



OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Public Meeting Notice

September 11, 2025

TO: Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees

FROM: Sabrina Prud'homme, University Board Secretary

RE: Notice of Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees

The Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees will hold a special meeting on the date and at the location set forth below.

The board will discuss and vote on “Toward a *(More)* Resilient SOU: A Plan to Reimagine the University.” This is the university’s plan to address structural financial deficits and support the strategic vision of Southern Oregon University. A budget update will be included in this discussion.

There are no board retreat activities occurring on this date.

The meeting will occur as follows:

Thursday, September 18, 2025

9:00 to 11:30 a.m. (or until business concludes)

Location: Virtual Meeting

Members of the public may view the proceedings at <https://sou.zoom.us/j/89593590378> at the time of the meeting.

Materials for the meeting are available at governance.sou.edu.

If special ADA accommodations are required, please contact Holly Frazier at (541) 552-8055 at least 48 hours in advance.



**Board of Trustees
Special Meeting
September 18, 2025**





Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Thursday, September 18, 2025

9:00 – 11:30 a.m. (or until business concludes)

Zoom: <https://sou.zoom.us/j/89593590378>

– Meeting to be conducted virtually –

AGENDA

9:00 a.m.	1	Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum	Chair Sheila Clough
	1.1	Welcome and Opening Remarks	
	1.2	Roll Call and Declaration of a Quorum	Sabrina Prud'homme, SOU, Board Secretary
	1.3	Agenda Review	Chair Sheila Clough
	2	Action, Information, and Discussion Items	
9:10	2.1	Toward a (More) Resilient SOU: A Plan to Reimagine the University (Action)	Chair Sheila Clough; President Rick Bailey
	2.1.1	Budget Update	President Rick Bailey
11:30 a.m.	3	Adjournment	Chair Sheila Clough

Call to Order / Roll / Declaration of a Quorum

Toward a (More) Resilient SOU: A Plan to Reimagine the University (Action)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The final RESILIENCY PLAN for Southern Oregon University (SOU), dated September 2025, outlines a strategic transformation to address ongoing and severe financial challenges following consistent declining state funding and enrollment, rising costs, and external pressures that threaten fiscal sustainability. Despite significant gains as a result of SOU FORWARD in 2023—such as \$22 million in grant support, a 125% increase in philanthropic giving, and innovative revenue diversification efforts—the long-term fiscal health of the university is at risk. In June 2025, the SOU Board of Trustees instructed the university to achieve \$5 million in budget reductions by the end of FY 2025-26. Recognizing that \$5 million would solve the fiscal problem for one year only, University President Rick Bailey declared financial exigency on August 1, 2025, as a means to transform SOU into a smaller, more resilient institution with an annual Educational and General (E&G) budget target of approximately \$60 million.

Guided by the principles of urgency, mission alignment, equity, transparency, data-informed decision-making, shared responsibility, and long-term sustainability, the RESILIENCY PLAN emphasizes building a university that is more focused, more responsive, and more resilient. This vision and its imperatives are detailed below:

MORE Focused

SOU and its regional partner universities are not funded by the legislature to be comprehensive as defined in state law. While SOU will maintain a broad portfolio of academic programs, the number and scope of these programs will contract.

MORE Responsive

The regional and state economy will dictate more of the university's strategic direction. SOU is not resourced to be all things to all people, so the university will be responsive to its regional mission, ensuring that workforce needs are met and that graduates are prepared to succeed in the local, regional, and state economy.

MORE Resilient

SOU has struggled during the last decade to invest in strategic initiatives that can change its trajectory. With a healthy reserve, the university can weather unexpected financial storms, and also invest in projects and programs that boost enrollment and student success. As an employer, SOU needs to remain competitive by investing in its workforce through compensation and other means to maintain a happy and productive employee base.

To achieve this vision, SOU will streamline its academic portfolio to 30 majors and 19 minors, sunsetting low-enrolled or less regionally relevant programs, and restructuring administrative and student support services to achieve more than \$10 million in savings over four years. Key academic adjustments include

retaining majors that lead students toward the health sciences, the arts, business, education, and other interdisciplinary programs aligned with regional workforce demands.

MAJORS Proposed for Elimination (in RED) in the Provisional Plan

MAJORS Retained in the Final RESILIENCY PLAN (in GREEN)

Art
Biology
Biomedical Science
Business Administration
Communication
Computer Science
Creating Writing (Retained)
Criminology & Criminal Justice
Digital Cinema
Early Childhood Development
Ecology & Conservation (Retained)
Economics (Retained)
Education Studies
Emerging Media + Design (Retained)
English
Environmental Science & Policy
Healthcare Administration (Retained)
Health & Exercise Science
History
Human Service (Retained)
Innovation & Leadership
Interdisciplinary Studies
Media Innovation (Retained)
Music
Music Industry and Production Studies
Outdoor Adventure Leadership (Retained)
Psychology
Sociology & Anthropology
Sustainability
Theatre

Sunsetting Majors

Chemistry
Financial Mathematics
Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies
International Studies
Management
Mathematics (added in the final plan)
Mathematics/Computer Science
Power & Politics
Spanish
Sustainable Tourism Management

MINORS Proposed for Elimination (in RED) in the Provisional Plan

MINORS Retained in the Final RESILIENCY PLAN (in GREEN)

Business Administration	International Studies
Chemistry	Latin American Studies
Communication Studies	Management
Criminology & Criminal Justice	Marketing
Digital Cinema	Mathematics
Early Childhood Development	Military Science
Economics	Native American Studies (Retained)
Education	Philosophy
English	Psychology
Environmental Science & Policy	Rhetoric and Reason
eSports Management	Social Sciences
Ethics	Special Education
Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies	Sociology & Anthropology
Health & Physical Education Teacher Education	Sustainability
Health Promotion	Tourism Management
History	

GRADUATE PROGRAMS Proposed for Elimination (in RED) in the Provisional Plan

Outdoor Leadership and Expedition Leadership

The Honors College also is eliminated in the final RESILIENCY PLAN. It will shift to an Honors Program based within the academic majors.

Administrative changes involve targeted personnel reductions across all units, including the President's Office, Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, University Advancement, Student Affairs, and Athletics, with some positions funded through alternative sources like the SOU Foundation, JPR Foundation, or grants. Workforce impacts are significant, with a total reduction of 150 full-time equivalent positions combining prior SOU FORWARD cuts and current RESILIENCY PLAN actions—distributed among faculty, unclassified, and classified staff.

Overall, the plan acknowledges the emotional and operational challenges ahead but commits to supporting employees and students through the transition. It aims to position SOU as a sustainable, mission-driven institution capable of weathering future financial uncertainties while continuing to serve its students and community effectively. The university leadership stresses that this transformation is not about individual performance but about ensuring institutional viability and relevance in a changing higher education landscape.



FINAL PLAN

TOWARD A (MORE) RESILIENT SOU

A Plan to
Reimagine the University

September 2025

Becoming
SOUTHERN
OREGON
UNIVERSITY **Resilient**





TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	2
CURRENT SITUATION	3
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	5
ASSUMPTIONS	6
CAMPUS INPUT	6
STRATEGY	7
FINANCIAL EXIGENCY	12
PROVISIONAL PLAN	13
THE FINAL PLAN	17
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE	20
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS	21
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES	26
COLLEGE OF NATURAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES	38
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS	50
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION	53
HANNON LIBRARY	55
STUDENT AFFAIRS AND DEAN OF STUDENTS	56
UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT	57
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	58
INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS	58
IMPACT ON WORKFORCE	60
PROJECTED GENERAL FUND SAVINGS	62

TOWARD A (MORE) RESILIENT SOU

PREFACE

In March, 2023, SOU adopted SOU FORWARD as a strategic response to a structural deficit that required immediate and comprehensive action. At that time, the SOU Board of Trustees directed university academic and administrative leaders to recommend a path that would stabilize campus-wide operations.

The core purpose of SOU FORWARD was to move the institution toward fiscal health and stability by reducing costs, leveraging revenues, and diversifying revenue sources. This strategic realignment was designed to ensure financial viability and support strategic growth, ultimately aiming to meet the academic needs of future students, the region, and the state.

The SOU FORWARD strategy was built upon four planks:

- **Cost Management:** This involved making decisions that affected academic and administrative programs and employees. The plan called for the elimination of 81.83 FTE (full-time equivalent) positions—equal to 13% of the workforce—through reorganization, process improvement, and program adjustments. Ultimately, \$13 million in recurring costs were achieved.
- **Grants:** SOU aimed to leverage numerous funding opportunities from state, federal, foundations, and other private entities to augment or add value to existing programs.
- **Philanthropy:** The university had seen significant growth in fundraising, with a 125% increase in giving over five years and was embarking on its inaugural comprehensive campaign to support academic programs, faculty, and student services. Using private dollars to leverage public dollars can bend the cost curve for the university.
- **Revenue Diversification:** The pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities and projects were envisioned as a means to capitalize on revenue streams beyond the state allocation and income from tuition and fees. Examples included:
 1. Becoming the first public university to produce all of its own daytime electricity through a solar initiative.

2. Replacing the Cascade Housing Complex with an older adult living community to create synergy between residents, students, and the university.
3. Developing a University Business District to provide potential additional sources of recurring revenue.
4. Continuous improvement efforts, such as leveraging changes to the Student Success and Completion Model (SSCM) to bring in additional state funding.

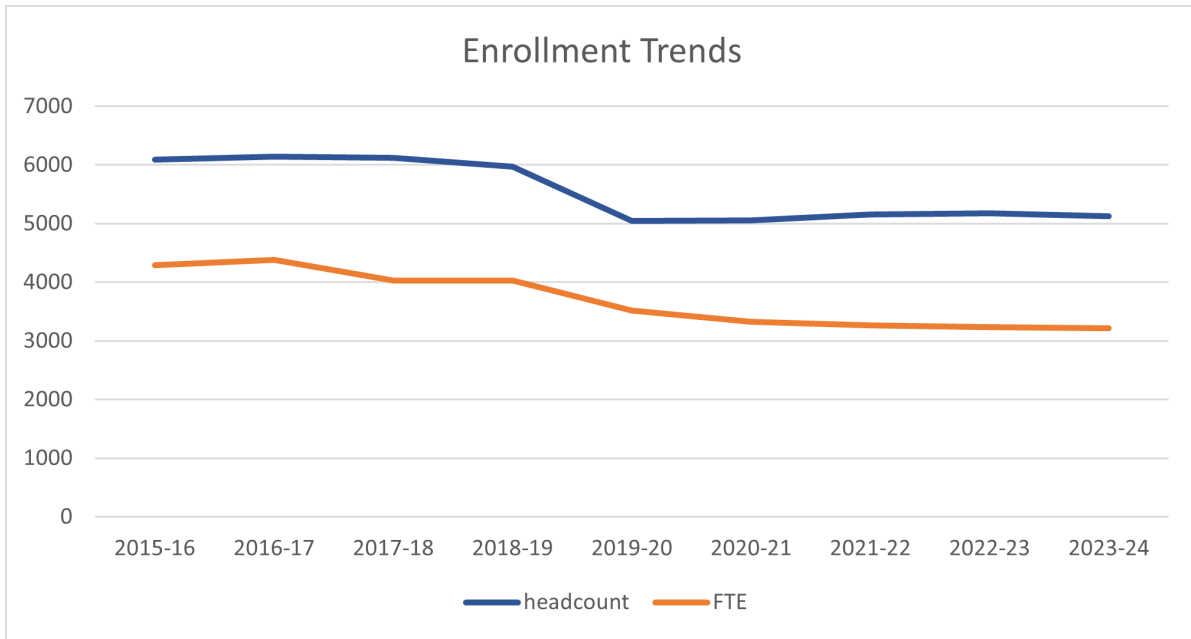
CURRENT SITUATION

The primary purpose of SOU FORWARD was to create a new fiscal model for the university, one that could reduce the university's reliance on state funding and tuition revenue. Now, just two years later, SOU faces another significant financial crisis. Despite our best efforts, much of the university's current crisis is caused by forces external to the university and outside the scope of its immediate control.

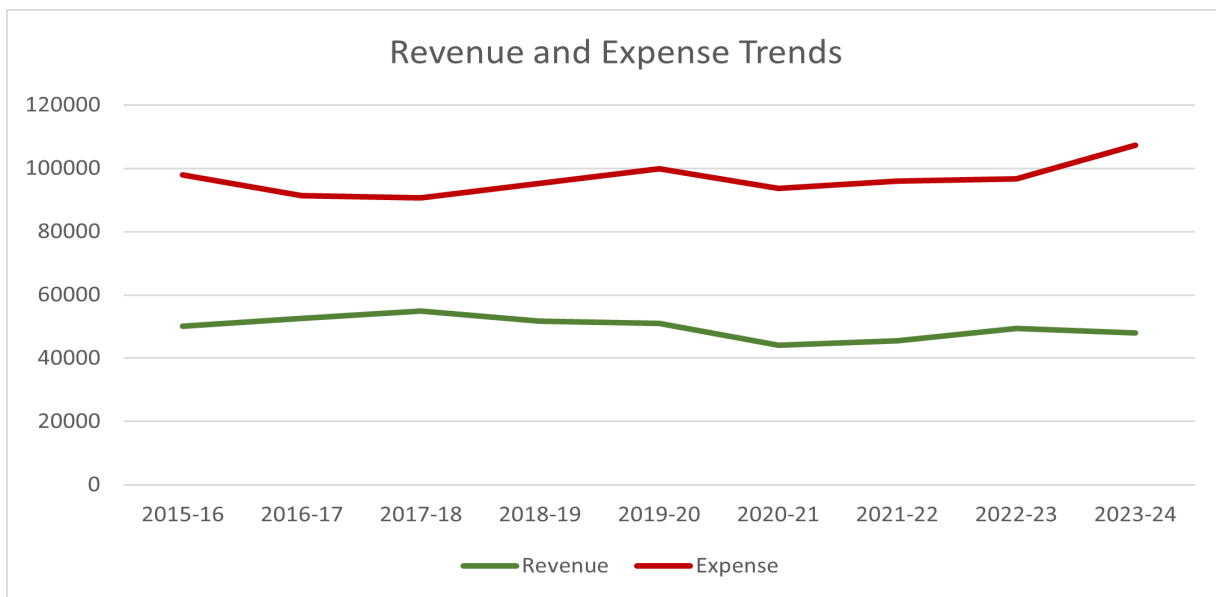
Beyond the cost management piece of SOU FORWARD, the plan is still being implemented. There are extremely positive outcomes thus far, including:

- \$22 million in grant support since 2021, resulting in \$2.8 million in indirect funding
- \$50 million raised in philanthropic gifts since 2021; this marks a dramatic shift from previous totals—going from an average of \$2 million to \$10 million per year in just ten years.
- Grants for the solar initiative totaling \$5.8 million since 2023
- Strong potential development partners for the older adult living complex

Despite these extremely positive outcomes, the university's two key revenue streams (tuition and state funding) are declining while costs continue to rise at a rate that is unsustainable. According to data at the Higher Education Coordination Commission, SOU's FTE enrollment declined from 4,108 in 2015 to 3,209 in 2024. The corresponding headcount declined from 6,215 in 2015 to 5,129 in 2024. It is also highly likely that the federal government's intent to dismantle support systems for low-income students also will have a devastating impact on student behavior.



Additionally, funding from the Oregon legislature for the 2025-2027 biennium will be at Current Service Level—essentially a “cuts budget,” since it does not match the basic increases in costs like retirement (PERS) and medical benefits (PEBB) that are outside of the university’s control. As a result, Oregon has slid from being ranked 44th in the country to 46th out of 50 states in terms of state support per student at its public universities.



Note: This information is taken from our audited financial statements which show the sum total of all activity on the campus. Whereas, the proforma shows activity and/or projections specific to the E&G Fund.

As a university, the largest expense is in personnel, with the aforementioned costs of PERS and healthcare benefits driving costs upward. Other costs—for those items generally referred to as services and supplies—are also rising. Even with the cost reduction measures implemented as part of SOU FORWARD, the university’s academic and administrative infrastructure is still out of balance for an institution with 3,500 students.

To be clear, reducing expenses remains just one part of our strategy, and we will continue to press ahead with our efforts to garner philanthropic gifts and grants and diversify our revenue streams.

In June 2025, the SOU Governing Board of Trustees directed the university administration to identify \$5 million in budget reductions to be achieved before the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year. They also asked for alternative proposals if the administration determined that \$5 million would be insufficient to address the structural fiscal challenges. Ultimately, SOU needs to be a smaller university to work within a framework where revenues are always greater than costs. As challenging as this work is, there is an imperative to envision a smaller, more resilient university—one that can withstand strong headwinds. If SOU FORWARD were to be considered the first of two phases, this current transformation effort (RESILIENCY) would be phase two—envisioning a smaller university as opposed to the current size of the institution, which as of June 2025 had an anticipated annual operating cost of \$71 million.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As was done with SOU FORWARD, we developed a set of guiding principles to ensure that we remained as transparent as possible with the campus community while recognizing the need to act with speed and intentionality. Those involved in developing this plan were also keenly aware that many would be unhappy with the recommendations, as the campus will lose treasured colleagues due to layoffs and restructuring. The guiding principles were:

- Urgency and Decisiveness: The timeline demanded rapid action and difficult choices.
- Mission Alignment: All decisions needed to align with SOU’s core mission, preserving academic quality and student success as much as possible.
- Center Equity in Decision-making: A commitment to removing barriers to access, opportunity, and participation needed to be maintained.

- Transparency and Communication: Open and honest communication with all constituents (faculty, staff, students, alumni, board) needed to be maintained to strengthen trust and morale.
- Data-Informed Decisions: Needed to rely on data to identify areas for reductions and assess potential impacts. There was also an important distinction made between data-driven and data-informed decision-making.
- Shared Responsibility: The collective challenge required collaboration across the entire university.
- Long-Term Sustainability: While addressing the immediate crisis, the team needed to begin to lay the groundwork for long-term financial health.

ASSUMPTIONS

The current environment is shaped by a significant reduction of state funding, beginning with the biennial budget that began on July 1, 2025. A level of uncertainty in state funding was identified as a persistent challenge in SOU FORWARD, and that uncertainty emerged during the 2025 legislative session, with higher education across the state set to receive less state funding. Work to recover losses in enrollment and retention remains a top university priority, and that work is ongoing. Because of budget timing, this plan needed to be enacted with speed and intentionality, with some cost savings to be achieved this current fiscal year.

