan for the QEP and developing the Impact Report at the end of year five.

Student Engagement and Retention Committee

The University will align the retention and engagement-focused efforts outlined in the QEP under the SERC, a cross-functional team composed of representatives from key areas of campus (Appendix D). The SERC is responsible for managing and implementing all aspects of the QEP. The committee is also responsible for assessing the effectiveness of plan's activities, analyzing the results, and formulating plans for improvement.

This SERC is chaired by the QEP Director and reports to the VPAA and VPSA, and both vice presidents are responsible for ensuring the committee and chair have the resources and support necessary to achieve the plan's anticipated outcomes and goals. As needed, the committee will submit recommendations to the VPAA for revising the plan's approach, including revision of targets for key performance indicators and outcomes.

QEP Teams

Led by representatives from the SERC Committee, QEP Teams are subcommittees of the SERC and they are responsible for implementing and managing specific broad actions from the

University's plan, as well as other institutional initiatives aimed at promoting student success and retention. Each team will consist of key individuals from those departments or units whose participation is required for successful implementation of the planned strategy.

QEP Management Team

As the SERC is now responsible for implementation, management, and assessment of the LIFE's QEP, the University revised the original charge for the QEP Management Team and it will serve in an advisory role during the first year of the plan, meeting as needed, to ensure a smooth and efficient transition between the planning and implementation phases of Enhance, Engage, Excel. The team will be dissolved at the end of year one.

Additional Personnel

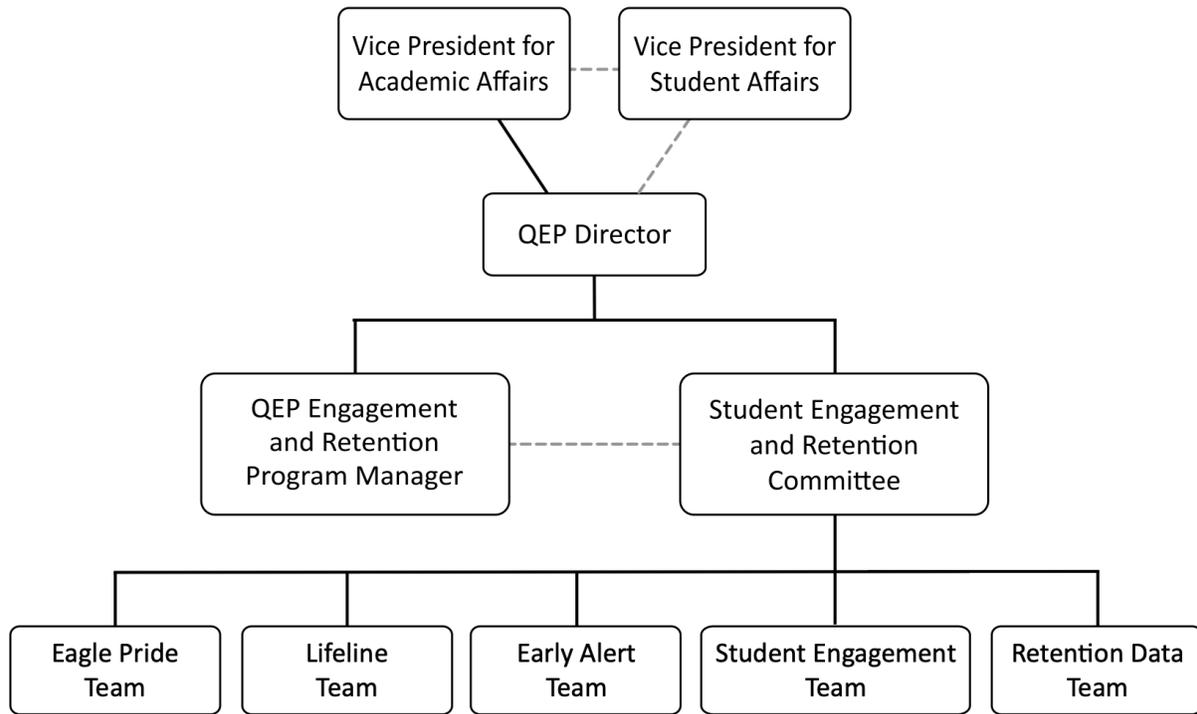
Successful implementation of LIFE's plan requires creation of a new position to support the project.

QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager

The QEP ERPM will report to the QEP Director and coordinate all aspects of the QEP plan. In addition to serving on the SERC, the position will assist and support each QEP Team. Other responsibilities for the position include management of the LIFE's early alert system, collecting relevant data, and assisting in the design and delivery of QEP-related training and development programs (Appendix E).

The following organizational overview (Figure 1) shows the relationships between key personnel and committees, as well as reporting lines. The relationship between the VPAA and VPSA is collaborative. The relationship between the Vice President for Student Affairs and the QEP Director is supportive.

Figure 1: QEP Organizational Overview



Budget

Following a comprehensive review of all required resources, a more extensively detailed budget was developed which delineates the funds necessary to carry out the strategies outlined for Enhance, Engage, Excel. The budget (Table 12) is comprised of newly dedicated allocations that were reviewed by university leadership and approved for inclusion in the institution’s base budget for subsequent fiscal years. A copy of the **institution’s allocated budget** is also provided.

