

# SUCCESS Team Charge

November 2023

## Context

Increasingly, U.S. universities are focusing attention on improving outcomes for students, especially those who begin pursuing a degree program but never graduate ([Kowarski, 10.28.22](#); [Nietzel, 12.13.22](#)). Foundations and policy research entities recommend adopting evidence-based approaches and examining programs and institutions that are successfully increasing graduation rates ([Bradley, 7.14.21](#); [Ascendium Education Group](#); [Lumina Foundation](#)). Such changes are leading to some gains, with the national average six-year graduation rate for students at four-year public institutions rising from 68% to 69% between 2020 and 2021 ([Carrasco, 2.2.22](#)). Currently, the University of Idaho's six-year graduation rate is ~61%. Through the Strategic Enrollment Plan, we've made important strides to increase both new enrollments and retention. Over the next three years, we'll focus further on retention, with emphasis on faculty leadership in revising curricula and instruction to promote success.

## Priorities

At U of I, we rightly take pride in preparing work-ready graduates, whatever their demographics. With ~41% first-generation and ~22% Pell-recipient students, we are committed to creating strong outcomes for learners from all backgrounds. But, like those at other universities, our success rates are not equitable. For example, of our Fall 2016 cohort, ~63% of continuing-generation students graduated in six years, compared with ~57% of first-generation students. Different outcomes begin in students' first year: we retain 73% of all students from the first year to the sophomore year. But we retain only 69% of Pell and 67% of first-generation students.

To improve outcomes for all students, President Green has appointed the Step-Up Completion: Collaboration, Evidence, Synergies, & Support (SUCCESS) Team to **improve graduation rates from our current 61%, which matches the national R2 average, to 77%, matching the current national R1 average.**

The SUCCESS Team's charge is to define three broad student success initiatives that focus on curriculum and/or instruction and use evidence-based approaches shown to deepen learning and improve academic achievement on other campuses. These initiatives should leverage U of I's existing strengths, scale cost-effectively, and build momentum to garner campus support.

## Recommendations Report

The SUCCESS Team will submit a recommendations report to President Green and Provost Lawrence by May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The report should define three student success initiatives, list approaches to pursue each, and address several topics for each:

- Evidence supporting it, including examples from other universities where relevant.
- Existing U of I strengths the initiative will leverage.
- Explanation of why this initiative is one of the top three with most potential to increase U of I graduation rates.
- Implementation plans, including plans to engage relevant stakeholder groups.
- Budget requests explaining what ROI is expected for each initiative and why.