The team working to develop this plan strategically considered all programs with the understanding that because of our environment, the institution had to transform to become more focused and less comprehensive. While there are some who may disagree about the import of particular programs and services, university leaders recognize that some functions are essential to ensure operational effectiveness, regulatory compliance, and future-proofing the institution where possible.

CAMPUS INPUT

SOU has a culture of employee engagement, and members of the SOU campus community submitted over 100 pages of ideas and proposals to decrease costs, rethink business processes, or reconfigure academic and student support programs. These inputs stimulated conversation and ultimately helped university leaders to develop the framework for the Provisional Plan. Following the release of the Provisional Plan on August 1, 2025, senior administrators and campus leaders received over 1,000 emails, phone calls, and written messages with recommendations, comments, and proposals. All of

those were considered and reviewed as a part of our process, and they have contributed to the improvement of this final RESILIENCY PLAN. We are extremely grateful for the collegiality of the SOU family and the care with which employees show for students and for one another.

To maintain as much transparency as possible, University President Rick Bailey held a Campus Conversation in August, and also updated the campus each week—sharing progress toward understanding the university’s finances, data collection, and decision-making. He and other university leaders also met multiple times with the university’s shared governance partners and union leaders to seek feedback and participation. Academic leaders, including department chairs, deans, and members of Faculty Senate, were pivotal in the process, as they submitted thoughts and ideas about how to maintain core academic programs while also recommending changes based on enrollment trends, graduation rates, and the impact on an intentional effort to become a more interdisciplinary university. Finally, the Governing Board of Trustees held a listening session in late August to hear directly from interested constituents ahead of its vote on the RESILIENCY PLAN in September 2025.

STRATEGY AND VISION

Over the course of the 2024-25 academic year, the SOU campus community engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process. While the final strategic plan has not yet been presented to the Board of Trustees, the draft—which has received significant praise and buy-in from the campus community—addresses answers to three critical questions:

1. What does it look like when students are thriving?
2. What does it look like team members (faculty and staff) are thriving?
3. What does it look like when the institution as a whole is thriving?

The objectives identified by the campus community that will contribute to the “thriving” of these groups indicate that the way fiscal challenges have been addressed in the past is insufficient. In essence, our campus community has indicated that we must think fundamentally differently about how we manage the fiscal resources of the institution. With the current state-funding landscape, sub-optimal declines in enrollment over the last decade, and unprecedented uncertainty because of federal administrative initiatives, it became clear that the strategy required for this work needed a paradigm shift.

Rather than looking across the university to determine things we could further eliminate with minimal impact to students and employees, the more appropriate question was to articulate a vision that would underpin the decisions at hand and also create a projected destination for the institution.

This vision, then, is to create an SOU that is:

MORE Focused

- SOU and its regional partner universities are not funded by the legislature to be comprehensive as defined in state law. While SOU will maintain a broad portfolio of academic programs, the number and scope of these programs will contract.

MORE Responsive

- The regional and state economy will dictate more of the university's strategic direction. SOU is not resourced to be all things to all people, so the university will be responsive to its regional mission, ensuring that workforce needs are met and that graduates are prepared to succeed in the local, regional, and state economy.

MORE Resilient

- SOU has struggled during the last decade to invest in strategic initiatives that can change its trajectory. With a healthy reserve, the university can weather unexpected financial storms and also invest in projects and programs that boost enrollment and student success. As an employer, SOU needs to remain competitive by investing in its workforce through compensation and other means to maintain a happy and productive employee base.

Using this vision and an analysis of the university's actual revenues and expenses, recent enrollment trends, unsatisfactory retention and student success rates, potential impacts of likely federal maneuvers, and the costs incurred by implementing this plan, university leaders agreed that an initial appropriate budget target should be in the range of \$60 million per year. With that as a new target, and the paradigm shift of "building" rather than "subtracting," we asked ourselves the following questions:

1. What does a \$60 million university look like?
2. What should be the scope of its academic portfolio?
3. What programs and services are absolutely required in order for the university to operate?

There was an acknowledgement that we were not starting from scratch in the intellectual exercise of what a \$60 million university could look like. University leaders used the NACUBO Pathway to Sustainability as a comprehensive framework to provide guidance to assess our financial health and develop strategies for long-term viability. Using this framework as a roadmap, a holistic evaluation was conducted of SOU's business model, identifying areas for increased efficiency and innovation, and using data-informed decisions to align resources with priorities to secure a stable future. Further, we responded to messages from government and business leaders who are strongly encouraging Oregon's universities to tie program offerings and student success to state and regional economic needs and priorities.

Throughout this entire process, there was a recognition that all programs and personnel are of high quality, and that cuts would have a deeply personal impact. These decisions are not a referendum on any individual or programmatic performance; rather, they are based on providing access to the most students as possible while meeting regional priorities and needs.

We also acknowledge that a \$60 million target was simply an intellectual target, to allow us to imagine the building of an institution from the ground up. The plan presented here does not transform the institution into a \$60 million enterprise overnight (in fact, with annual escalating costs, it is likely that we will never achieve that number anyway). Rather, the goal is to build an institution that reflects the actual revenues and expenditures of the institution, and is more focused, responsive, and resilient.

A New Financial Culture

A key component of this plan is a fundamental shift in our financial culture. For many years, SOU has operated within a framework of declining state support and increasing operating costs, a challenge faced by universities across the state and nation. To ensure our long-term stability and continued mission of providing a top-tier education, we must move beyond simply managing these challenges. We must become a university where fiscal mindfulness and accountability are embedded in every decision we make. This cultural change is not about centralizing control, but about collaboratively building a more sustainable and prosperous future for SOU, its students, and its community. This is a challenge that we will tackle together.

To achieve this critical shift, we will take concrete and deliberate action. The university will immediately begin a comprehensive review of its existing fiscal policies and procedures. We will revise these policies to align with our new, fiscally-minded culture and to ensure greater transparency and accountability at every level. Following the policy revisions, we will develop and implement a series of robust training programs. These trainings will equip every member of the SOU community with the knowledge and tools necessary to make informed, responsible financial decisions that support the university's mission.

We understand that change can be challenging, but we are confident that the SOU community will embrace this new direction with the same dedication and passion that defines our institution. This shift is not a burden; it is a shared commitment to a brighter future. We are not just building a plan for financial health; we are building a more resilient, more unified, and more successful Southern Oregon University for generations to come. We will embark on this journey together, supporting each other every step of the way, and emerge a stronger institution because of it.

FACTORS AND CRITERIA

As noted above, university leaders understood their task to be one of “building” rather than “subtracting.” During this work, all campus operations were considered alongside the following factors:

- Institutional guidelines and mission
- Operational requirements regardless of SOU’s size
- State and regional economic needs and priorities
- Admissions and graduation patterns
- Staffing needs for the next biennium
- Interdependence of academic programs
- Reconfiguration of majors or programs of study
- Revenue generation opportunities

We then used those factors to evaluate operations using the following criteria:

Factors related to decreasing cost

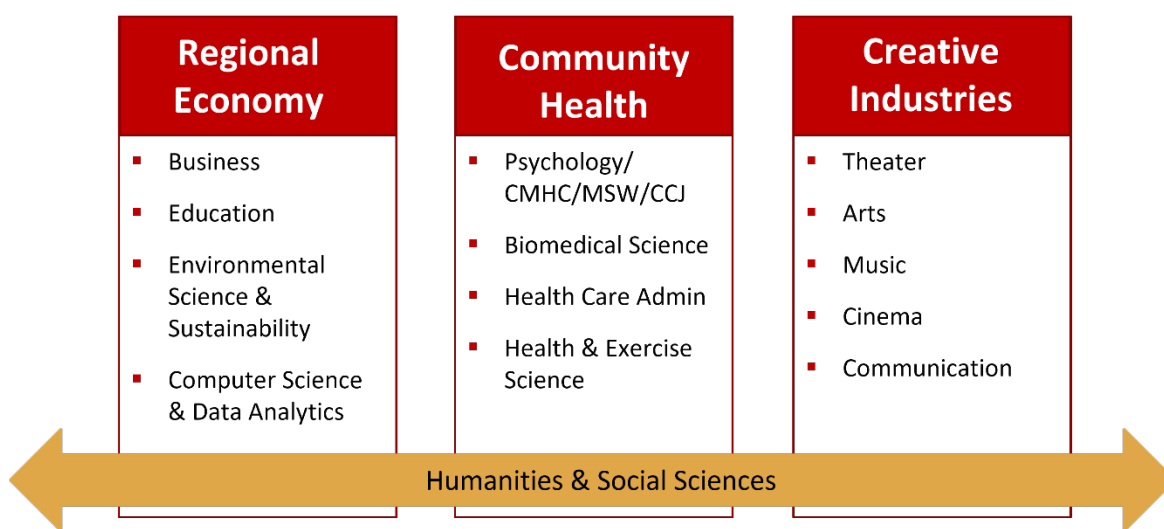
- Quality of programming
- Salary savings
- Employee morale & quality of life
- Damage or negative impact to other programs
- Efficiency
- Impact on service and supply budgets
- Institutional reputation
- Impact on workload
- Streamlining of complex programs and functions
- Alternative funding resources

Factors related to increasing revenue

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Reputation
- Return on investment
- Impact on workload
- Revenue generation and diversification

FINANCIAL EXIGENCY

In recognition of the current environment, imagining a more responsive and resilient institution involved a recognition that it is not resourced to be “all things to all people.” To thrive, the university’s academic offerings need to be focused and in concert with regional economic and workforce needs and statewide priorities. The following provides a visual depiction of what a focused portfolio will look like. While this is not a list of particular majors or programs, it does represent core areas where SOU already has or can develop strong academic programming and how those existing programs link with the needs of our regional economic demands and workforce needs.



On August 1, 2025, University President Rick Bailey declared financial exigency as the only path toward transforming the university. Financial exigency is generally defined as an imminent and severe financial crisis that threatens an institution’s ability to survive. It is a mechanism within the framework of the university’s collective bargaining agreement with the Associated Professors of Southern Oregon University (APSOU), the faculty union. It is not a declaration of bankruptcy, nor is it a pathway to something more dire. In partnership with the leadership of APSOU, a joint document was signed that recognizes that declaring exigency was the best pathway to a more fiscally sustainable and thriving institution. As a reflection of the years of financial challenges that led to this declaration, it is important to note that this RESILIENCY PLAN is not the final answer or solution to the problem. Rather, exigency is an institutional state of being that reflects both the financial challenge and a strongly developed plan for

attaining a state of financial stability. A state of financial exigency will remain in effect until our financial crises is resolved or significantly improves. The university will engage with the Board of Trustees and the campus community to determine the financial targets required to exit the state of exigency.

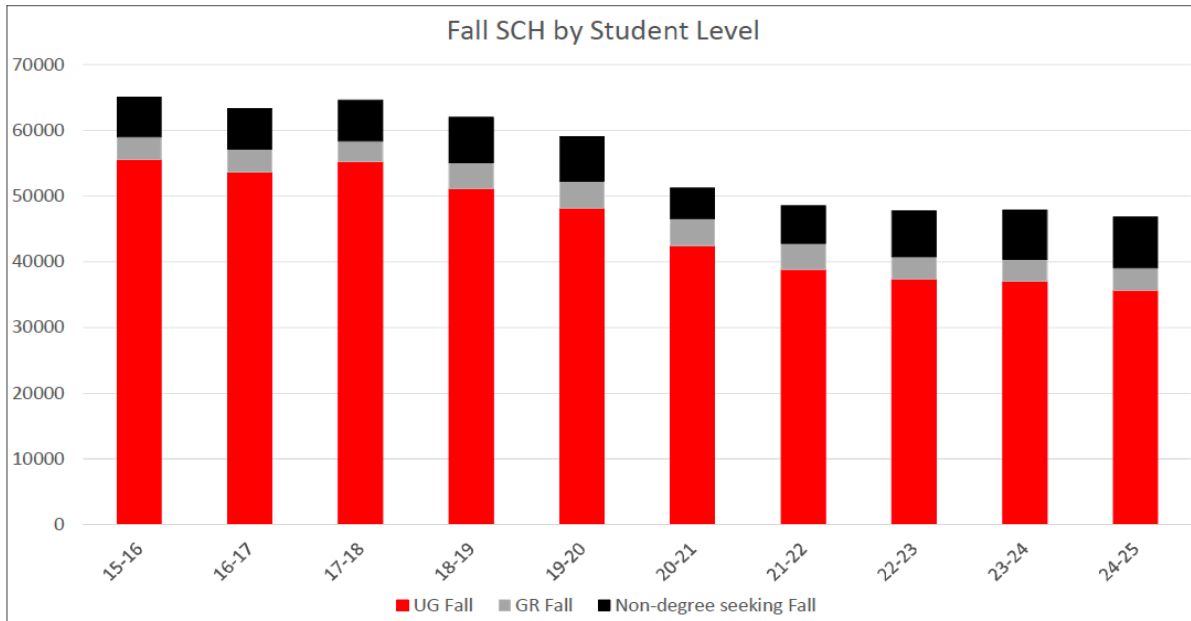
PROVISIONAL PLAN

The university published a Provisional Plan on August 1, 2025, following the evaluation of multiple variables to evaluate pathways to sustainability. These assessments resulted in the determination that SOU would pursue the pathway to exigency. As decisions for academic program changes were reviewed, each potential choice was evaluated using these factors:

- a. ***Institutional guidelines and mission:*** All decisions were made in alignment with the Southern Oregon University mission to be a regionally engaged learning community that inspires curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and civic engagement, preparing all learners for lives of purpose and professional success in a diverse and evolving world.

We do this through:

- Student Success and Professional Preparation: Achieving student success, professional preparation, and civic engagement through service excellence, evolving technologies, and innovative curriculum.
 - Access, Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity: Fostering access, equity, inclusion, and diversity in thought and practice, and preparing learners to be responsible, engaged citizens in a democracy.
 - Regional and Global Impact: Promoting economic vitality, sustainability, cultural enrichment, and social well-being in the region, the state, the nation, and the world.
- b. ***University admission patterns, historical, current and projected:*** All decisions were made in conjunction with the admissions patterns over the past 10 years, focusing specifically on variables from the past 5 years of program-specific data. Additionally, the projected impact of program changes on future enrollment was considered and included in the final assumptions for enrollment projections.



Academic Year	Undergraduate Degree-Seeking Students	Graduate Degree-Seeking Students	Non-degree Seeking Students (i.e. ASC)
2015-2016	55,530	3,451	6,101
2016-2017	53,650	3,490	6,192
2017-2018	55,177	3,185	6,227
2018-2019	51,081	3,992	6,885
2019-2020	48,148	4,092	6,821
2020-2021	42,462	4,072	4,681
2021-2022	38,821	3,947	5,757
2022-2023	37,354	3,365	7,022
2023-2024	36,988	3,379	7,495
2024-2025	35,632	3,389	7,808
<i>Total % Change</i>	<i>36% Decline</i>	<i>2% Decline</i>	<i>22% Increase</i>

- c. **Program Chairs' and Deans' (Previously the Directors') evaluations of the curriculum staffing needs for the next biennium:** Evaluation of staffing impacts reflect the need for consideration of teach-out plans, additional advising support for students in degree-program transitions, and the workload needed to rebuild the academic portfolio as described in this provisional plan.

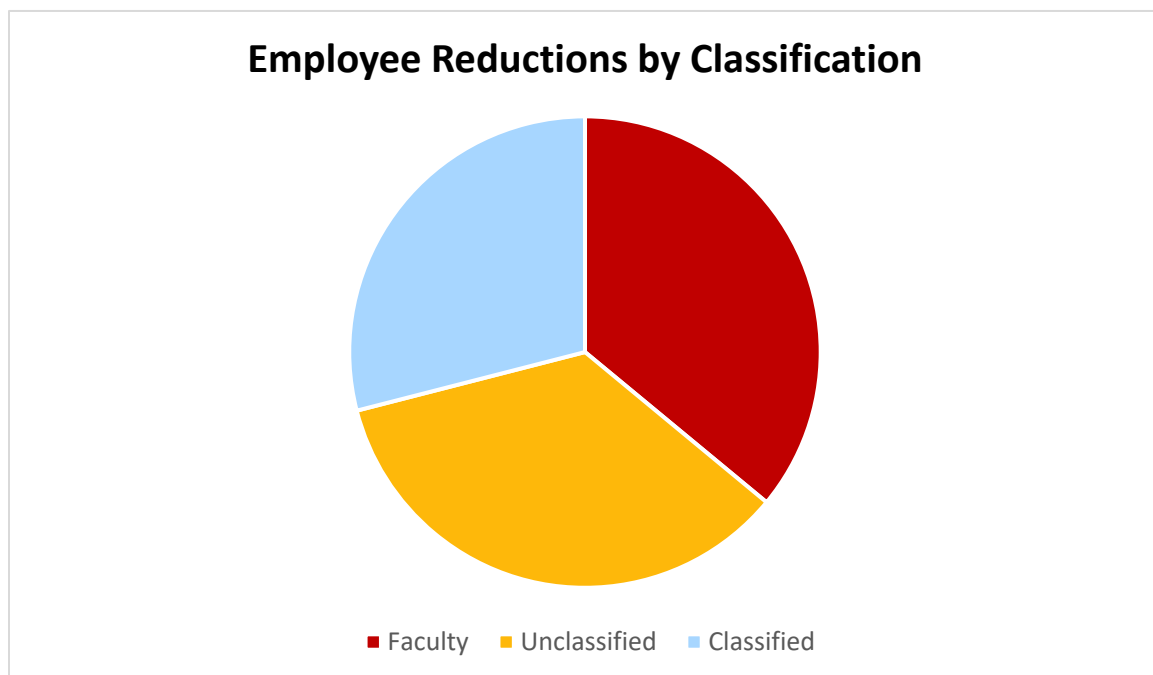
- d. ***The number of sabbaticals, retirements and other personnel requests that require consideration for staffing:*** All current sabbaticals are being honored as previously approved. As such, any back-fill needs for term-by-term faculty for teaching requirements will be supported with this plan. Further, sabbatical applications will continue to be accepted and reviewed in the 2025-26 academic year, but the approval of those applications may be delayed for up to two years. Furthermore, until such time that the university is no longer in a state of exigency, applications for tenure relinquishment and affiliated benefits will be denied and later reviewed per an established priority scheme. All other personnel requests will continue to be assessed for the overall financial impact on the institution.
- e. ***The dependence of other programs within the University on the programs:*** Each program was evaluated in context of the potential impact on other programs. All potential programming changes were evaluated on these criteria:

Decreasing Costs:	Increasing revenue:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintaining quality of programming ○ Salary Savings ○ Employee morale & quality of life ○ Damage or negative impact to other programs ○ Efficiency ○ Impact on service & supply (S&S) budget ○ Institutional Reputation ○ Impact on Workload ○ Streamlining of complex programs and functions ○ Alternative funding resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recruitment ○ Retention ○ Reputation ○ Return on investment ○ Impact on workload ○ Revenue generation and diversification

For example, analysis of a particular program involved a review of specific data that included student credit hour (SCH) to faculty equivalent loading unit (ELU) ratios, current and recent historical enrollment data and trends, and factors that evaluate the marketability of particular degrees in local, regional, and state economies. Further evaluation included variables such as the impact of the degree program on other programs, the state Student Success and Completion Model, total number of annual graduates, and recent trends in employment data.