Table 12: QEP Five Year budget

QEP Five Year Budget						
Required Resources	Year 0 2020- 2021	Year 1 2021- 2022	Year 2 2022- 2023	Year 3 2023- 2024	Year 4 2024- 2025	Year 5 2025- 2026
Personnel	\$31,000	\$87,000	\$88,500	\$90,030	\$91,591	\$93,182
Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Professional Development	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000

Early Alert Software	\$0	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000
Computer Hardware	\$3,500	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Office Supplies	\$250	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Instructional Supplies	\$1,200	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500
Promotional Items	\$2,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$50,000
Food	\$1,500	\$8,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000
Furniture	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$41,950	\$169,500	\$206,500	\$223,030	\$239,591	\$256,182

Life University is committed to providing the resources necessary for the successful implementation and continuation of the Enhance, Engage, Excel's initiatives, as outlined below.

Personnel

Funds are budgeted annually to include salary/benefits, including a projected salary increase of 2%, for the QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager. This budget line also includes a stipend for the QEP Director.

Stipends

The budget includes allocations for annual stipends (\$1,000) for faculty and staff who commit to and serve as mentors in the Lifeline mentoring program for a one-year period. Lifeline begins in Year 2 and stipends are paid at the end of the annual mentoring cycle.

Professional Development

Funds are allocated each year of the plan to afford the QEP Director and QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager opportunities to participate in professional development activities to acquire new knowledge and refine skills essential to advancing the strategies and programs included in Life University's QEP.

Early Alert Software

Allocations are included for the purchase and/or development of an early alert system.

Computer Hardware

This budget area includes funds for purchasing computer hardware for new QEP staff and card readers for tracking student attendance in campus events and organizations.

Office Supplies

The budget includes annual allocations for consumables, including office supplies, photocopying, postage, and telephone.

Instructional Supplies

Funds are allocated each year of the plan for the development and/or purchase of instructional supplies and training resources essential to advancing several strategies outlined in Enhance, Engage, Excel, including:

- Handbooks for mentors and mentees participating in Lifeline mentoring program.
- Training and quick reference guides for faculty and staff who will implement, manage, and use the early alert system.
- Resources for student leadership training program.
- Handbooks and reference guides for retention data governance program.

Promotional Items

Funds are allocated each year for promotional initiatives associated with the Eagle Pride campaign and Lifeline mentoring program. For the Eagle Pride campaign, funds will be used to identify and/or develop campus traditions and to develop a marketing campaign to promote awareness of those traditions among the campus community, especially students identified as at-risk. The SERC will select existing quarterly campus-wide events (one per quarter) and coordinate with departments or units responsible for those events to implement actions and incentives designed to promote students' engagement and familiarity with specific Life University traditions. For Lifeline, funds will be used to develop and implement annual strategies for recruiting mentors and mentees. The funds allocated in this budget item increase annually in anticipation that QEP programs will result in year-to-year increases in student participation and engagement, and consequently, costs associated with promoting campus traditions and the Lifeline program may rise.

Food

Funds are budgeted each year of Enhance, Engage, Excel to provide food at select Enhance, Engage, Excel activities, including quarterly mentoring recruitment sessions and annual trainings for faculty, staff, and students. Additionally, funds are allocated to provide additional support to departments or units that manage campus-wide events that have been designated as Eagle Pride events (one per quarter) as it is anticipated that Enhance, Engage, Excel strategies will result in increased attendance, and consequently, additional costs for food. The allocations of funds in this budget line increase each year of the plan in anticipation that QEP programs will result in year-to-year increases in student participation and engagement, and consequently, costs associated with providing food at select events may rise.

Furniture

The budget includes funds in Year 0 to purchase furniture for the QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager

Budget Review and Modification Process

As detailed in Section IX, Assessment Plan, Life University has developed a comprehensive assessment plan to monitor the overall progress of Enhance, Engage, Excel. As part of this assessment process, the SERC will review resulting data and budgetary allocations annually to determine if a modification of allocations is needed. If the SERC determines allocations need to be adjusted, the committee will submit budgetary requests as part of the university's Institutional Effectiveness (IE) process. At Life University, the IE process is an ongoing, comprehensive, and research-based process centered on the use of the Continuous Improvement Cycle (CIC) model. In this model, units and programs on campus maintain annual assessment plans (CIC Plans) to monitor their progress towards established goals and outcomes, and to identify opportunities for improvement and budget needs. As noted in Section IX, the SERC will maintain a CIC Plan and use data and feedback resulting from its annual review of that plan to determine whether budgetary changes are needed to promote the QEP's overarching objectives. If changes in allocations are required, the SERC will submit those requests as part of its annual CIC Report, which is shared with campus leadership for consideration during the annual strategic planning and budgeting processes.

IX. Assessment Plan

To measure the success of Enhance, Engage, Excel, Life University developed a comprehensive assessment plan to monitor the overall progress of the project and its planned outcomes. Assessment will be ongoing throughout the implementation of the QEP over the next five years, and the University will use the resulting data to continuously refine and improve the project and its associated strategies. As demonstrated in the plan that follows, assessments will generate a combination of qualitative and quantitative feedback, and the resulting data will be used for formative and summative purposes, ensuring that changes and improvements can be made well before the plan fails to achieve a desired target or outcome.

The SERC will meet at least monthly to review available data and assess the effectiveness of the implemented strategies against the targets established for the key performance indicators (KPIs) and outcomes. The committee will identify areas of success and areas in need of improvement, and when necessary, identify specific changes or action items that may be needed to improve the QEP and its planned activities. The SERC will create and maintain a Continuous Improvement Cycle (CIC) Plan to monitor progress toward achieving the plan's overarching objective. As a component of Life University's institutional effectiveness process, CIC reports are completed by faculty, staff, and administrators of the University involved in academic programs and administrative support services units. The annual CIC reporting process is cyclic whereby support for goals is identified, plans developed and implemented, outcomes assessed, and findings from the assessment used to guide unit improvements and inform budgeting processes. The QEP Director will report on the plan's progress during an annual campus-wide professional development event to keep the University community informed on the plan's progress and impact.