- f. ***The ability of existing faculty to cover courses in other programs:*** The synthesis of existing majors and minors brings an opportunity to streamline all curricular programs. The majors and minors presented in this plan pull directly from the existing faculty expertise, existing courses, and areas identified as high-student-demand.

- g. ***The possible reconfiguration of majors or programs of study:*** The Provisional Plan on August 1, 2025, proposed the reduction of academic offerings to 23 majors and 24 minors. That consolidation consisted of synthesizing current courses and existing faculty talent, resulting in a streamlined offering of academic programs. After consultation with academic leaders and the campus community, this final plan consists of 30 majors, 19 minors, and goal of reviewing all certificates for efficacy, relevance, and efficiency.
- h. ***Balance between academic programs and other services:*** The decision to decrease academic offerings has been made with a focused effort on bringing the university into closer alignment between academic programs and student enrollment trends. While programmatic offerings will decrease, there continues to be a commitment to invest in the personnel needed to support this level of academic transformation. In addition, every non-academic operational enterprise at the institution was considered. Ultimately, cost savings from non-academic programs constitute an important and significant portion of the overall cost savings outlined in the final RESILIENCY PLAN.



	FACULTY	UNCLASSIFIED	CLASSIFIED	TOTALS
RESILIENCY PLAN	28.00	28.00	14.00	70.00
SOU FORWARD	27.03	24.75	30.05	81.83
TOTALS	55.03	51.75	44.05	151.83
	36%	34%	30%	100%

The Board of Trustees has instituted a target fund balance for our university equivalent to the operational costs of one full fall academic term. We know that it will take time to reach this target, so the goal of this plan is to position the university to make steady annual incremental additions to the fund balance. The exact values each year will be weighed against three factors: 1) the need for continual student enrollment initiatives; 2) targeted funding for student retention gains; and 3) talent management (taking care of our faculty and staff).

THE FINAL RESILIENCY PLAN

Following many weeks of data analysis, conversations with constituents, and direct input from students, alumni, faculty, administrators, academic leaders, and staff, the university adjusted the scope of academic programs that had been proposed for elimination in the Provisional Plan. The following is a full list of the academic majors and minors at the university that are part of the final RESILIENCY PLAN:

RETAINED MAJORS

Art
 Biology
 Biomedical Science
 Business Administration
 Communication
 Computer Science
 Creating Writing
 Criminology & Criminal Justice
 Digital Cinema
 Early Childhood Development
 Ecology & Conservation
 Economics
 Education Studies
 Emerging Media + Design (EMDA)
 English
 Environmental Science & Policy

Healthcare Administration
Health & Exercise Science
History
Human Service
Innovation & Leadership
Interdisciplinary Studies
Media Innovation
Music
Music Industry and Production Studies
Outdoor Adventure Leadership
Psychology
Sociology & Anthropology
Sustainability
Theatre

SUNSETTING MAJORS

Chemistry
Financial Mathematics
Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies
International Studies
BAS in Management
Mathematics
Mathematics/Computer Science
Power & Politics
Spanish Language and Culture
Sustainable Tourism Management

RETAINED MINORS

Business Administration
Chemistry
Communication Studies
Criminology & Criminal Justice
Digital Cinema
Economics
Education
English
Environmental Science & Policy
Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies
Health & Physical Education Teacher Education
Health Promotion
History
Mathematics
Military Science
Native American Studies
Psychology
Sociology & Anthropology
Sustainability

SUNSETTING MINORS

Early Childhood Development
eSports Management
Ethics
International Studies
Latin American Studies
Marketing
Philosophy
Rhetoric and Reason
Social Sciences
Special Education
Tourism Management

RETAINED GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Business Administration (MBA)
Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)
Education (MSEd)
Spanish Language Teaching
Teaching (MAT)
Theatre Production & Design

SUNSETTING GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Outdoor Adventure & Expedition Leadership

Four-Year Budget Reduction

In addition to creating a more focused academic portfolio, university leaders evaluated all other administrative and student support programs across campus. The following pages illustrate reductions in all administrative, academic, and student program offices. The rationale for these reductions is identified, as is a rationale for maintaining staffing levels in some areas. An important notation is that many administrative offices perform functions that are essential to operational effectiveness, regulatory compliance, and future-proofing the institution where possible. These reductions of \$8.7 million in labor and S&S, along with over \$2 million additional savings in remissions dollars, are projected to result in more than \$10 million in savings over the next four years.

FISCAL YEAR	Labor	S&S	Total	Running Total
FY 25-26	\$ 3,497,179	\$ 1,198,723	\$ 4,695,902	\$ 4,695,902
FY 26-27	\$ 1,767,212	\$ 1,447,000	\$ 3,214,212	\$ 7,910,114
FY 27- 28	\$ 179,497	\$ 212,000	\$ 391,497	\$ 8,301,611
FY 28-29	\$ 162,993	\$ 235,000	\$ 397,993	\$ 8,699,604
TOTALS	\$ 5,606,881	\$ 3,092,723	\$ 8,699,604	

NOTE: This excludes other remissions dollars as shown in the Projected Savings table located on page 61.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

SOU has long held a core value of providing a safe and welcoming environment to students, faculty, and staff. Unfortunately, in this era of shrinking budgets, university leaders had to rethink how best to support students and continue its broader commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) work. As the budget resiliency work moved toward conclusion, it became clear that the best use of limited university resources would be to support EDI efforts that directly impact students to ensure they have a supportive pathway to graduation. Although funding and personnel are shifting to the Dean of Students Office, the broader EDI work will continue, as the President will work directly with the Committee on Equity and Diversity.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
President's Office				\$113,000	
JPR	0.00	Unclassified	JPR Foundation		
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion	1.00	Unclassified		\$71,000	
Office of the Board of Trustees				\$19,133	
Subtotals	1.00			\$203,133	\$398,637
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$601,770

NOTE: The JPR Foundation will relieve the university's E&G budget by absorbing the cost of one position.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

With roughly 75% of the university ultimately reporting to the Executive Vice President and Provost, a significant number of reductions will occur in the academic and student affairs infrastructure. The following provides a summary of the analysis used by academic leaders in the work to build a university that is both more focused and more interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary.

Prior to the generation of the Provisional Plan, the Provost's Leadership Council met numerous times, including with department chairs and academic leaders, over the course the last two weeks of July. During these meetings, every program and every position under the direction of Academic Affairs was assessed to determine provisional options for program elimination. After the release of the Provisional Plan, the Provost's office and academic deans worked closely with programs identified as potentially impacted. During the many conversations between faculty members, program chairs, academic deans, and others, the Provost's Leadership Council took great care to review and analyze all proposals submitted. Each of these proposals were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Five-year graduation trends
- Total degrees awarded in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025
- Five-year student SCH to faculty ELU trends
- Five-year student headcount trends
- Five-year student SCH trends
- Percentage fill rates for lower and upper division courses
- Percentage fill rates for graduate courses (if applicable)
- Degree program viability index (a weighted score for future employability of college majors)
- Total service and supplies (S & S) budget
- Total salaries of faculty, classified, and unclassified employees
- Total cost of the program per student
- Effect on cost savings
- Impact on the majority of students
- Impact on interdisciplinary focus
- Potential hidden administrative costs
- Regional impact

In addition to the data points listed above, we also reviewed proposals that included significant curricular revisions, including notably, the proposed elimination of required low-enrolled courses, streamlining of complex curricular pathways, and proposals to share resources with other programs. The value that each proposal had on our discussions and decisions cannot be overstated. The Provisional Plan underwent substantial adjustment because of the compelling nature of these proposals. Faculty

and staff are to be commended for their creativity, flexibility and commitment to students. In the end, each decision maintains the integrity of our original framework to consider programs that meet the region's economic needs, help students through to graduation, and reduce costs—whether those costs are associated with programs or personnel.

The sections below provide a more focused description on the proposed changes to the programs within Academic Affairs. However, all programs, regardless of whether they are projected to be impacted in this plan, will be asked to review their programs and processes from a mindset of fiscal responsibility and accountability. This is not simply a financial question but also one of resiliency and the well-being of our campus community members. It will be imperative that our campus community focus intently on what SOU does best for the majority of students, and to keep in mind that SOU is no longer a comprehensive university. We cannot continue to provide all the programs and supports as we have in the past.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST'S OFFICE

Provost's Office Operations

The SOU Provost's Office has identified several areas of costs savings by streamlining administrative operations including the elimination of the Director of Institutional Assessment. The Office of Institutional Research will decrease to one Director of Mission Fulfillment and one Institutional Research Analyst. Furthermore, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning (CATL) will decrease staffing by 1.0 FTE. These changes will result in \$185,000 in total annual cost savings.

THE CREATIVITY CONFERENCE

The university will eliminate direct funding for the annual Creativity Conference. Future conference proceedings will be evaluated for viability based on shifting funding to proceeds generated from the conference itself. In total, this change will result in approximately \$75,000 in annual cost savings.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SOU has hosted a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for more than 20 years, helping businesses throughout the Rogue Valley with strategic planning, budgeting, and business plan development. The

evaluation of data to determine the financial feasibility of maintaining an independent SBDC versus merging with Rogue Community College (RCC) revealed multiple factors: 1) redundancy of services offered in the Southern Oregon region; 2) approximately \$130,000 in SOU financial support of the SBDC; and 3) a willingness by RCC to partner. Ultimately, partnering with RCC results in maximizing economic development support while eliminating redundant costs for providing these services to local emerging and established business leaders. Beginning in 2026, the center will merge with the RCC Business Development Center, creating savings for SOU.

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Provost's Office	2.35	Unclassified			
SBDC	1.00	Unclassified			
SBDC	1.00	Classified			
CATL	1.00	Unclassified			
Subtotals	6.35				\$369,240
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$369,240

The Honors College

The university created the Honors College in 2014 to recruit and retain high-achieving students. Today, the academic experience of the current program of study results in approximately \$700,000 in annual costs to the institution, providing over \$400,000 in tuition remissions every year. Although the program is identified as an exceptional honors program experience for the 100 to 115 total students enrolled annually, it is an experience that the university can no longer continue to subsidize at this cost. The program will undergo significant curricular revision during financial exigency. In the final RESILIENCY PLAN, the Honors College is replaced with an Honors Program embedded within the academic majors. This new Honors Program will include coordination among all Honors Scholars, with most of their honors experience included in the courses of their academic major. Honors Scholars will continue to experience a cohort-based seminar, and their work will culminate in an Honors thesis project, supported by a faculty Honors Program Coordinator. The elimination of the Honors College will result in nearly \$500,000 annual cost savings to the institution, while continuing to support high-achieving students who wish to pursue the distinction of an honors curriculum.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Honors College	0.50	Unclassified			
Honors College	1.00	Classified			
Honors College Tuition Remissions				\$295,000	
Honors College				\$74,621	
Subtotals	1.50			\$369,621	\$111,911
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$481,532

College of Arts and Humanities

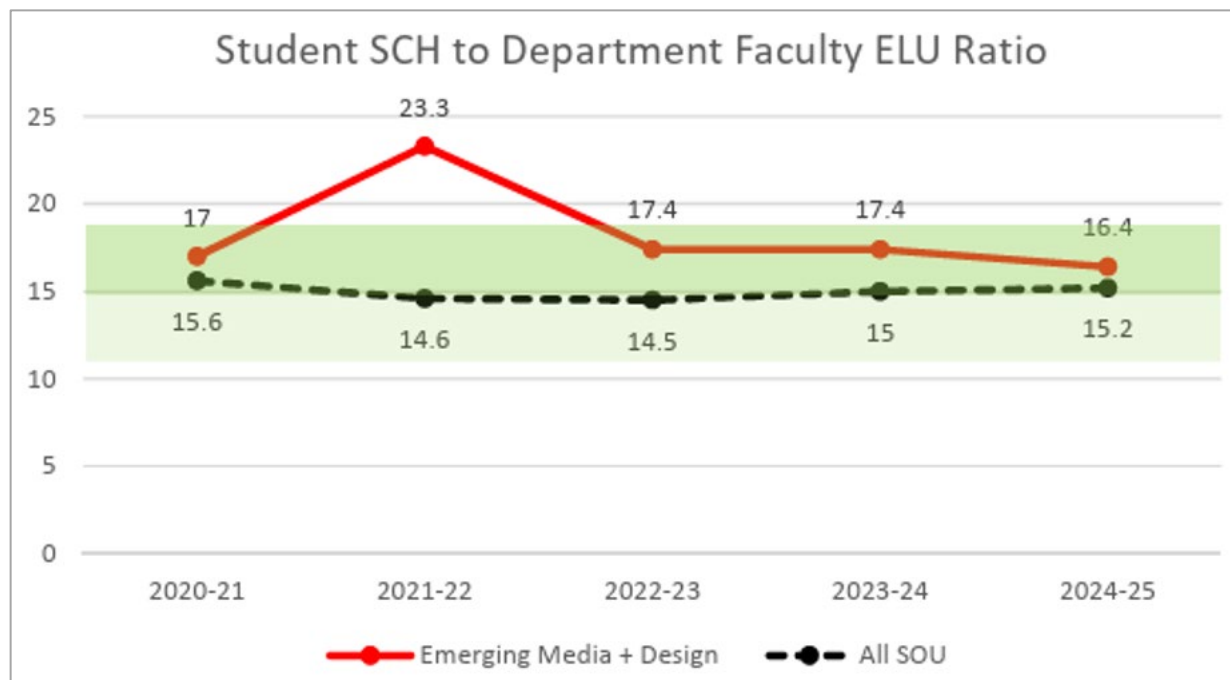
PROGRAM	ACTION	RATIONALE
Emerging Media + Design (EMDA)	Originally eliminated in the Provisional Plan and retained in the final RESILIENCY PLAN	Program has strong enrollment and an articulation agreement with RCC; EMDA faculty will work collaboratively across disciplines on curricular revisions to eliminate low-enrolled courses, increase efficiency and reduce redundancy of foundational courses across multiple majors
Creative Writing	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan and retained in the final RESILIENCY PLAN, with conditions	Creative Writing will begin curriculum revisions to teach with 2 FTE; eliminate low-enrolled electives and upper-division required courses; require existing English courses; focus on industry-topics; reform studio courses for increased efficiency; major will be evaluated for continued viability in Summer 2027
Media Innovation	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan but retained in the final RESILIENCY PLAN, with conditions	Faculty committed to reviewing the curriculum to ensure no low-enrolled courses; major will be evaluated for continued viability in Summer 2027 with potential re-emergence as a concentration within the Communication major if unable to increase enrollment
Spanish Language & Culture	Eliminated in both the Provisional and final RESILIENCY PLAN	The major has continued to experience significant declines in enrollment; curricular updates to include a certificate program in Medical Spanish and other introductory Spanish courses will be maintained
Theatre	Retained with conditions	The degree must be streamlined; faculty must review existing certificates for viability and achieving enrollment benchmarks outlined in SOU FORWARD
Music	Retained with conditions	Accreditation from the NASM will be eliminated, and a revised curriculum will be developed in AY 2025-26 for