The comprehensive assessment plan, organized by KPIs and goals, is included below:

Assessment of the Plan's Overarching Objective Engage students in co-curricular and academic services to increase retention.

Since the overarching objective of Life University's QEP is to engage students in co-curricular and academic services to increase retention, the institution has established two key performance indicators to monitor the overall progress and success of its plan: student retention and student engagement.

For student retention, the SERC will monitor retention rates for incoming undergraduate students, incoming graduate students, and incoming DC students for fall, winter, spring, and summer quarters using data available in the Persistence, Retention, and Graduation Report, which is compiled annually by the Office of Institutional Research. In addition to examining results from this annual report, the SERC will review retention rates for targeted and/or at-risk populations each quarter to determine if immediate actions or enhancements are needed to maintain the institution's progress toward achieving its intended target.

Life University will monitor student engagement and belonging by analyzing student feedback on an internally developed instrument, the Student Engagement and Belonging Survey (SEBS), and a survey provided by the Gardner Institute as part of the RPM process, the Student Integration, Persistence, and Satisfaction Survey. The institution will begin developing the SEBS during year zero and coordinate with the Office of Institution Research to administer it to students at the end of year one. The survey will merge questions from several of the institution's existing surveys and include questions specific to the initiatives and strategies Life University is implementing as part of its QEP. In addition to providing summative feedback on the institution's progress toward promoting belonging and engagement, the SERC will use the results to inform and refine, as needed, specific components of the plan, including the campus traditions campaign, mentoring, student engagement activities, and the early alert process.

Key Performance Indicator 1: Student Retention			
Data Source	Frequency of Analysis	Baseline	Target(s)
Persistence, Retention, and Graduation Report	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	First to second year and second to third year average retention rates for incoming undergraduate students (5-year average, 2016-2020)	3% year-to-year increase in year 1 to year 2 retention rate for incoming students. 2% year-to-year increase in year 2 to year 3 retention rate for incoming students.
Persistence, Retention, and Graduation Report	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	First to second year and second to third year average retention rates for graduate students (5-year average, 2016-2020)	2% year-to-year increase in year 1 to year 2 retention rate for incoming students. 1% year-to-year increase in year 2 to year 3 retention rate for incoming graduate students.
Persistence, Retention, and Graduation Report	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	First to second year average retention rates for DC students (5-year average, 2016-2020)	1% year-to-year increase in year 1 to year 2 retention rate for incoming DC students.
Key Performance Indicator 2: Student Engagement			
Data Source	Frequency of Analysis	Baseline	Target(s)
Life University Student Engagement and Belonging Survey	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	Percentage of students reporting satisfaction or agreement with engagement-related items on the Student Satisfaction Survey (3-year average, 2017-2019)	3% year-to-year increase in overall student satisfaction or agreement as reported by incoming students on engagement-related items assessed on the survey.

Life University Student Engagement and Belonging Survey	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	Percentage of students reporting satisfaction or agreement with engagement-related items on the Student Satisfaction Survey (3-year average, 2017-2019)	3% year-to-year increase in overall student satisfaction or agreement as reported by incoming students on belonging-related items assessed on the survey.
Student Integration, Persistence, and Satisfaction (SIPS) Survey (SIPS)	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	Results from the 2019 SIPS Survey	2% year-to-year increase in overall student agreement as reported by incoming students on engagement-related items assessed on the survey.

Assessment of Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging and community among all students

To measure LIFE's progress toward the goal of fostering a sense of belonging and community among all students, the University has established two supporting outcomes. The assessment plan for each is included below.

Outcome 1.1: Students will develop a sense of belonging by engaging in campus traditions.

The University will conduct an extensive and ongoing assessment of the campus traditions program beginning in year two. In years zero and one, the Eagle Pride Team will oversee development of the campaign, collect data needed to establish baselines, and develop assessments to measure the effectiveness of the program. The team will develop a post-event survey and a process for conducting focus groups designed to gather qualitative feedback from students. The post-event survey will include select questions from the Student Engagement and Belonging Survey, questions measuring participants' familiarity with the campus traditions being promoted through the Eagle Pride campaign, as well as the overall effectiveness of the associated strategies at promoting belonging and community. Beginning in year two, the survey will be administered via QR code and/or email to all students during or immediately following participation in an Eagle Pride-designated event. The Eagle Pride Team will compile participation data from the events and the post-event survey quarterly, and the SERC will analyze the results and implement any needed adjustments and/or improvements for the upcoming quarter. Beginning in year two, the team will conduct focus-groups twice a year with incoming undergraduate students to gather qualitative feedback on the campaign's impact.

The SERC will use data resulting from the quantitative and qualitative assessments described above, as well as feedback from annual assessments, including the Student Engagement and Belonging Survey and the SIPS survey, to continuously assess, modify, and improve, as needed, the planned activities and targets for this outcome. The team will also use data resulting from the assessments to determine if new target and/or at-risk populations need to be added to the assessment plan, and whether strategies used to establish and promote campus traditions need to be modified.

Outcome 1.2: Students will develop influential and ongoing relationships with faculty and staff.

The University will conduct an extensive and ongoing assessment of the mentoring program beginning in year two. In years zero and one, the Lifeline Team will oversee establishment of the mentoring program and related processes, as well as the development of assessments to provide qualitative and quantitative data on the effectiveness of the initiative. In addition to developing a process for monitoring participation, the team will create a survey to gain feedback from mentees on the quality and effectiveness of the program. The survey will be administered annually to all students who participate in the mentoring program for at least one quarter.

The SERC will use data resulting from the quantitative and qualitative assessments described above, as well as feedback from annual assessments, including the Student Engagement and Belonging Survey and the SIPS survey, to continuously assess, modify, and improve, as needed, the planned activities and targets for this outcome. The team will use data resulting from the assessments to determine if changes need to be made to the program or its curriculum to enhance mentees’ experience. The team will also use the data to determine if new at-risk or target populations need to be considered for the mentoring program.

Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging and community among all students.			
Outcome 1.1: Students will develop a sense of belonging by engaging in campus traditions.			
Data Source	Frequency of Analysis	Baseline	Target(s)
Engage Participation Reports	Quarterly, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	No data available, baseline set at end of spring quarter, year 1.	2% quarter-to-quarter increase in the percentage of incoming undergraduate students participating in events associated with campus-wide traditions campaign. 1% quarter-to-quarter increase in the percentage of incoming graduate students participating in events associated with campus-wide traditions campaign. 1% quarter-to-quarter increase in the percentage of incoming CoC students participating in events associated with campus-wide traditions campaign.

Focus Group Log	Bi-annually, beginning in winter and summer quarter 2022 (Year 2)	New initiative, baseline set at end of year 2.	5% year-to-year increase in the percentage of incoming undergraduate students who participate in focus groups reporting main ideas of student belonging, engagement, and satisfaction.
Post-event survey	Quarterly, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	Percentage of students reporting satisfaction or higher with select, engagement-related items on Life University Student Satisfaction Survey (3-year average, 2017-2019)	2% quarter-to-quarter increase in overall satisfaction or agreement for incoming undergraduate, graduate, and CoC students on items assessed on the survey.
Attendance Logs	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	N/A	90% of New Student Orientation Staff will participate in training sessions designed to introduce them to the campus traditions campaign and its key features. 80% of Student Orientation Leaders will participate in training sessions designed to introduce them to the campus traditions campaign and its key features.
Outcome 1.2: Students will develop influential and ongoing relationships with faculty and staff.			
Data Source	Frequency of Analysis	Baseline	Target(s)
Early Alert System Report/Mentoring Participation Report	Quarterly, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	N/A	100% of incoming undergraduate students who are identified as a member of one or more at-risk or target populations will receive an invitation to participate in the mentoring program.
Mentoring Participation Report	Annually, beginning winter 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	Year 2: 10% of at-risk incoming undergraduates students who receive an invitation will participate in the mentoring before the end of the subsequent quarter. Year 3: 15% Year 4: 20% Year 5: 25%

Mentoring Participation Report	Quarterly, beginning winter 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	60% of mentees who stop participating in mentoring program are contacted via an intervention strategy.
Mentoring Participation Report	Annually, beginning summer 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	50% of mentees complete the program.
Mentee Survey	Annually, beginning summer 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	Year 2: 50% of mentees report satisfaction or agreement on questions asking about the quality and effectiveness of the mentoring program. Year 3: 60% Year 4: 65% Year 5: 70%
Training Log	Annually, beginning fall 2021 (year 2)	N/A	100% of faculty and staff accepted as mentors complete the required training.

Assessment of Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources.

To measure LIFE's progress toward the goal of encouraging students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources, the University has established two supporting outcomes. The assessment plan for each is included below.

Outcome 2.1: Faculty and staff will use strategies and tools that contribute to students' academic success.

The University will conduct ongoing assessment of efforts to promote faculty and staff members' use of strategies and tools that contribute to students' success beginning in the fall quarter of year one. In year zero and the fall quarter of year one, the Early Alert Team will oversee selection of early alert software and design of the institution's early alert process, as well as developing training to prepare faculty and staff for its use. As faculty and staff involvement is critical to the success of the early alert process, the team will assess their engagement in the process on a quarterly basis by monitoring participation in required training sessions, measuring competency of core knowledge and skills, and evaluating use of the system to enter and resolve alerts. The team will assess the effectiveness of the early alert process and its associated efforts by monitoring student attendance and grades. The team will use data resulting from assessment of those efforts to determine whether adjustments need to be made to implemented strategies and/or the types of assistance or resources provided to at-risk students. Lastly, the University will monitor faculty members use of the learning management system to track

attendance and grades to ensure the data can be used by the early alert software to identify students who may be at-risk.

The SERC will use data resulting from the ongoing assessments described above, as well as feedback from annual assessments, including the Student Engagement and Belonging Survey and the SIPS survey, to continuously refine and improve, as needed, the planned activities and targets for this outcome. The team will also use data resulting from the assessments to determine if new target and/or at-risk populations need to be added to the early alert process.

Outcome 2.2: Students will participate in co-curricular activities that promote engagement with the University community.

The University will conduct ongoing assessment of the efforts used to promote students' participation in co-curricular activities that promote engagement with the campus community beginning in year two. In years zero and one, the Student Engagement Team will oversee establishment of processes and programs designed to promote participation and develop assessments to provide quantitative data on participation. As part of its work, the team will coordinate with the Early Alert and Retention Data Teams to identify a strategy for linking participation data from Engage to the Early Alert system so that non-participant students can be easily identified and tracked.