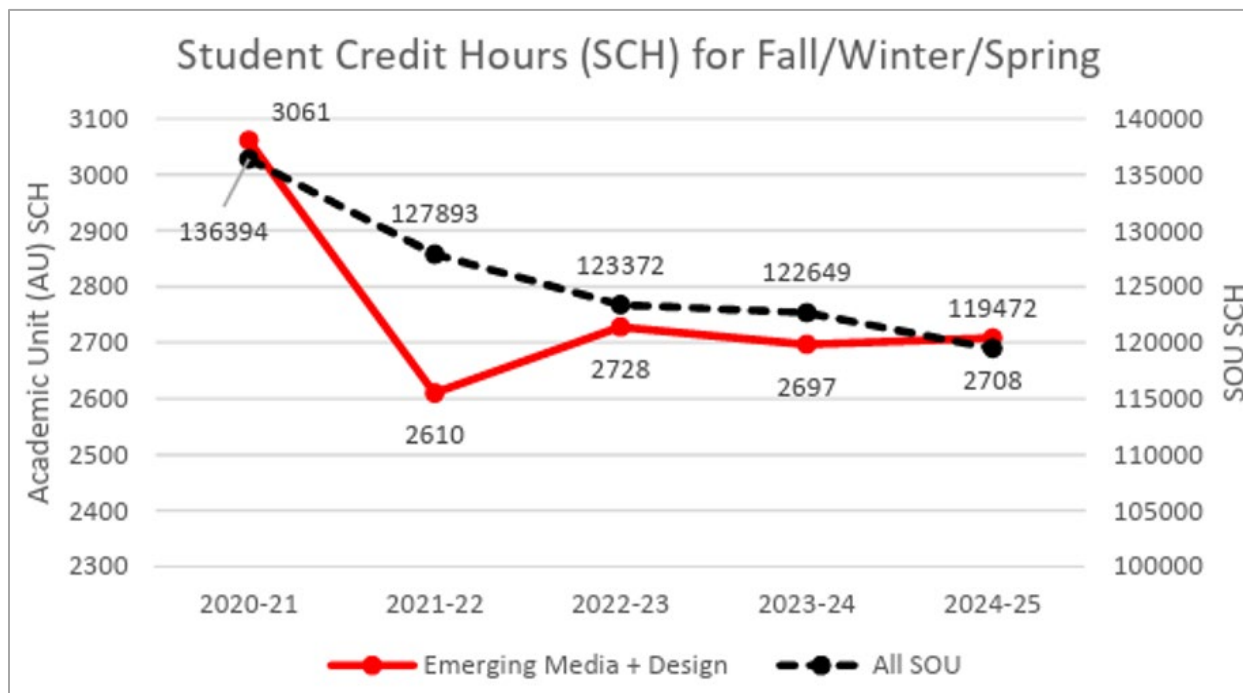
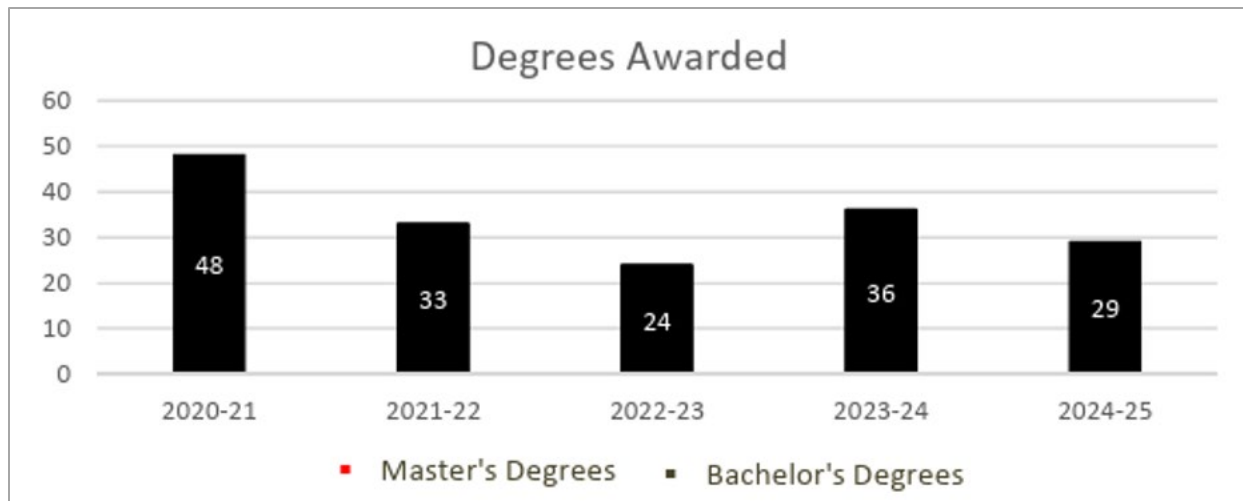
		implementation in AY 26-27; faculty will review existing certificates for viability
Philosophy	Minor eliminated in the Provisional Plan and in the final RESILIENCY PLAN	Results in the additional elimination of the Ethics and the Rhetoric & Reason minors
Theatre Production & Design	N/A	The master's degree was inadvertently left out of the Provisional Plan, but it will be retained

EMERGING MEDIA + DESIGN

The Emerging Media + Design (EMDA) program was originally identified as an eliminated program in the Provisional Plan due to the redundancy in the program with other majors offered on campus.

Original data-points considered in the assessment of the degree program viability include:





Considering the high-demand for this major, the program was afforded the opportunity to continue as a stand-alone major. Faculty will revise the program of study given the following parameters:

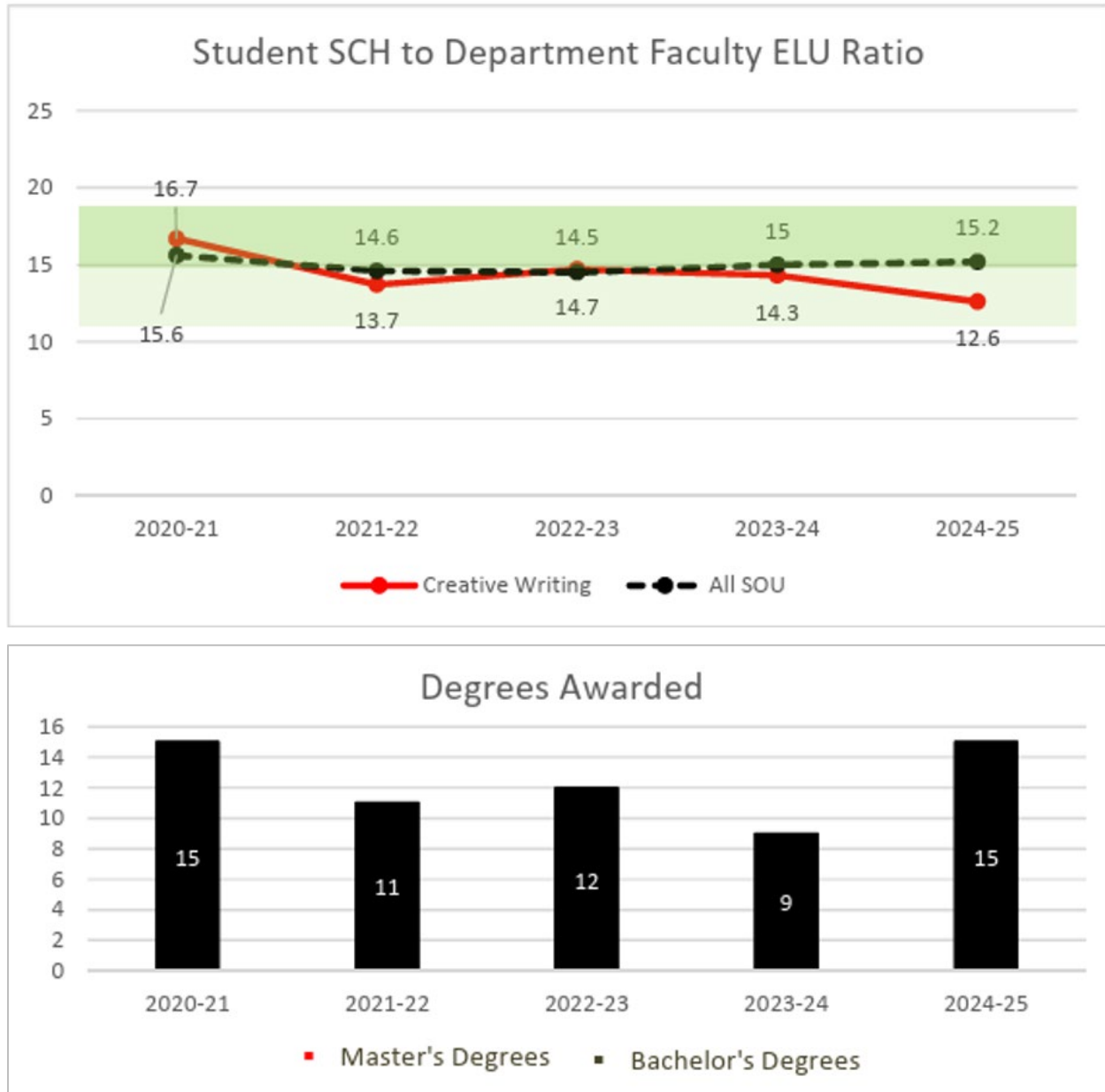
- Delivered by current full-time and Term-by-Term [TxT] faculty only (eliminating one year-long temporary appointment) and other program faculty
- All low-enrolled courses will be eliminated
- Reduce redundancy of foundational courses across majors
- Increase course efficiency to attain an SCH-to-ELU ratio of 18
- Capitalize on the existing articulation agreement with Rogue Community College (RCC)

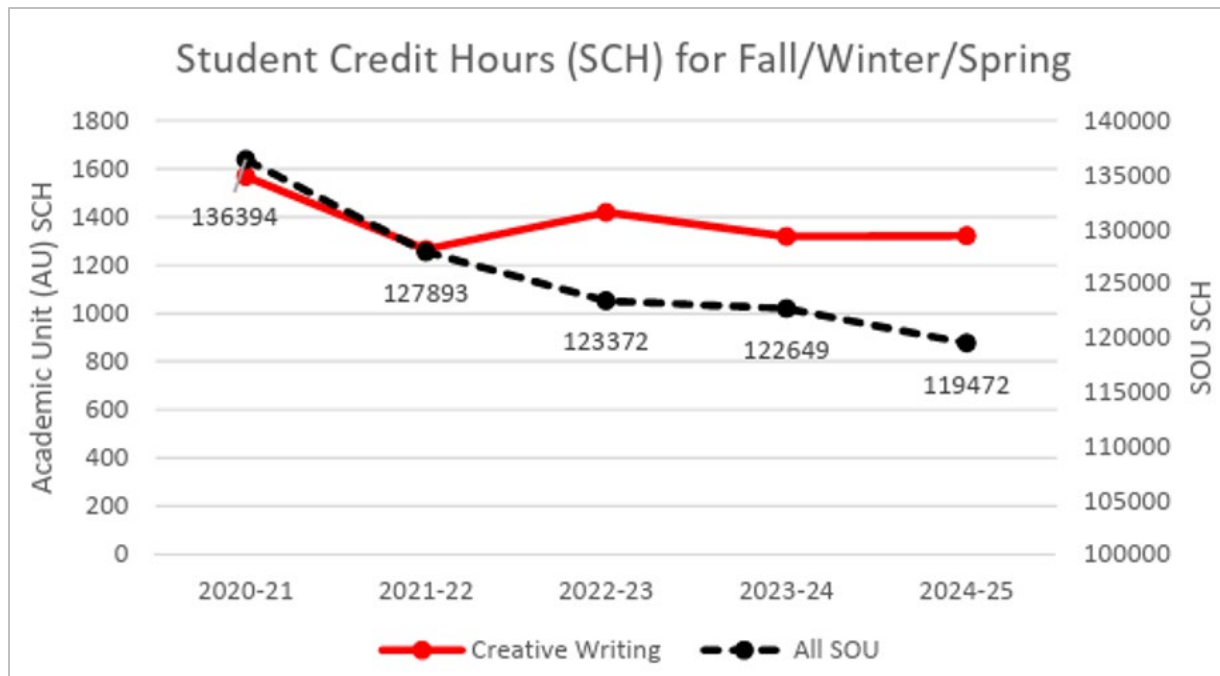
The EMDA program will be assessed on an annual basis to determine the continued progress toward meeting these program goals.

CREATIVE WRITING

The Creative Writing program was originally identified as an eliminated program in the Provisional Plan due to the redundancy in the program with other majors offered on campus and the high number of low-enrolled upper-division required courses.

Original data-points considered in the assessment of the degree program viability include:





The program was afforded the opportunity to continue as a stand-alone major for two additional years and will be assessed annually. Faculty will revise the program of study given the following parameters:

- Delivered by 2 full-time FTE and no TxT faculty
- All low-enrolled courses will be eliminated
- Reduce redundancy of foundational courses across majors
- Increase course efficiency to attain a minimum of an SCH-to-ELU ratio of 18

The Creative Writing program will be assessed on an annual basis to determine the continued progress toward meeting these program goals. If, after two years, the program cannot attain these target benchmarks, the program will be subsumed into the English major.

MEDIA INNOVATION

Due to the unique nature of this program, some of the data points are not available. However, we did look at the number of majors in the program, and it is showing growth in just two years. In academic year 2023-24, the Media Innovation major had 10 students listed as majors and that number increased to 16 last year. Majors head-count will be one of the primary data points assessed when we evaluate this program at the end of the 2025-26 academic year. We also assessed the total number of graduates, but since the program has only been a formal major for two years, most of the students will not start graduating until academic year 2026-27 and beyond.

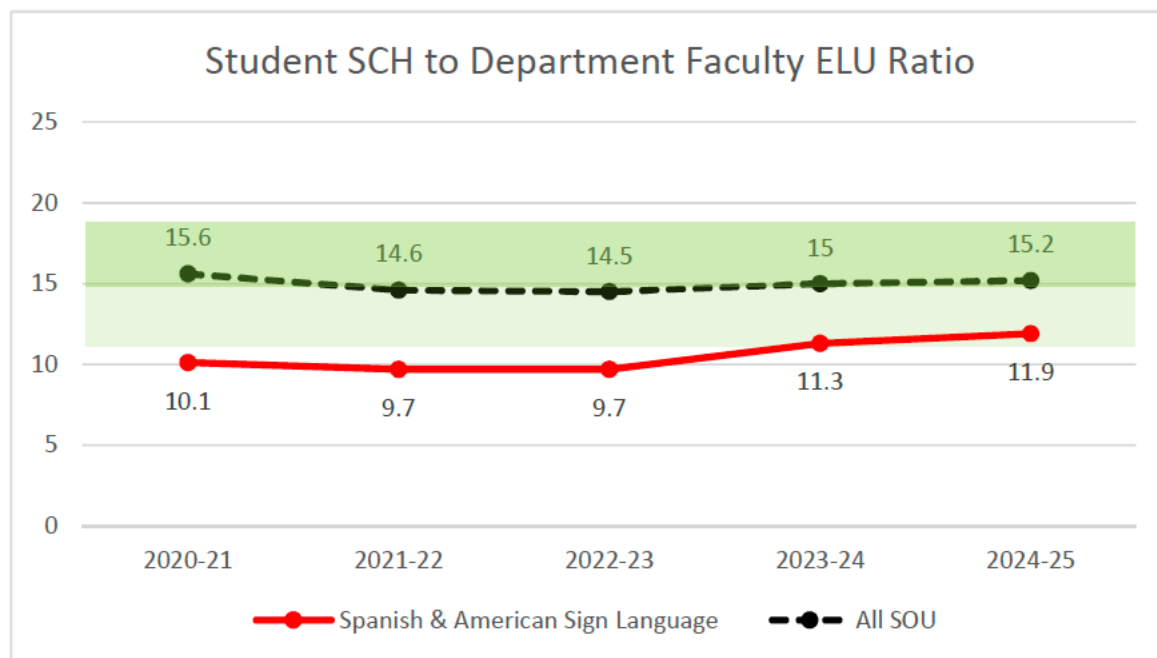
The program was afforded the opportunity to continue as a stand-alone major for two additional years and will be assessed annually. Faculty will revise the program of study given the following parameters:

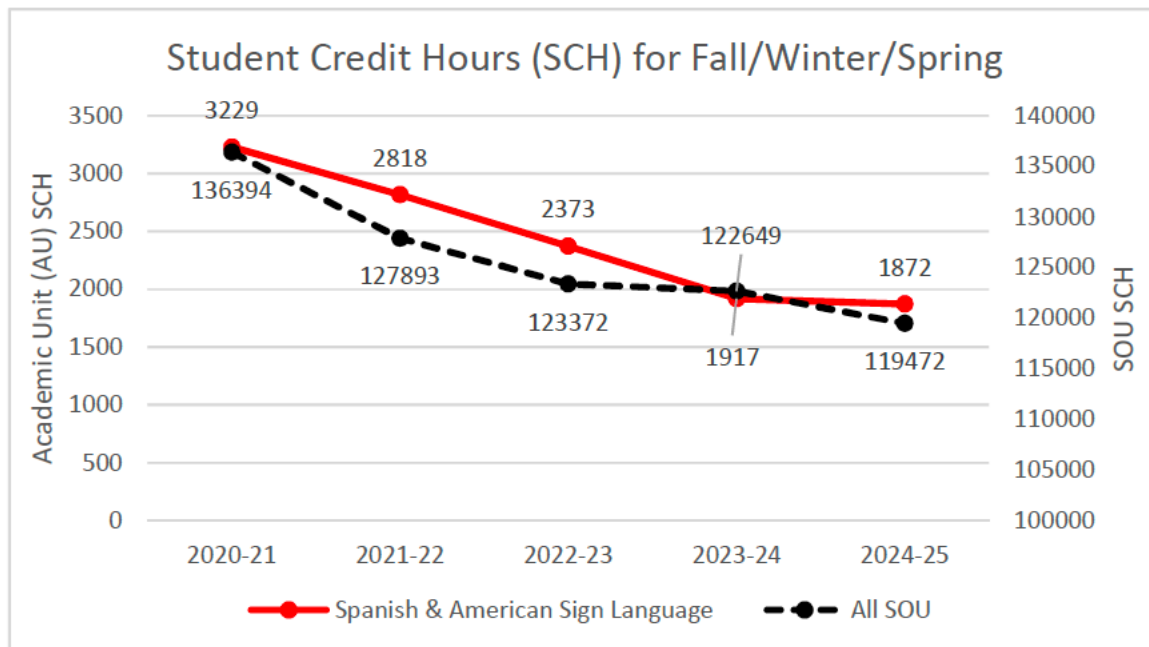
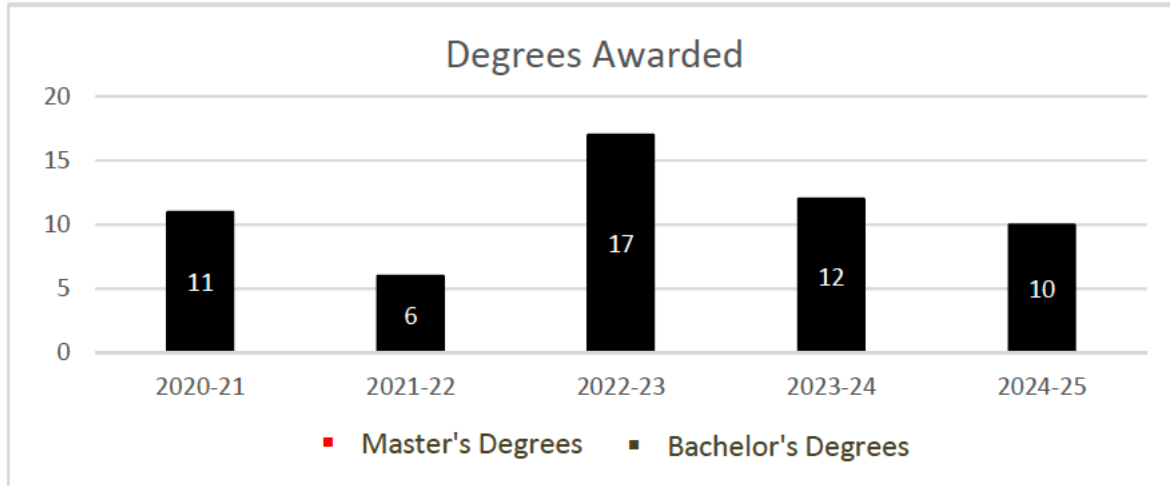
- Delivered by 1 full-time FTE and other program faculty
- All low-enrolled courses will be eliminated
- Reduce redundancy of foundational courses across majors
- Look for overlap and potential strategic alignment with EMDA
- Increase course efficiency to attain a minimum SCH-to-ELU ratio of 18

The Media Innovation program will be assessed on an annual basis to determine the continued progress toward meeting these program goals. If, after two years, the program cannot attain these targets benchmarks, the program will be subsumed as a concentration in the Communication major.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The Spanish Language and Culture program remains recommended for elimination. Metrics of the past five years show a continued decline across all data points. The Spanish Language Teaching graduate program will be retained as will the Medical Spanish courses and the foundational Spanish courses.

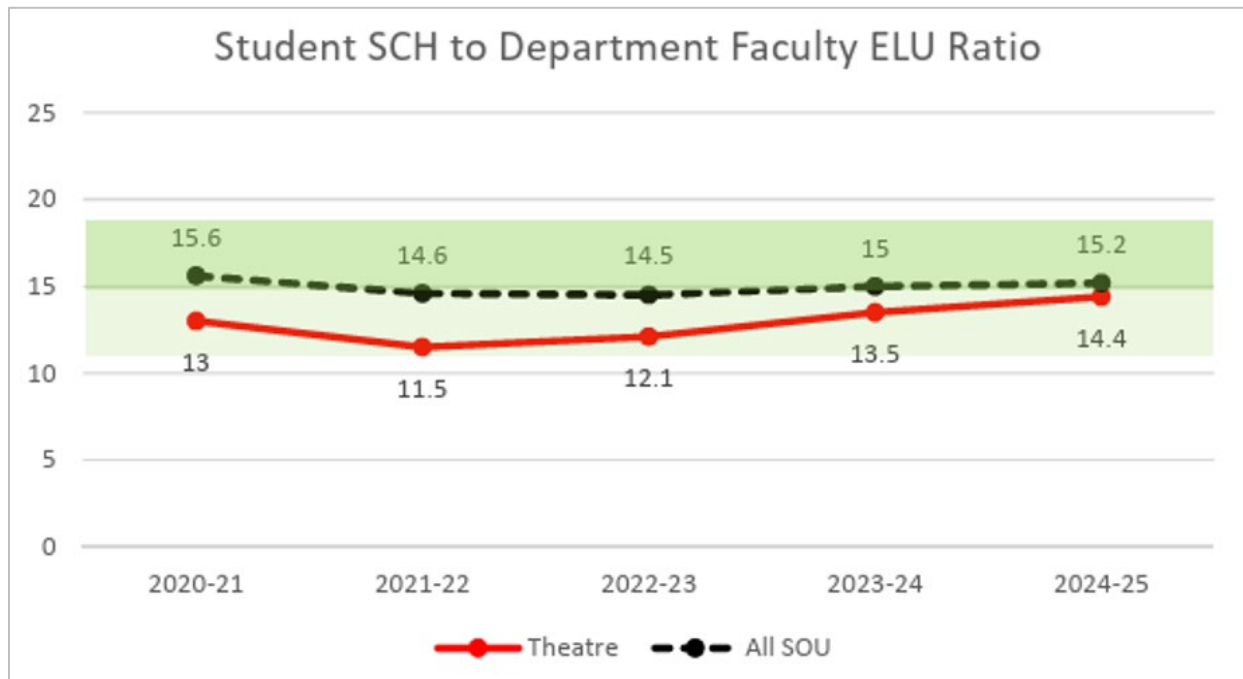


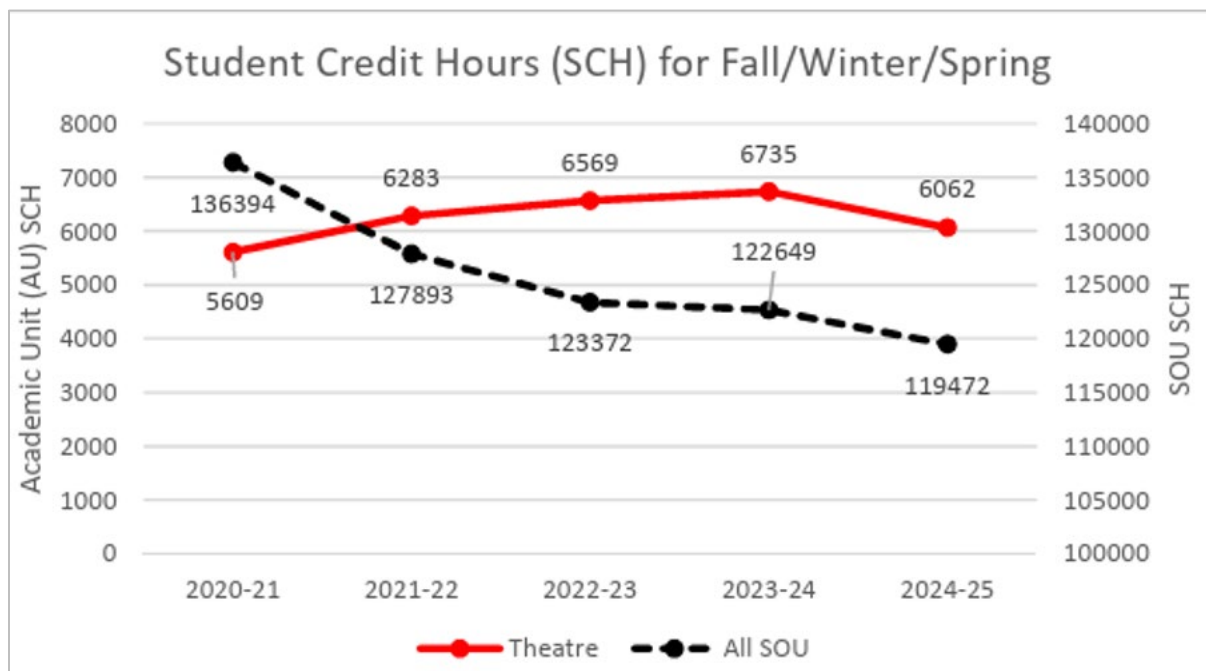
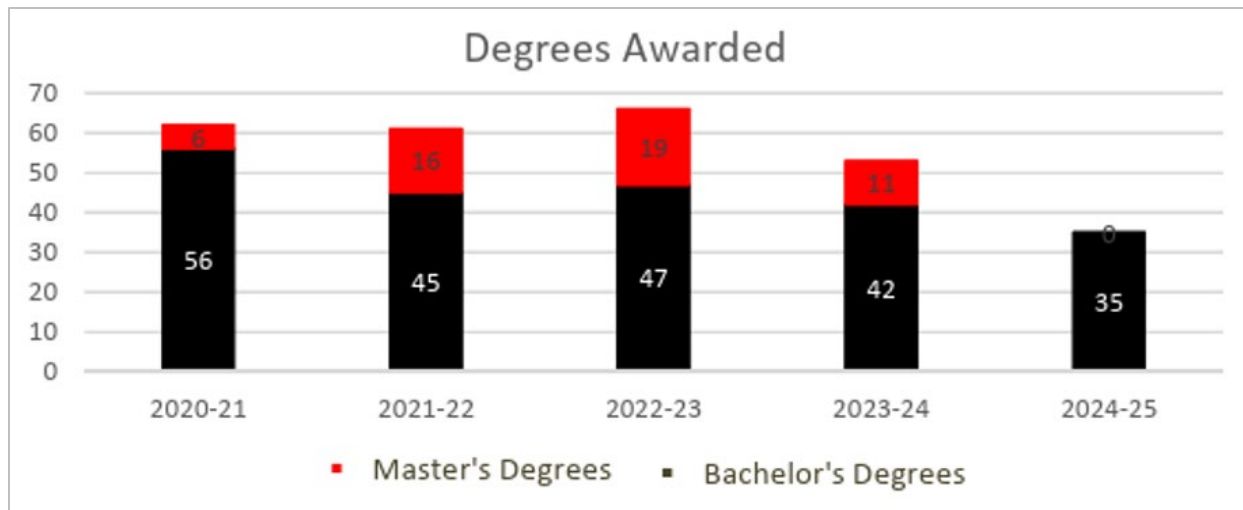


THEATRE

As outlined in the SOU FORWARD plan in 2023, Theatre faculty have collaborated with the Provost's office and President Bailey on a 3-year realignment plan to improve enrollment metrics and better prepare students for careers in the entertainment industry. This plan includes several curricular changes, along with bringing on new faculty and staff hires that have been in progress. The realignment plan will be fully implemented in Fall 2025. Theatre enrollments will be monitored over the next three years to ensure progress, and faculty will continue to use enrollment data and benchmarks to drive curricular innovation and simplify the path to graduation.

Original data-points considered in the assessment of the degree program viability include:



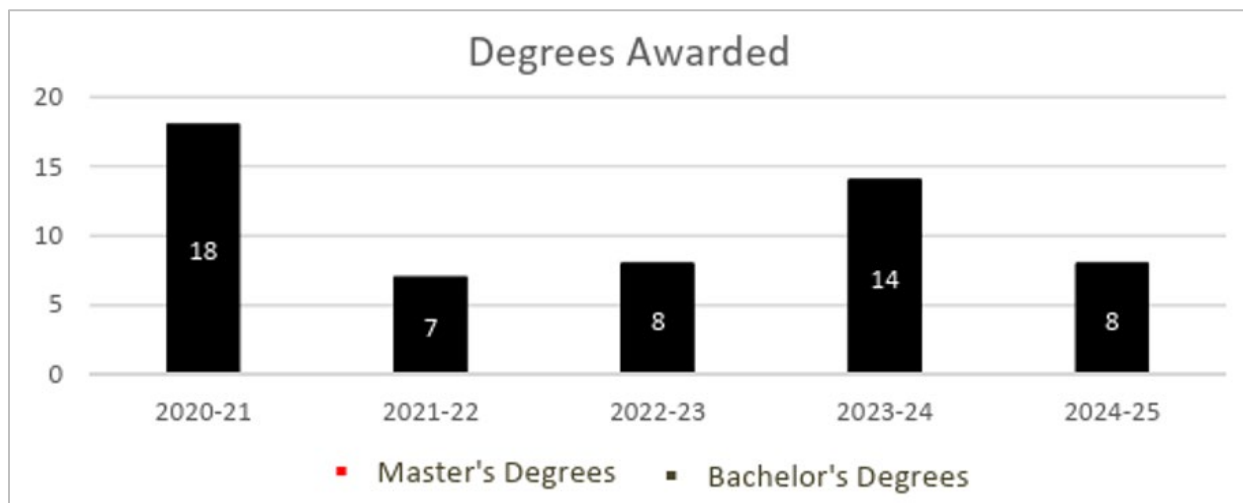
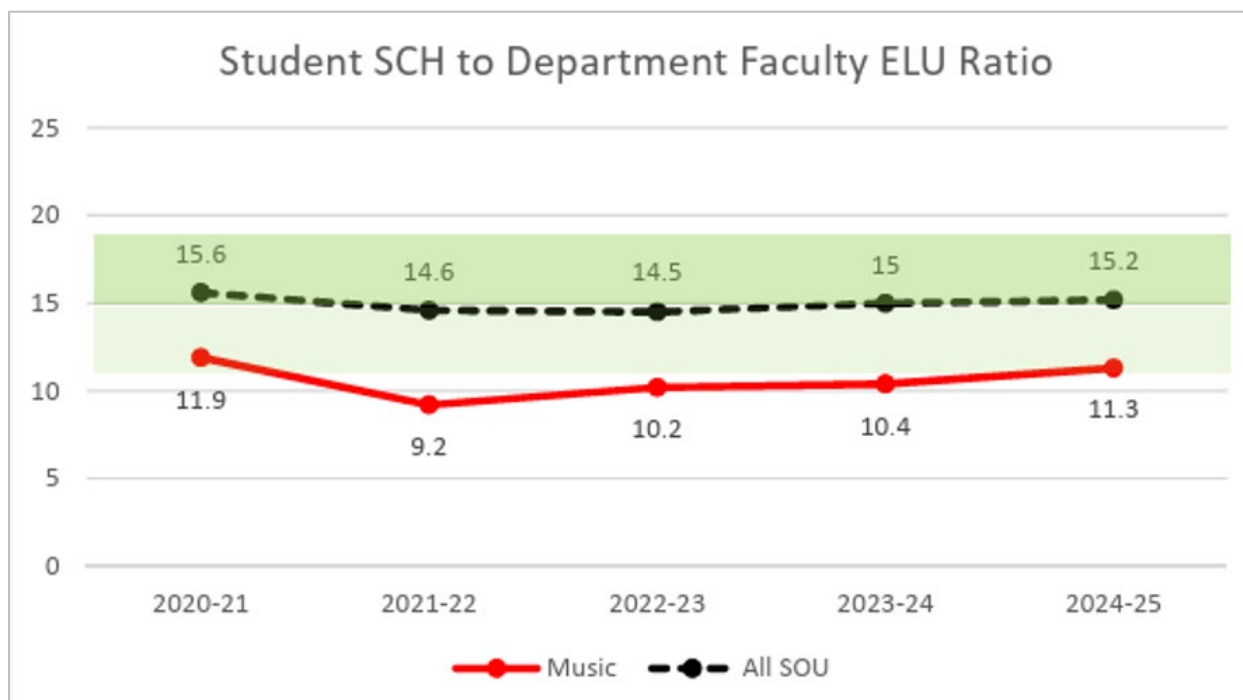


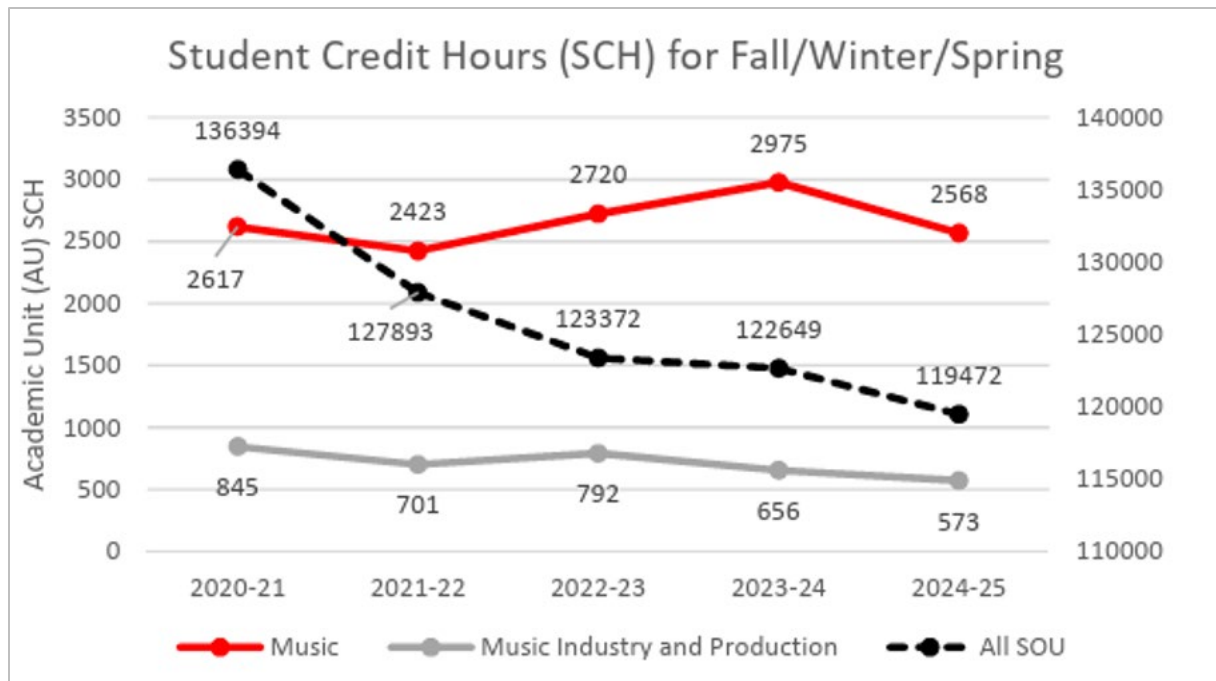
The Theatre Program will be charged with the following:

- Eliminate low-enrolled courses
- Use course-level enrollment data to streamline curriculum
- Reduce certificate options and reduce overall credit requirements
- Increase course efficiency to attain a minimum SCH-to-ELU ratio of 18

MUSIC

Music will be asked to continue their transition away from the conservatory model program with a renewed focus on the transition to a program focused on Music Industry and Production. Music faculty must focus on enrollment metrics as they transition away from the conservatory model. The NASM accreditation will be discontinued; however, the program will still be accredited through NWCCU. Faculty will propose curricular revisions in the 2025-26 academic year with a focus on the current certificate structure.





The Music Program will be charged with the following:

- Use enrollment metrics to eliminate low-enrolled courses
- Look for opportunities to streamline and simplify curriculum and reduce overall credit requirements
- Increase course efficiency to attain a minimum SCH-to-ELU ratio of 18

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Dean's Office	2.20	Classified			
EMDA	1.00	Faculty			
Museum of Art	0.00	Unclassified (2)	SOU Foundation		
Museum of Art	0.00	Classified	SOU Foundation		
Philosophy	1.00	Faculty			
Spanish	1.00	Faculty			
Music	0.00	Faculty	SOU Foundation		
Music	1.00	Faculty			
First-Year Seminar	2.50	Faculty			
English	1.00	Faculty			
Creative Writing	2.00	Faculty			
Subtotals	11.70				
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$1,717,379

NOTE: The SOU Foundation will relieve the university's E&G budget by using donor-designed gifts to fund three positions (indefinitely) in the Museum of Art and one in the School of Music for three years.

College of Natural and Social Sciences

Many graduates from the College of Natural and Social Sciences will head to graduate schools with a goal of becoming a physician, dentist, sociologist, psychologist, or researcher. To maintain that trajectory and ensure that SOU STEM and social science degrees are aligned with regional needs, the university will maintain multiple majors within the Health Sciences, Natural Resource Sciences, Social Sciences, Behavioral Sciences, and Computational & Data Sciences.