The SERC will use data resulting from the ongoing assessments described above, as well as feedback from annual assessments, including the Student Engagement and Belonging Survey and the SIPS survey, to continuously refine and improve, as needed, the planned activities and targets for this outcome. The team will also use data from the assessments to determine if new intervention strategies are needed to promote non-participating students' engagement with co-curricular activities and/or events.

Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources			
Outcome 2.1: Faculty and staff will use strategies and tools that contribute to students' academic success.			
Data Source	Frequency of Analysis	Baseline	Target(s)
Early Alert System/Learning Management System	Quarterly, beginning spring 2022 (Year 1)	N/A	Year 1: 65% of faculty participating in the early alert process will use the learning management system to track attendance for students in their courses. Year 2: 70%... Year 3: 75%... Year 4: 80%... Year 5: 85%...
Early Alert System Report	Quarterly, beginning spring 2022 (Year 1)	N/A	100% of students who generate an attendance alert will be contacted and offered support.

Early Alert System Report	Quarterly, beginning spring 2022 (Year 1)	N/A	100% of students who generate an alert for falling below a C average or earning a failing grade on a summative assessment will be contacted and offered support.
Early Alert System Report	Quarterly, beginning spring 2022 (Year 1)	N/A	50% of students who receive an attendance alert will not generate a second attendance alert.
Early Alert System Report	Quarterly, beginning spring 2022 (Year 1)	N/A	50% of students who receive a low (below a C) or failing grade alert will not generate a second low/failing grade alert.
Early Alert System Report	Quarterly, beginning spring 2022 (Year 1)	N/A	85% of alerts will receive attention within 2 days of the initial alert.
Training Log	Quarterly, beginning fall 2021 (Year 1)	N/A	100% of faculty responsible for using the early system will participate in trainings designed to promote the effective use of the process.
Training Log	Quarterly, beginning fall 2021 (Year 1)	N/A	100% of departments/units responsible for implementing and using the early alert system will participate in trainings designed to promote the effective use of the process.
Assignment Log	Annually, beginning summer 2021 (Year 1)	N/A	Year 1: 50% of those participating in training sessions will demonstrate competency or higher on an activity or assignment that is representative of the knowledge and/or skills shared through an early alert training session or resource. Year 3: 55% Year 4: 60% Year 5: 65%
Outcome 2.2: Students will participate in co-curricular activities that promote engagement with the University community.			
Data Source	Frequency	Baseline	Target(s)
Participation Reports from Engage	Quarterly, beginning winter 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	100% of incoming undergraduate students who are identified as not having participated in at least one co-curricular campus organization during the previous quarter (fall 2022) will be contacted through an outreach strategy.
Participation Reports from Engage	Quarterly, beginning winter 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	Year 2: 10% of incoming non-participating undergraduate students who are contacted through an outreach strategy will participate in

			at least one co-curricular activity by the end of the subsequent quarter. Year 3: 20%... Year 4: 30%... Year 5: 40%...
Event Attendance Reports	Quarterly, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	No data available, baseline set at end of winter quarter, year 1.	5% quarter-to-quarter increase in the percentage of campus events participation.
Training Log	Annually, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	N/A	80% of student organization leaders complete a leadership training series designed to promote team-building strategies, traits of effective leadership, and goal setting.

Assessment of Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus

To measure LIFE’s progress toward the goal of improving coordination and management of retention and engagement focused efforts across campus, the University has established two supporting outcomes. The assessment plan for each is included below.

Outcome 3.1: Faculty and staff will use an assessment process designed to promote the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making regarding programs, strategies, and services related to student engagement and retention.

The University will conduct ongoing assessment of efforts to promote faculty and staff members’ use of an assessment process to promote the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making beginning in year two of the QEP. The Retention Data Team will use the University’s existing institutional effectiveness (IE) process as the foundation for centralizing and assessing the effectiveness of strategies designed to promote coordination and management of retention-related data. Life University’s IE process is centered on the use of the Continuous Improvement Cycle (CIC) model, which is a comprehensive and integrative planning and assessment process that incorporates feedback and input from units across the campus. The annual CIC process is cyclic whereby support for goals are identified, plans are developed and implemented, outcomes are assessed, and findings from the assessment are used to guide unit and programmatic improvements. The planning and assessment activities conducted as part of the CIC process ultimately serve to support LIFE’s strategic initiatives and fulfill the University’s mission and vision.

In years zero and one, the Retention Data Team will collaborate with departments and units included in the retention data governance program and those tasked with implementing and managing various aspects of the QEP to include outcomes, measures, and targets for those actions in their respective CIC plans. Beginning in year two, the team will coordinate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning to compile an annual report on the units’

effectiveness in meeting the outcomes and targets established in their plans. The SERC will review the information compiled by the management team and formulate recommendations for improvement, if needed, for the units responsible for implementing QEP and non-QEP retention-related strategies. The SERC will also maintain an annual CIC plan for the QEP and track overall progress toward anticipated outcomes and targets. In addition to centralizing all of the data linked to the QEP, the use of an annual CIC plan allows the SERC to analyze the short- and long-term impact of the various QEP and non-QEP student success initiatives and to make adjustments as warranted to improve retention and engagement.

The Retention Data Team will design and deliver an annual Retention Data Needs Survey to measure the effectiveness of training and resources aimed at enhancing the coordination and management of retention-related data. The survey, which will be designed and implemented in year one, will be sent to faculty and staff responsible for implementing QEP-related activities. The survey will gather feedback on participants' understanding and implementation of strategies and tools aimed at enhancing coordination and use of retention-related data. The survey will also include questions designed to gather feedback on whether current retention-related data needs are being met and to identify potential gaps in the data collection and management processes.

The SERC will use data resulting from the qualitative and quantitative assessments described above and detailed below to continuously assess, modify, and improve, as needed, the planned activities and targets for this outcome. The team will also use data resulting from the assessments to make improvements to strategies designed to enhance coordination and management of retention-related data.

Outcome 3.2: Faculty and staff will participate in training and development programs to advance their understanding and use of tools and strategies designed to improve the coordination and management of retention-related data.

Beginning in year two, the University will conduct ongoing assessment of the trainings and resources delivered in support of this outcome. In addition to monitoring participation by those departments required to maintain and use retention-related data, the team will assess participants' competency in using designated tools and strategies. The team will use data resulting from the competency assessment, as well as feedback from the Retention Data Needs Survey, to make refinements and improvement, as needed, to the training sessions and provided resources to support faculty and staff in developing the knowledge and skills required to use tools and strategies supportive of improving retention-related data processes.

Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus			
Outcome 3.1: Faculty and staff will use an assessment process designed to promote the centralized collection and use of data to inform decision making regarding programs, strategies, and services related to student engagement and retention.			
Data Source	Frequency of Analysis	Baseline	Target(s)
QEP Continuous Improvement Cycle (CIC) Report	Annually, summer 2022 (Year 1)	N/A	Year 2: The University will meet or exceed 60% of the targets established for outcomes included in the QEP's CIC Plan. Year 3: 70% Year 4: 80% Year 5: 90%
CIC Report Inventory Log	Annually, summer 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	Year 2: Departments/units responsible for implementing QEP-related initiatives will meet or exceed 60% of QEP-related benchmarks included in their CIC plans. Year 3: 70% Year 4: 80% Year 5: 90%
Dashboard Data Log	Quarterly, beginning in fall 2022 (Year 2)	No data available, baseline set at end of year 1.	5% year-to-year increase in number of departments/units responsible for collecting, compiling, and submitting data do so before the established quarterly deadline.
Retention Data Needs Survey	Annually, beginning in fall 2021 (Year 1)	No data available, baseline set at end of year 1.	10% year-to-year increase in overall satisfaction and/or agreement reported by members of departments or units supporting the QEP.
Outcome 3.2: Faculty and staff will participate in training and development programs to advance their understanding and use of tools and strategies designed to improve the coordination and management of retention-related data.			
Data Source	Frequency	Baseline	Target(s)
Training Log	Annually, beginning summer 2023 (Year 2)	N/A	100% of designated departments/units responsible for implementing and assessing QEP-related initiatives will participate in trainings designed to promote the effective use and analysis of retention-related data, tools, and resources.
Assignment Log	Quarterly, beginning fall 2022 (Year 2)	N/A	Year 2: 50% of participants will demonstrate competency or higher on an activity or assignment that is representative of the knowledge and/or skills shared through sessions or resources promoting the effective use of retention-related data, tools, and strategies.

			Year 3: 55% Year 4: 60% Year 5: 65%
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XI. Appendices

Appendix A: QEP Management Team

Appendix B: Retention Performance Management Team

Appendix C: Retention Analytics Inventory

Appendix D: Student Engagement and Retention Committee

Appendix E: QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager Job Description

Appendix A: QEP Management Team

Bill Watson, QEP Director (Chair)

Keiko Childs, Student Affairs

Dr. Shawn Cradit, Faculty, CGUS

Dr. Vince Erario, Office of Institutional Planning

Erin Gilligan, CETL

Dr. Tameka Glass, University Advisement

Erica Hampson, Progressive Advisement

Jessica Lewis, CETL

Dr. John Thornhill, Faculty, CoC

Dr. Alan Wells, CGUS

Dr. Howard Wright, Office of Institutional Research

Appendix B: Retention Performance Management Team

Jana Holwick, Institutional Liaison
Janna Bredeson, Institutional Liaison
Allyson Bianchi, College Programs
Sam Clark, Athletics
Cathy Faust, CGUS
Tom Flores, CGUS
Tameka Glass, University Advisement
Kan Guvensal, CGUS
Henry Hammond, CGUS
Heather Hoffman, Registrar
Rebekah Janiak, CGUS
Keith Jordan, Enrollment Services
Ben Martin, Operations
Anthony Maxwell, Athletics
Nicoly Myles, Student Services
Michael Smith, CGUS
Jennifer Stroble, Student Services
Ron Ware, CGUS
Bill Watson, CETL
Alan Wells, CGUS
Howard Wright, Office of Institutional Research

Appendix C: Retention Analytics Inventory

CGUS UG

Voluntary Departure from UG Program by Year and GPA

GPA	Fall 2013 Beginning Cohort Size	YR 1 Voluntary Departure		YR 2 Voluntary Departure		YR 3 Voluntary Departure		YR 4 Voluntary Departure		YR 5 Voluntary Departure		YR 6 Voluntary Departure		YR 7 Voluntary Departure	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No GPA	194	47	24.23%	44	22.68%	41	21.13%	39	20.10%	39	20.10%	39	20.10%	39	20.10%
4.0-3.0		36	18.56%	38	19.59%	43	22.16%	43	22.16%	42	21.65%	38	19.59%	36	18.56%
2.99-2.0		26	13.40%	30	15.46%	38	19.59%	35	18.04%	37	19.07%	35	18.04%	37	19.07%
1.99-1.0		11	5.67%	16	8.25%	18	9.28%	18	9.28%	18	9.28%	17	8.76%	17	8.76%
.99-0.0		9	4.64%	10	5.15%	10	5.15%	10	5.15%	10	5.15%	10	5.15%	10	5.15%
Total	194	129	66.49%	138	71.13%	150	77.32%	145	74.74%	146	75.26%	139	71.65%	139	71.65%