PROGRAM	ACTION	RATIONALE
Biology	Program split into two components, Health Sciences and Natural Resource Sciences Cluster 1: Biology, Environmental Science & Policy, Chemistry Cluster 2: Biology, OAL, Health & Exercise Science	The two clusters would have combined departments across campus where lab space constrains movement of faculty and classes; maintenance of these administrative units simplifies course delivery; Center for Health Sciences will be created to coordinate Health Sciences efforts
Chemistry	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan with retention as a minor in the final RESILIENCY PLAN	Although the program is unquestionably of exceptional quality, the high cost of delivering this program for the low numbers of majors does not justify the continued offering of the Chemistry major; Chemistry courses will continue to be offered in support of Biology, Biomedical, Computer, and Health Sciences degree programs
Ecology & Conservation	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan and retained in final RESILIENCY PLAN	Degree identified regionally as important to workforce; all courses in major taught in either Biology or Environmental Science & Policy; student retention positively impacted; continuation of major is cost neutral and helps with specific workforce requirements identified by the Federal Government Multi-Agency office

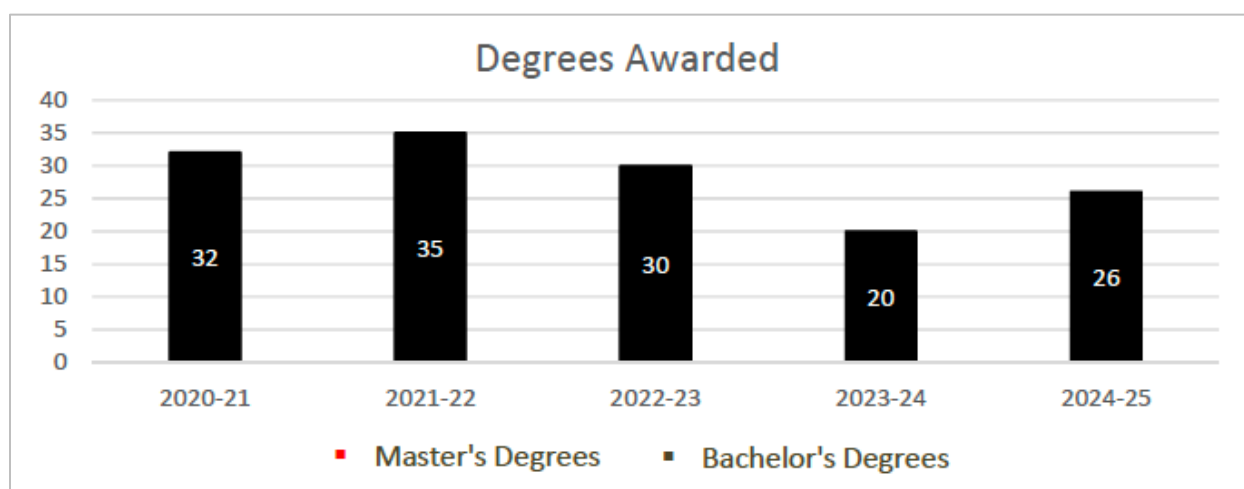
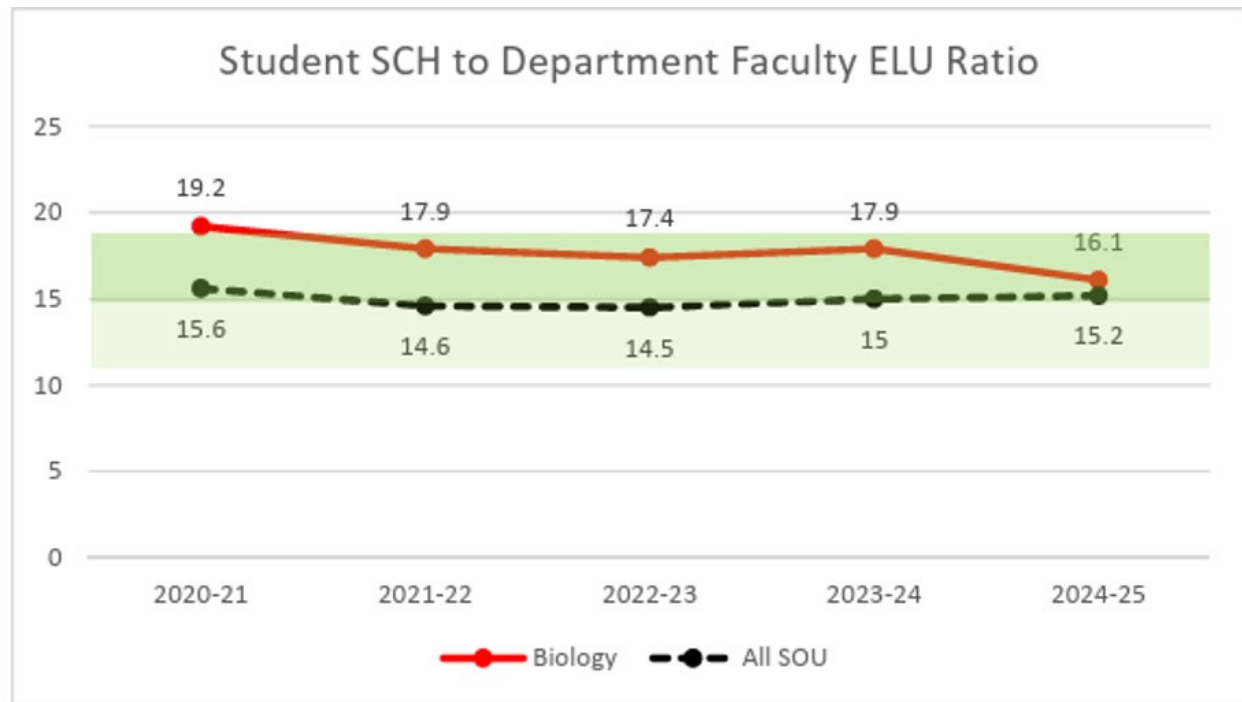
Outdoor Adventure Leadership	Eliminated in Provisional Plan and retained in final RESILIENCY PLAN with conditions	Undergraduate degree is one of just a few programs in the west; faculty will revise curriculum to deliver major with only 2 faculty members, drawing on courses from other existing academic majors; eliminate low-enrolled upper-division courses
Master of Outdoor Adventure and Expedition Leadership	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan and the final RESILIENCY PLAN	Enrollments in the program have not kept pace with costs
Human Service	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan and retained in the final RESILIENCY PLAN with conditions	Human Service major maintained; eliminating low-enrolled courses and building on existing courses in other programs; strong alignment with RCC assists transfer students seeking a four-year degree; all coursework in major will be retained in Psychology & SOAN course requirements
Native American Studies	Final RESILIENCY PLAN retains the stand-alone NAS minor as a part of a Center for Native American Programs	SOU will create a Center for Native American Programs as a joint venture within the President's and Provost's Offices to increase the visibility and effectiveness of NAS coursework, research, and outreach, as well as Native Government-to-University-Leadership relations
Economics	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan and retained in the final RESILIENCY PLAN as an Applied Economic major	Economics faculty built a new curriculum with fewer faculty FTE that leverages courses needed for an economics minor but paired with math, computer science, and environmental science courses to build a stronger interdisciplinary degree
Mathematics	Retained in the Provisional Plan, but the major is eliminated in the final RESILIENCY PLAN; however, it will be offered as a minor or certificate	The student credit hours generated by mathematics is primarily from lower-division math courses and Advanced Southern Credit courses; headcount in the major is too low to continue offering in its present form; a revision to the major modeled after

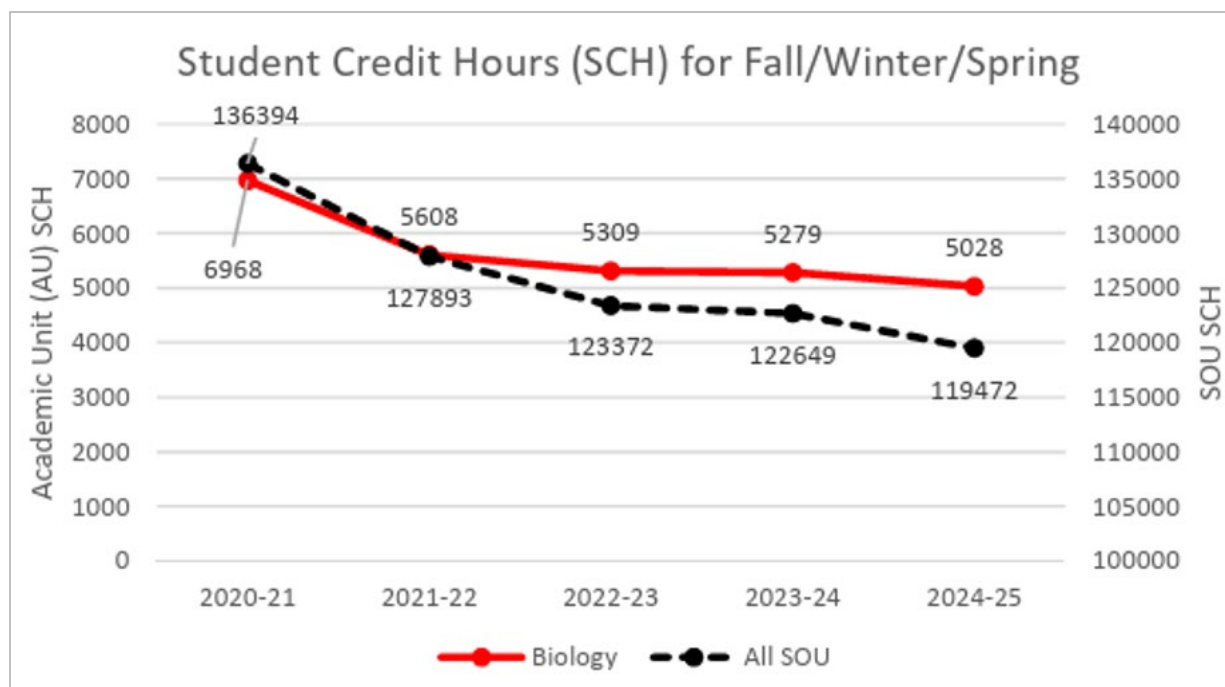
		the Applied Economics degree is being considered
Financial Mathematics	Eliminated in both the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	The Applied Economics major will build on business and mathematics courses to provide a pathway for students seeking financial mathematics careers
Mathematics/Computer Science	Eliminated in both the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Focus will be on creating data science programs of study to leverage interdisciplinary collaboration between programs
Power and Politics	Eliminated in both the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Low-enrolled courses and few declared majors does not support maintaining the major
International Studies	Eliminated in both the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Low-enrolled courses and few declared majors does not support maintaining the major
Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies	The major was eliminated in the Provisional Plan. It was reconfigured to be part of an interdisciplinary minor with Ethnic & Racial Studies and Gender, Sexuality, Women's Studies. The final RESILIENCY PLAN retains a minor in GSWS	Although retaining coursework in the field of GSWS is essential, the number of students in the major is too low to justify ongoing low enrolled courses. Focus will be placed on a minor and community trainings. Curricular changes will be needed in GSWS in order to eliminate low-enrolled courses and manage with reduced faculty
Data Science	The Provisional Plan added this as a major along with a pre-engineering minor; the final RESILIENCY PLAN eliminates both	This field is growing, and SOU faculty will continue to contemplate a major in the future

BIOLOGY

The Biology major has recently transitioned the curriculum to more fully focus on Biomedical and Natural Resource Sciences. The transitions in the programs of study will be evaluated with a focus on an increase in the SCH:ELU ratios.

Original data-points considered in the assessment of the degree program viability include:

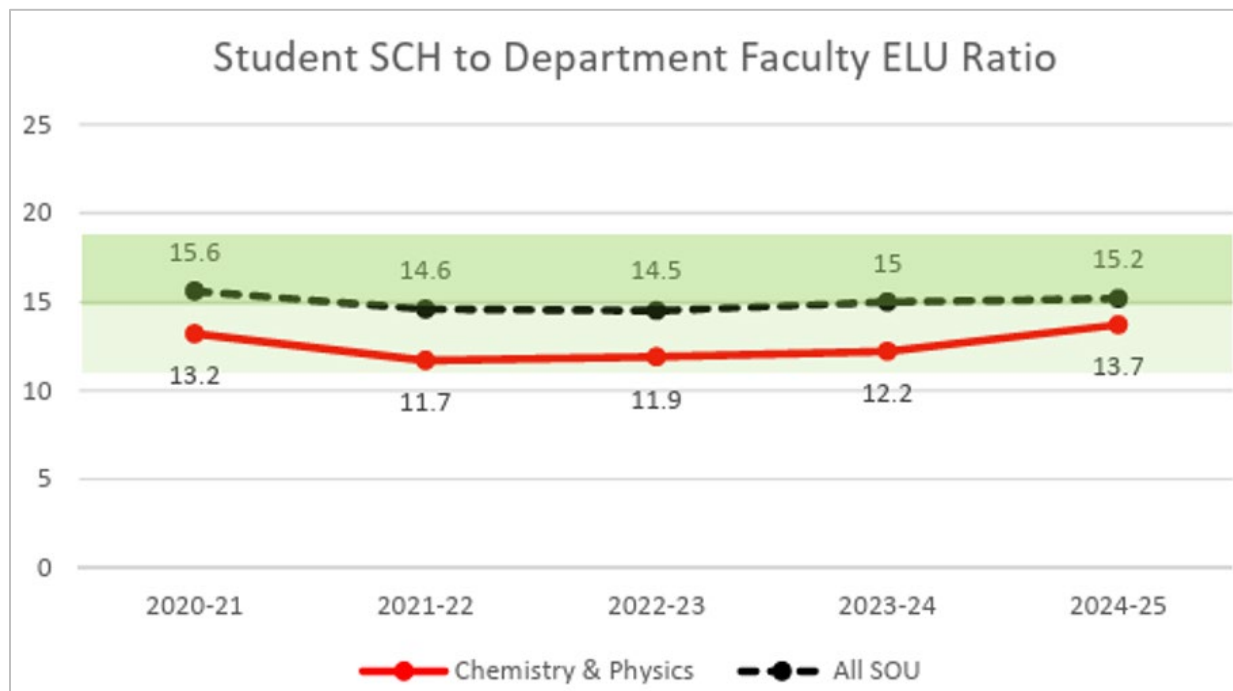


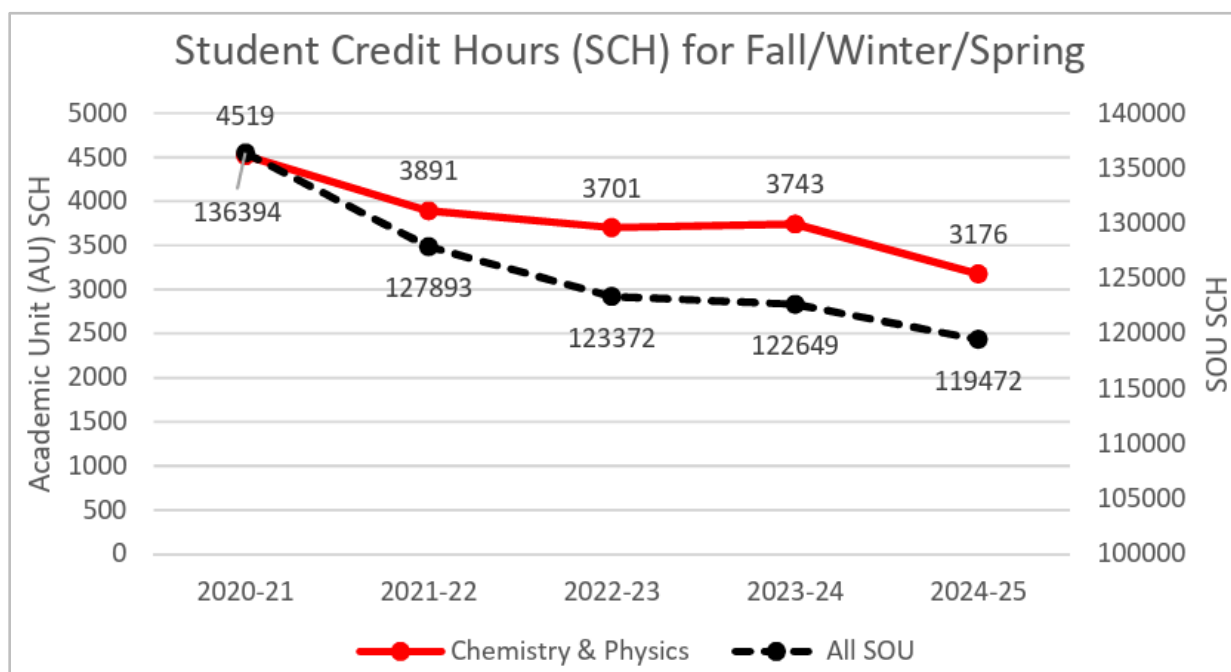
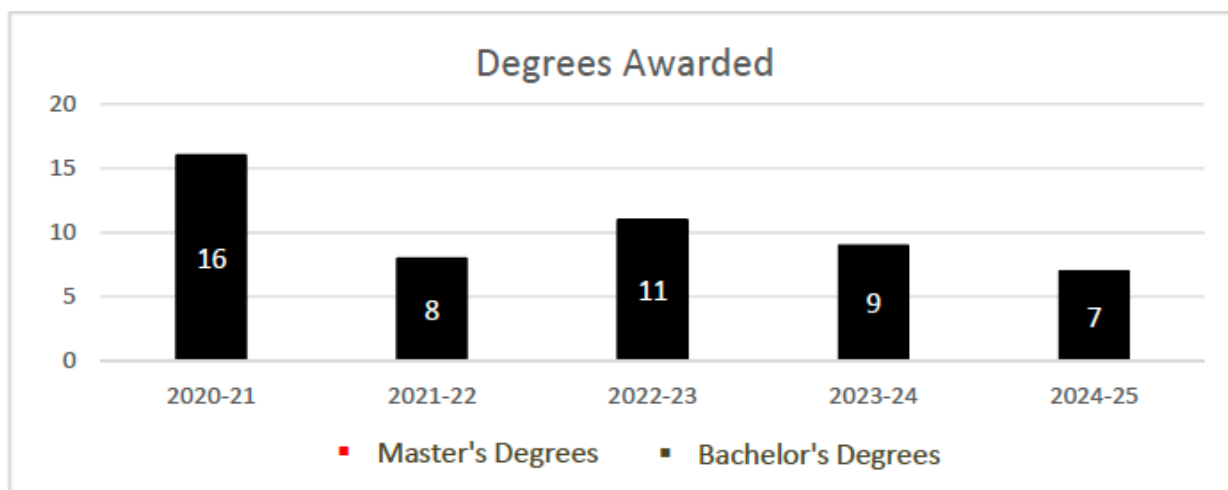


CHEMISTRY

The Chemistry program was eliminated in the Provisional Plan due to the high cost associated with teaching this program with the low numbers of total majors. Chemistry is unquestionably a critically important program with outstanding faculty. They have a strong track record of supporting students into top-rated graduate programs. However, the data shows continued low SCH and headcounts without commensurate reductions in FTE or credit requirements for the major. Ultimately, the long-standing low faculty-to-student ratio precludes the ability for the university to continue offering this program of study. The program will retain three faculty and continue to support a range of other majors on campus.