Appendix C: Retention Analytics Inventory

CGUS UG

Year to Year Retention and Graduation Rates for First-Generation and Non-First Generation Students

Year	Cohort #	# Beg. 2nd YR	1st-2nd YR Retention	# Beg. 3rd YR	1st-3rd YR Retention	# Beg. 4th YR	1st-4th YR Retention	# Graduating in 4 YRS	4-YR Graduation	# Graduation in 5 YRS	5-YR Graduation
Fall 2013	194	81	41.75%	50	25.77%	36	18.56%	21	10.82%	36	18.56%
Non-First	177	70	39.55%	41	23.16%	27	15.25%	20	11.30%	32	18.08%
First-Gen	17	11	64.71%	9	52.94%	9	52.94%	1	5.88%	4	23.53%
Fall 2014	196	105	53.57%	57	29.08%	37	18.88%	33	16.84%		
Non-First	178	90	50.56%	46	25.84%	30	16.85%	27	15.17%		
First-Gen	18	15	83.33%	11	61.11%	7	38.89%	6	33.33%		
Fall 2015	168	100	59.52%	76	45.24%	52	30.95%				
Non-First	149	83	55.70%	65	43.62%	49	32.89%				
First-Gen	19	17	89.47%	11	57.89%	3	15.79%				
Fall 2016	195	101	51.79%	65	33.33%						
Non-First	170	89	52.35%	57	33.53%						
First-Gen	25	12	48.00%	8	32.00%						
Fall 2017	221	130	58.82%								
Non-First	103	65	63.11%								
First-Gen	118	65	55.08%								
Fall 2018	279										
Non-First	132										
First-Gen	147										
Average	209	103	53.08%	62	32.93%	42	22.40%	27	13.85%	36	18.56%

Appendix C: Retention Analytics Inventory

CGUS UG

Retention by Age – Select Groups

Year	Cohort #	# Beg. 2nd YR	1st-2nd YR Retention	# Beg. 3rd YR	1st-3rd YR Retention	# Beg. 4th YR	1st-4th YR Retention	# Grad. in 4 YRS	4-YR Grad.	# Grad. in 5 YRS	5-YR Grad.
Fall 2013	194	81	41.75%	50	25.77%	36	18.56%	21	10.82%	36	18.56%
Age 22 & Under	117	62	53.45%	41	35.34%	30	25.86%	14	12.07%	28	24.14%
Age 23-30	61	16	26.26%	7	11.48%	5	8.20%	7	11.48%	8	13.11%
Fall 2014	196	105	53.57%	57	29.08%	37	18.88%	33	16.84%		
Age 22 & Under	124	77	63.64%	43	35.54%	28	23.14%	24	19.83%		
Age 23-30	52	18	34.62%	9	17.31%	4	7.69%	6	11.54%		
Fall 2015	168	100	59.52%	76	45.24%	52	30.95%				
Age 22 & Under	121	83	69.17%	64	53.33%	46	38.33%				
Age 23-30	34	11	32.35%	8	23.53%	3	8.82%				
Fall 2016	195	101	51.79%	65	33.33%						
Age 22 & Under	141	80	57.55%	53	38.13%						
Age 23-30	42	16	38.10%	7	16.67%						
Fall 2017	221	130	58.82%								
Age 22 & Under	170	107	62.94%								
Age 23-30	39	19	48.72%								
Fall 2018	279										
Age 22 & Under	2440										
Age 23-30	35										

Appendix C: Retention Analytics Inventory

CGUS UG

Year to Year Retention and Graduation Rates for Athletes and Non-Athletes

Year	Cohort #	# Beg. 2nd YR	1st-2nd YR Retention	# Beg. 3rd YR	1st-3rd YR Retention	# Beg. 4th YR	1st-4th YR Retention	# Grad. in 4 YRS	4-YR Grad.	# Grad. in 5 YRS	5-YR Graduation
Fall 2013	194	81	41.75%	50	25.77%	36	18.56%	21	10.82%	36	18.56%
Non-Athlete	137	46	33.58%	24	17.52%	18	13.14%	16	11.68%	24	17.52%
Athlete	57	35	61.40%	26	45.61%	18	31.58%	5	8.77%	12	21.05%
Fall 2014	196	105	53.57%	57	29.08%	37	18.88%	33	16.84%		
Non-Athlete	130	61	46.92%	25	19.23%	15	11.54%	21	16.15%		
Athlete	66	44	66.67%	32	48.48%	22	33.33%	12	18.18%		
Fall 2015	168	100	59.52%	76	45.24%	52	30.95%				
Non-Athlete	89	41	46.07%	27	30.34%	20	22.47%				
Athlete	79	59	74.68%	49	62.03%	32	40.51%				
Fall 2016	195	101	51.79%	65	33.33%						
Non-Athlete	100	44	44.00%	25	25.00%						
Athlete	95	57	60.00%	40	42.11%						
Fall 2017	221	130	58.82%								
Non-Athlete	104	51	49.04%								
Athlete	117	79	67.52%								
Fall 2018	279										
Non-Athlete	101										
Athlete	178										
Average	209	103	53.08%	62	32.93%	42	22.40%	27	13.85%	36	18.56%