Original data-points considered in the assessment of the degree program viability include:





Furthermore, upper-division required courses have maintained a fill-rate of less than 50% for the past two years, reflecting low-enrolled courses that are required for the major. With an average of less than 9 students per year graduating with a Chemistry major over the past 4 years, a decline of 40% in the SCH generated for Chemistry majors, and a total budget of approximately \$850,000 for less than 40 total majors, the university can no longer offer Chemistry as a major. All Chemistry courses required for all remaining majors will continue to be provided by the Chemistry faculty.

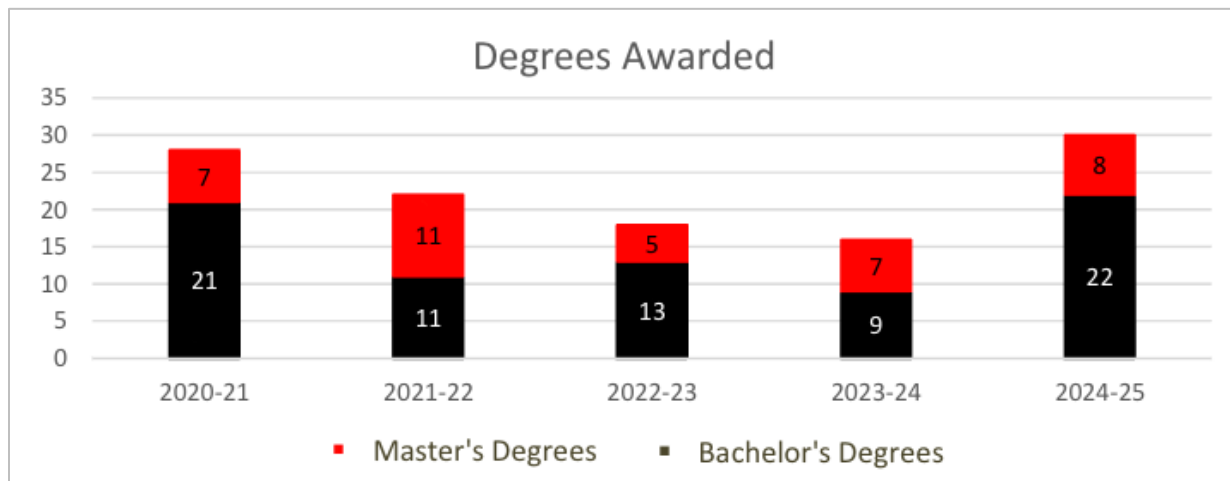
ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION

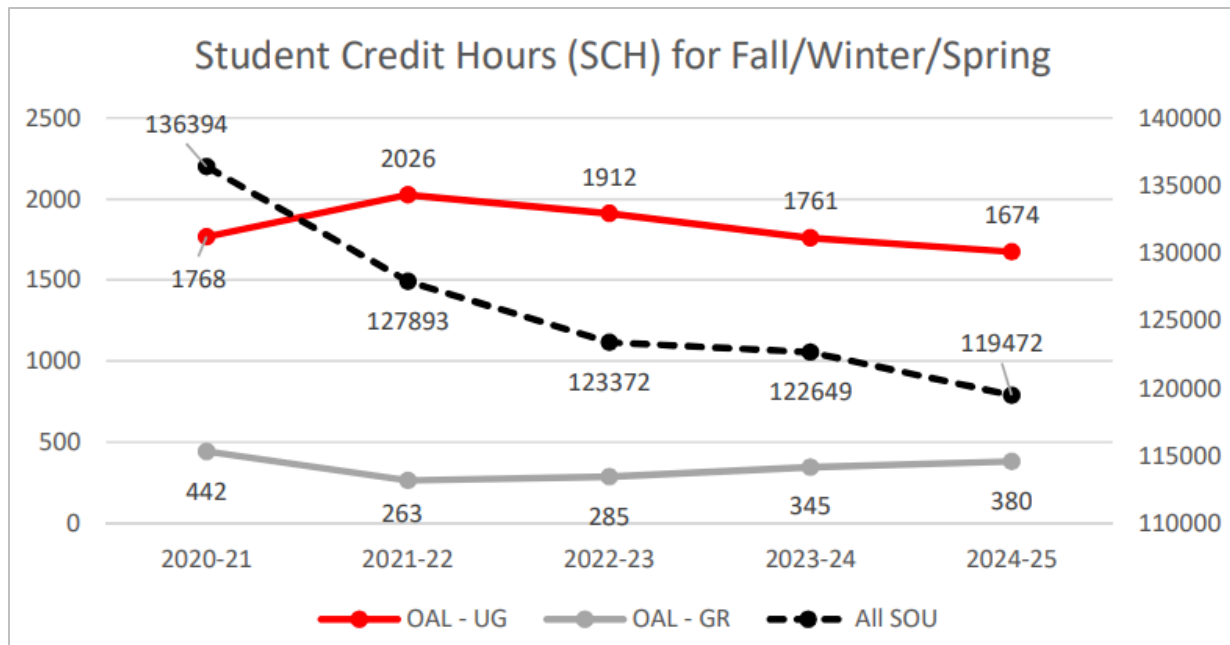
Ecology and Conservation is a relatively new program that is largely embedded in Environmental Science. Because this program does not have a unique program prefix only headcount and number of graduates (3 in 2024 and 4 in 2025) can be calculated.

The degree was recently created to respond to regional demands for this specific workforce. All courses in major are taught in either Biology or Environmental Science & Policy. The program will be evaluated annually to ensure courses are reaching adequate fill-rates and there are no low-enrolled required courses created specifically for this major.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE LEADERSHIP

The Outdoor Adventure Leadership program was originally scheduled for sunset but faculty developed a plan to offer a revised curriculum with two fewer FTE. Streamlining the curriculum and reducing the FTE in the program will better align the program with the number of students enrolled in the major. The undergraduate program is intertwined with the graduate program so getting specific metrics for either is more challenging. Considering that the specific SCH:ELU ratio is not accurate because of the confounding of this variable, that data point was not included in the assessment.





The OAL Program will be charged with creating a program of study in which:

- It will be delivered by 2 full-time FTE and other program faculty with no TxT faculty
- All low-enrolled courses will be eliminated
- Look for collaborative opportunities with other programs on campus; notably Environmental Science, Business, and Health and Exercise Science
- Increase course efficiency to attain a minimum SCH-to-ELU ratio of 18
- Yearly evaluation of progress toward these outcomes

MASTER IN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE AND EXPEDITION LEADERSHIP

The Master in Outdoor Adventure and Expedition Leadership, with one exception, has seen fewer than ten graduates over the past five years. Despite the best efforts of faculty to market this unique program, the enrollments have not kept pace with the increasing cost to run the program. Unfortunately, this program will sunset.

HUMAN SERVICE

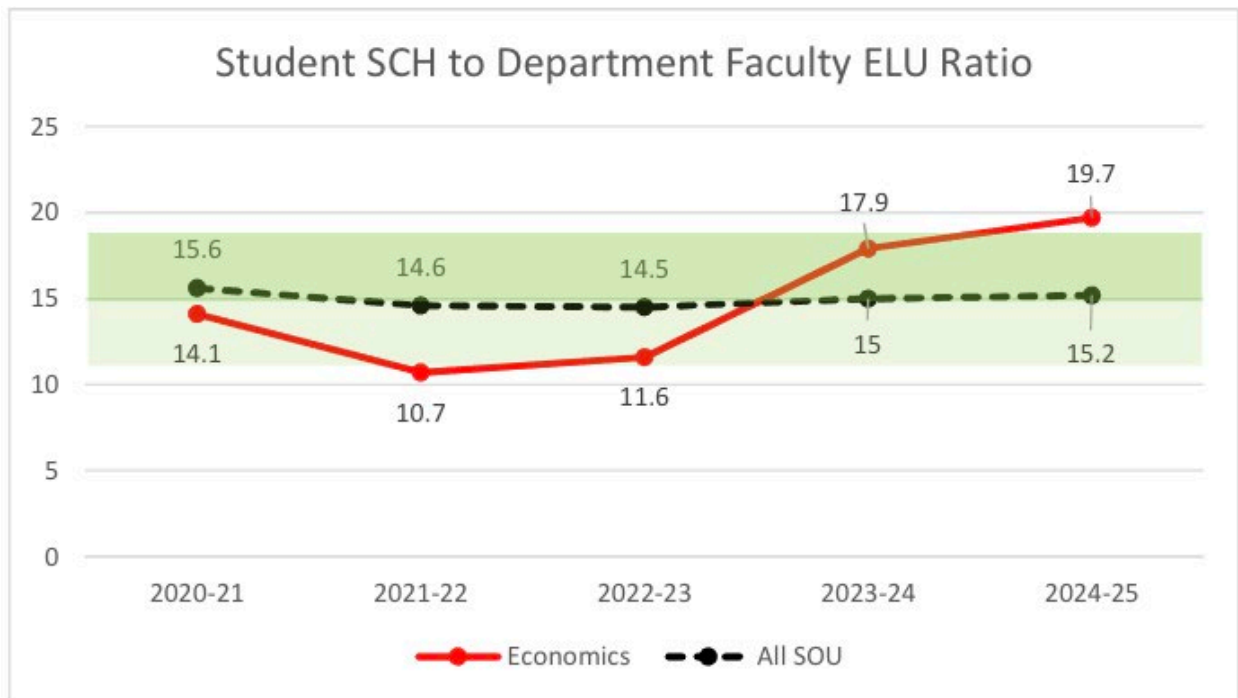
Human Service enrollment numbers have continued to decline. However, a recent transfer agreement with RCC is expected to bolster enrollments. Because this program does not have a unique program prefix and relies mainly on Psychology and Sociology/Anthropology (SOAN) courses, only headcount and number of graduates can be calculated.

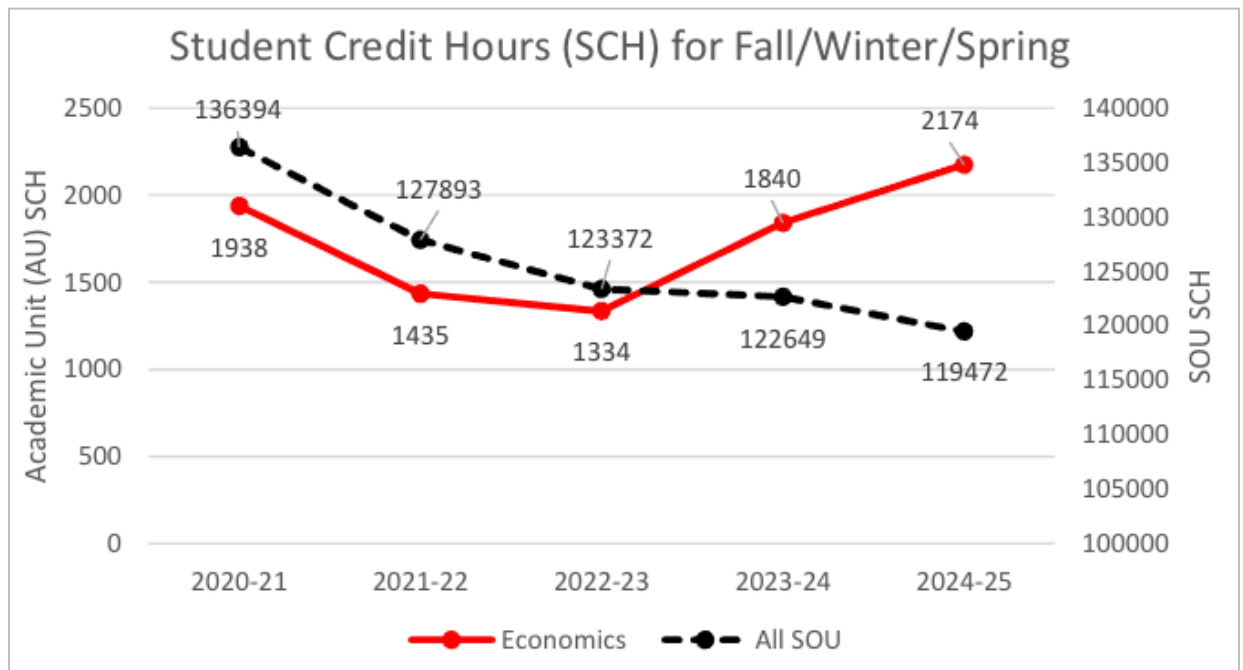
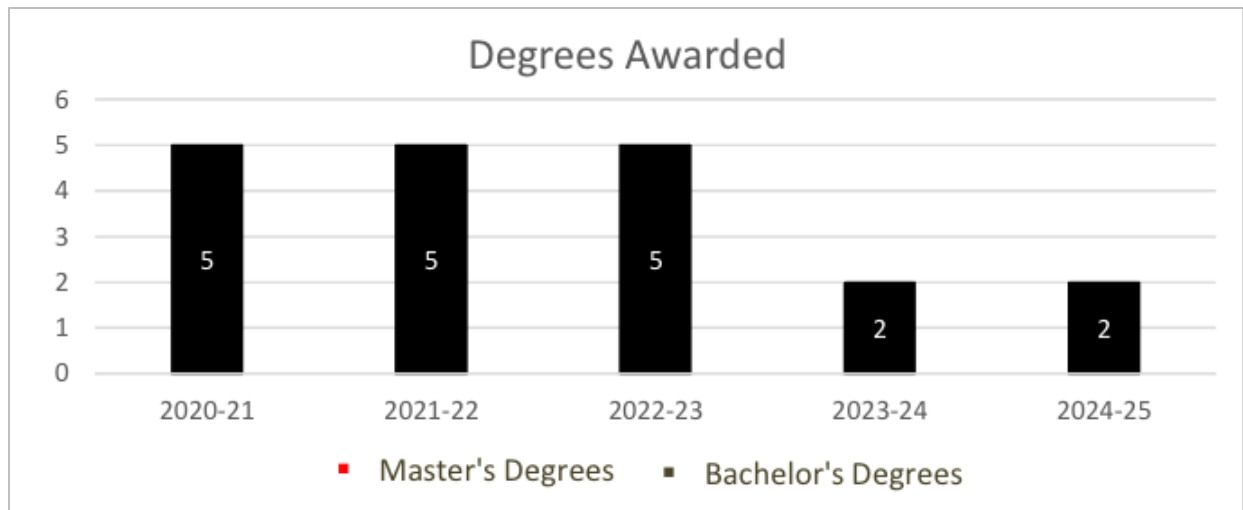
The Human Service program will be expected to create curricular revisions that ensure:

- The program is delivered by 2 full-time FTE and other program faculty with no TxT faculty;
- Program curriculum and modality to be reviewed during Fall term 2025 and changes proposed for review in winter/spring 2026
- All low-enrolled courses will be eliminated
- Look to utilize SOAN courses as a foundation for program requirements
- Headcount target is a minimum of 25 majors by the end of academic year 2026-2027

ECONOMICS

Though scheduled for sunset in the original provisional plan, the faculty developed a compelling proposal to leverage coursework from a number of existing programs including, Math, Computer Science, and Environmental Science. The numbers of both majors and SCH have shown increases in the past two years, consequently it is recommended that the Economics major be retained with conditions.





The Economics Program will be charged with creating a curriculum that:

- Is delivered by 2 full-time FTE and other program faculty with no TxT faculty
- Eliminates all low-enrolled courses
- Leverages interdisciplinary opportunities to provide a wide range of financial and economic-focused learning for students
- Increase course efficiency to attain a minimum SCH-to-ELU ratio of 18

NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES

The geographic location of SOU on the ancestral homelands of the Shasta, Takelma, and Latgawa peoples created discussion and reflection about the role that SOU plays in educating and uplifting the lives of Native Americans. In recognition of the inherent responsibility to create a culturally responsive university, we will explore the creation of a Center for Native American Programs, which will continue to support the Native American Studies minor program as it currently exists. This new center could serve as a hub for academic, student, and Native Nations collaboration and work.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Dean's Office				\$125,000	
Outdoor Adv Ldshp	1.39	Faculty			
Biology	0.26	Classified			
CCJ	0.27	Faculty			
Environmental Sci/Pol	0.50	Faculty			
Exercise & Health Sci	0.00	Faculty	SOU Foundation		
GSWS	0.27	Faculty			
GSWS	0.00	Faculty	SOU Foundation		
Mathematics	2.00	Faculty			
Power & Politics	1.00	Faculty		\$10,742	
Soc & Anthro	1.27	Faculty			
Chemistry & Physics	2.00	Faculty		\$9,000	
Farm			Farm	\$100,000	
Subtotals	8.96			\$244,742	\$1,135,246
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$1,379,988