Appendix C: Retention Analytics Inventory

Retention Programs and Support Services

Name	Description	Goals	Date Started	% of Cohort
AALPHA (African-American Leaders Promoting Higher Achievement)	AALPHA offers academic support resources for multicultural, primarily African-American students, as they transition and adjust to their new cultural and academic surroundings.	AALPHA's goals are to create an institutional climate in which multicultural students feel valued, included, supported, and empowered to reach their full academic and human potential; to build relationships between multicultural students and their peers, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni; to promote the engagement of multicultural students at the university; to create pathways for multicultural students to move successfully through their university careers and into rich and rewarding professional careers; and to know the resources available to students to achieve academic success.	Summer 2018	Not reported
Student Success Center (SSC) Global Voices	Global Voices helps non-native, English-speaking students to strengthen their communication, written, and comprehension skills so that they may be more successful in their academic programs at Life University. Students can find resources to enhance their reading, writing, comprehending, and speaking of the English language, along with other support.	Global Voices' goal is to assist with students' transition and adjustment to the students' new cultural and academic surroundings. The program's goals are to guide the students towards achieving their academic, cultural transitional and leadership goals as they join the university community.	Summer 2017	Not reported
SSC Skillshops	The Academic Success Skillshops focus on helping students develop effective learning strategies, such as improving their studying, goal setting, and time management skills through interactive processes and individual one-on-one appointments. The Campus Connections	Skillshops are designed to assist students in achieving their academic goals and attain life skills.	Fall 2019	Not reported

	<p>Skillshops focus on helping students develop effective life strategies that are needed outside of academics, such as financial literacy, media literacy, care and compassion, and counseling. "Don't Cancel Class" is an opportunity for faculty to request an Academic Support team member to present an academic success topic to the class.</p>			
SSC STARS Peer Mentoring Program	<p>STARS Peer Mentoring program is a mentorship that takes place between an experienced student (a peer mentor) and a new student (a peer mentee) at the university.</p>	None reported.	Winter 2019	Not reported
SSC Supplemental Instruction/Tutoring Program	<p>Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic support program that utilizes a peer assisted study model. SI sessions are regularly scheduled, informal reviews in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items.</p>	None reported.	Ongoing	Not reported

Appendix D: Student Engagement and Retention Committee (SERC) Members

Dr. Janna Bredeson- Dean of Students

Lindsey Farley- Marketing Project & Social Media Manager

Charles Farmer- Learning Specialist/Writing, College of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies

Dr. Daniel Friedman- Psychology Faculty, College of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies

Dr. Jana Holwick- Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Rebecca Koch- Director of Service Initiatives

Dr. Bernadette Lavender- Associate Dean, College of Chiropractic

Dr. Lauren Lunk- Director of College of Chiropractic Advisement

Dr. Nicoloy Myles- Director of Academic Support

Dr. Danielle Pichette- Associate Professor, Clinical Sciences

Patrick Reeves- Coordinator of Campus Activities

Dr. Tamika Russell- QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager (SERC Chair)

Bill Watson- QEP Director and CETL Director

Dr. Howard Wright- Director of Institutional Research

Eagle Pride Subcommittee

- Variety of members from various departments (Members will be changed as needed)

Lifeline Subcommittee

- Variety of members from various departments (Members will be changed as needed)

Early Alert Subcommittee

- Variety of members from various departments (Members will be changed as needed)

Student Engagement Subcommittee

- Variety of members from various departments (Members will be changed as needed)

Retention Data Subcommittee

- Variety of members from various departments (Members will be changed as needed)

Appendix E: QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager Job Description

The QEP Engagement and Retention Program Manager is responsible for coordinating, supporting, and assessing student retention and engagement initiatives at Life University.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

1. Coordinate with faculty and staff, departments, and units to plan, support, manage, and deliver programs and resources that promote student retention and engagement.
2. Oversee selection, design, and management of the institution's early alert system, and develop related processes to promote the effective use of the system to identify at-risk students.
3. Create and deliver training and development resources for faculty, staff, and students in support of assigned retention and engagement initiatives.
4. Collaborate with departments, committees, and individuals across the university to advance and enhance the effectiveness of assigned retention-related services and programs.
5. Develop and facilitate processes for the collection and analysis of data utilized to improve student retention.
6. Assess the overall effectiveness of assigned retention and engagement initiatives and formulate recommendations and plans for improvement.
7. Develop quarterly and annual assessment reports detailing the overall progress of the institution's retention and engagement programs.
8. Serve as a resource for information and knowledge concerning assigned student engagement and retention issues and topics.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Assume additional responsibilities and performs special projects as needed or directed.
2. Exhibit student centeredness in performance of all job duties.
3. Treat all others with respect; understands the impact of culture/background on the behavior of others; respects differences among the Life community and demonstrates inclusive behavior.
4. Anticipates, listens to, understands, and responds to customer needs.
5. Delivers work products and services to customers in a way that reflects positively upon the department and the University.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Education, Training and/or Experience

1. Master's Degree in Education or related field.
2. 2 years of experience working in an academic support, student success role, or related area in a higher education setting
3. Experience or familiarity with early alert systems and processes.
4. Experience developing resources and facilitating trainings and development programs for diverse audiences.
5. Experience designing and facilitating a variety of assessments strategies, including surveys, evaluations, and focus groups.
6. Experience managing academic support or student success initiatives in a higher education setting.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Personal Characteristics