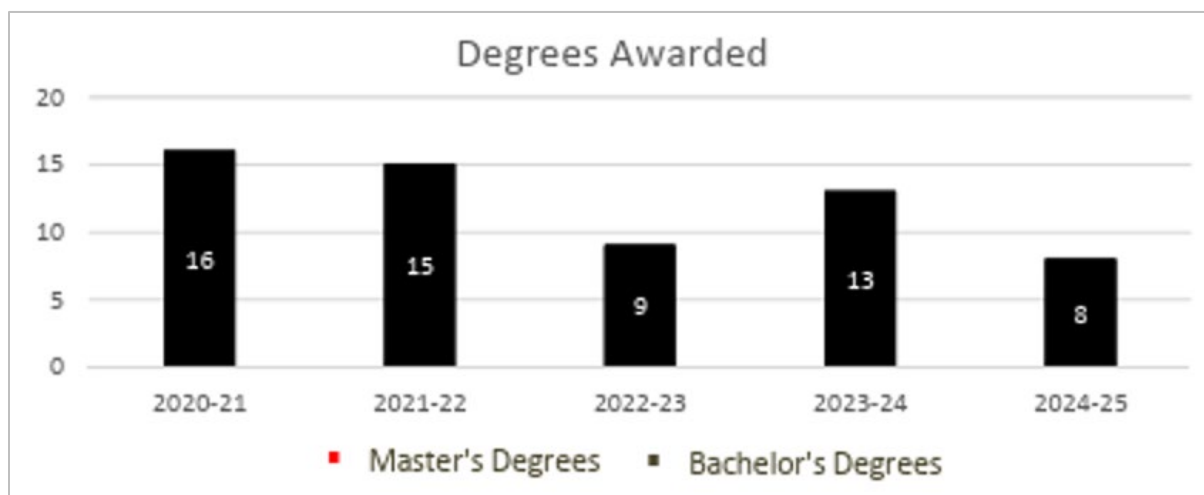
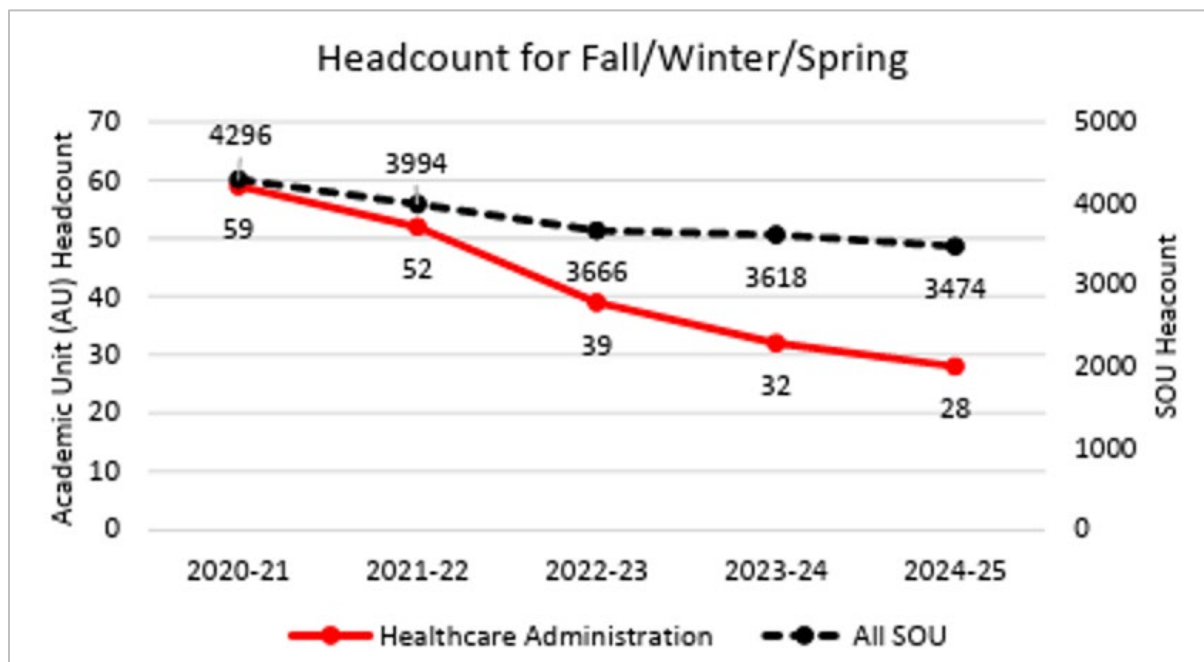
School of Business

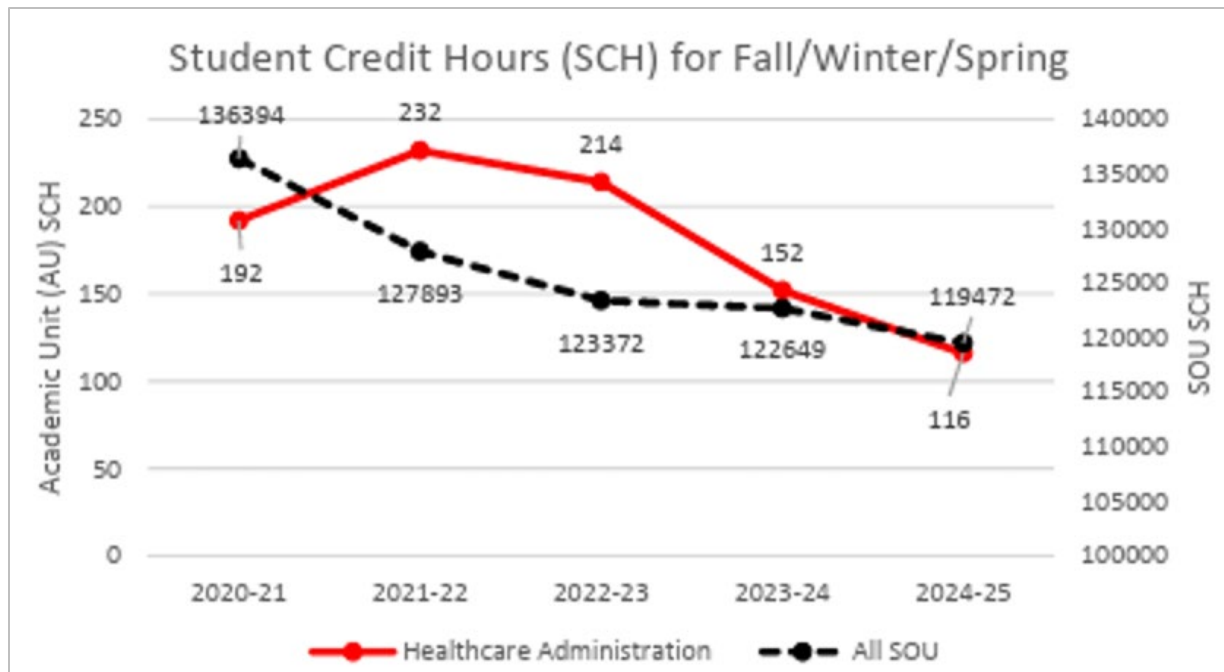
PROGRAM	ACTION	RATIONALE
Healthcare Administration	Eliminated as a major in the Provisional Plan and retained in the final RESILIENCY PLAN.	The impact to maintain a major over a minor is negligible in this case. Program viewed as primary to serving the needs of the region. HCA will be pulled into business and administered by the Chair; administrative release adjusted accordingly: 4 ELU release for community connection maintained
BAS in Management	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	The overlap with the Business Administration degree does not support continued delivery of this as a stand-alone major
Marketing	Minor removed in both the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Enrollment in the minor is very low; with the total FTE reduction in Business, goal is to maintain focus on majors with higher enrollment
Sustainable Tourism Management	Eliminated in the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Enrollment in the major is very low; with the total FTE reduction in Business, goal is to maintain focus on majors with higher enrollment
eSports Management	Minor eliminated in the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Enrollment in the minor is very low; with the total FTE reduction in Business, goal is to maintain focus on majors with higher enrollment
Tourism Management	Minor eliminated in the Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Enrollment in the minor is very low; with the total FTE reduction in Business, goal is to maintain focus on majors with higher enrollment

HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION

Healthcare Administration was originally scheduled to sunset, but after consultation with academic leaders the relative cost to retain the major over the minor is minimal. Many courses are taught as part of other programs. The program is established in the region and seen as a key program that meets the healthcare workforce needs of the region.

The SCH/ELU ratio is not a valid metric for HCA because HCA relies on many courses that are taught as part of other programs.





The HCA program will be charged with the following program revisions:

- Program curriculum and modality to be reviewed during academic year 2025-26 to identify low-enrolled course and opportunities to streamline curriculum
- Create a seamless pathway to the MBA program
- Strive to attain a target headcount of 35 students by Fall 2026

BAS IN MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANAGEMENT MAJORS, AND MARKETING, ESPORTS, AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT MINORS

Due to low enrollments and efforts to streamline curricular offerings, the BAS in Management along with the related Sustainable Tourism Management majors were proposed as programs to be eliminated in both the Provisional Plan and the final RESILIENCY PLAN. The BAS in Management had 8 students listed as majors during the 2024-25 academic year and Sustainable Tourism Management had only one student listed as a major. Similarly, the minors in Marketing, eSports, and Tourism Management were proposed for elimination in both the provisional and final plans. Program faculty feel that remaining personnel in Business can be better utilized to support the new streamlined list of programs.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Dean's Office	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation		
Business	1.00	Faculty			
Subtotals	1.00		\$30,000		\$131,597
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$161,597

NOTE: The SOU Foundation will relieve the university's E&G budget by using donor-designed gifts to partially support the compensation of the School of Business Dean.

School of Education

PROGRAM	ACTION	RATIONALE
Education Studies	Reduce complexity of the degree and limit offerings to three concentrations. Eliminate TESOL concentration.	Concentrations in special education/elementary licensure, and holistic education have strong enrollments and meet regional needs
Special Education Minor	Eliminate Minor	Education Studies Major concentration in SPED licensure serves similar audiences
MS Education	Concentration in curriculum and instruction in STEM eliminated in both Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Concentration in STEM has low enrollments; elimination of concentration will allow program to refocus on existing programs
Master of Arts in Teaching	Accelerated MAT track eliminated in Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Low enrollments and streamlined master's level offerings for School of Education
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) endorsement program	Eliminated in both Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Low enrollments in required courses

Autism Spectrum Disorder Programs (ASD; ABA/ASD)	State licensure specialization and ABA credential eliminated in both Provisional Plan and final RESILIENCY PLAN	Low enrollments and lack of appropriately qualified personnel to teach coursework
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Faculty in the School of Education will simplify the curriculum at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Over the past five years, annual headcounts of students in the programs and program variations listed above range from 0 to 7 students. These programs also present significant staffing challenges as they require very specific faculty qualifications, (some of which are mandated by the state in order to award teaching licenses and endorsements). The School of Education has recommended the programs and program variations listed above for elimination. These proposed eliminations will allow School of Education faculty to streamline and strengthen existing programmatic offerings.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Dean's Office	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation		
Education	2.00	Faculty			
Education	1.24	Unclassified			
Education	1.00	Classified			
Education				\$12,000	
Subtotals	4.24			\$12,000	\$449,015
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$461,015

Hannon Library

Hannon Library will undergo a comprehensive program review to establish an operational structure that reflects the evolving role of the library within the broader university community and to meet the needs of a more focused university. Because academic programs will be impacted during the next three years, the library will retain the current faculty but eliminate 2.33 FTE from staff positions until there is more clarity around the needs of the university, faculty, and students. This review will occur in over the course of Fall and Winter terms with a final report due in May 2026.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Hannon Library	0.33	Unclassified			
Hannon Library	2.00	Classified			
Hannon Library				\$82,400	
Subtotals	2.33			\$82,400	\$195,296
SAVINGS					\$277,696

STUDENT AFFAIRS AND DEAN OF STUDENTS

The Dean of Students Office will transition several positions from 12-month contracts to 10-month contracts to minimize costs. It also plans to shift funding for one UCAM coach to Incidental Fee funding as a result of decisions students made last year to provide access to a coach and mentor for all students.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Dean of Students	0.34	Unclassified			
UCAM	0.00	Unclassified	Incidental Fee		
Other offices	0.34	Classified			
Disability Resources				\$23,427	
Subtotals	0.68			\$23,427	\$77,507
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$100,934

NOTE: The Student Incidental Fee will relieve the E&G Budget by supporting 0.4 FTE of the UCAM personnel portfolio. This will be subject to ASSOU Student Fee Allocation Committee decisions each year.

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

The largest component within University Advancement is the Development Program, which is funded almost entirely by the SOU Foundation. The foundation’s mission is “to secure private philanthropic support to advance SOU and to invest and manage gifts responsibly to honor donors’ wishes.” This is the basis for moving the General Fund portion of the salary of five members of the Development team to the SOU Foundation for the duration of the current fundraising campaign. Two planks in the SOU Forward plan are devoted to revenue generation and diversification, both of which can be influenced and impacted by garnering additional philanthropic support. Additionally, Alumni Relations works in tandem with the Development Program and is focused on fostering relationships and cultivating alumni to engage with students and also by identifying potential future philanthropic supporters. The Executive Committee of the SOU Foundation approved the university’s request on August 6, 2025, with savings retroactively generated starting on July 1, 2025.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Alumni Relations	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation	\$6,400	
Development	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation		
Development	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation		
Development	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation	\$21,000	
Development	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation		
Development	0.00	Unclassified	SOU Foundation		
Subtotals	0.00			\$27,400	\$508,689
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$536,089

NOTE: The SOU Foundation will relieve the university’s E&G budget by funding five development positions and one Alumni Relations position through the remainder of the university’s comprehensive fundraising campaign.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Regardless of size, the university will always require employees who oversee payroll, human resources, finance, facilities, etc. These are overhead costs that are critical to maintaining an infrastructure, irrespective of size or acreage. It should be noted that this unit's area reduced its workforce significantly during SOU FORWARD, and it is currently operating at minimum scale.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
VP Office	0.80	Unclassified			
Business Services	1.00	Classified			
Sustainability	0.00	Unclassified	Grant/Gift		
Info Tech	1.00	Unclassified			
Equipment Purch				\$100,000	
Subtotals	2.80			\$100,000	\$484,802
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$584,802

NOTE: The university's E&G budget will be relieved by using grant and gift fund revenues that will offset expenses currently paid by the General Fund.

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Athletics at a regional university are often used to drive enrollment and retention of students. That is true at SOU, where more than 450 men and women compete in sports ranging from football and softball to wrestling and beach volleyball. SOU's student-athletes also retain above 90% and are enrolled in some of the university's most academically challenging majors. At present, SOU uses tuition remission dollars to recruit students for its 17 sports, allowing student-athletes to share their status as a scholarship athlete. In this final RESILIENCY PLAN, athletics will reduce its allocation of tuition remission dollars over the next four years and also reduce the rosters of several sports during the upcoming seasons. This strategy will achieve greater savings for the institution than the elimination of entire sports. The goal is to maintain university enrollment while also reducing the amount of General Fund dollars supporting the program. This plan also eases the burden on Student Incidental Fee dollars.

IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Department	FTE Reduction	Classification	Alternative Funding Source	S & S Budget Savings	General Fund Salary Savings
Athletic Remissions				\$380,000	
Athletic Admin				\$320,000	
Athletics IFC				\$300,000	
Athletic Admin	0.50	Unclassified			\$27,562
Subtotals	0.50			\$1,000,000	\$27,562
TOTAL SAVINGS					\$1,027,562

NOTE: The reduction of athletic funding is projected to save the university's E&G Budget \$718,000 and the Student Incidental Fee by \$300,000. It should be noted that the savings will be generated over three years, and then maintain those savings indefinitely.

IMPACT ON WORKFORCE

While consequences of this RESILIENCY PLAN work remain essential to the future of the university, they are nonetheless emotional and challenging for the entire campus community. University leaders are committed to helping all employees, regardless of whether they are departing or will remain on campus. We recognize that healing is needed in order for us to move forward in unison. To be sure, the scope of the RESILIENCY PLAN impacts every program and person on campus.

University leaders also recognize that SOU FORWARD left in its wake a workforce that expressed deep concerns about increasing workloads—feeling as though they were asked to do more with less. Therein lies the fundamental difference between SOU FORWARD and this RESILIENCY PLAN. SOU FORWARD reduced expenditures in a more opportunistic way; many savings garnered through personnel reductions took advantage of planned retirements and the elimination of unfilled positions. In essence, the plan did not eliminate work. The RESILIENCY PLAN calls for the strategic reduction of programs, thereby reducing the workload of remaining university staff and faculty.

Additionally, the ability to use philanthropic dollars to strategically fund university positions will continue to bend the cost curve and reduce pressure on General Fund dollars.

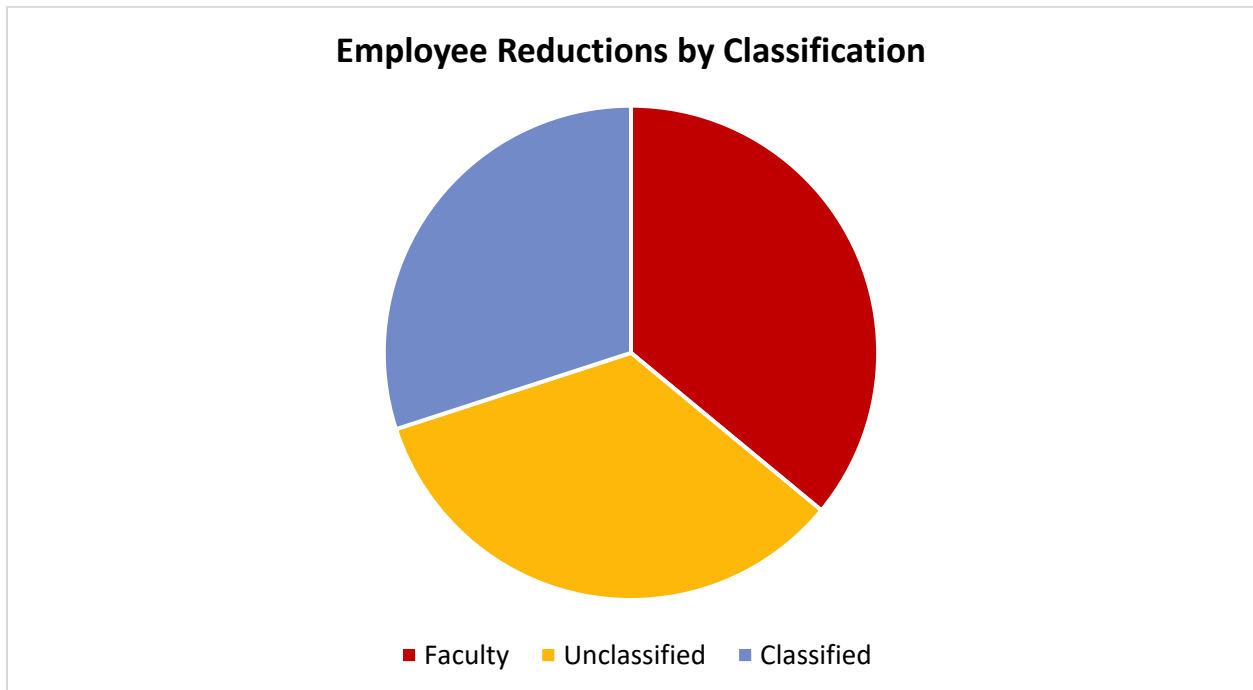
Resiliency Reductions

	FACULTY	UNCLASSIFIED	CLASSIFIED	TOTALS
Vacancies	7	2	3	12
Alternate Funding Source	3	13	1	17
Retirements/Resignations	8	5	1	14
12->10 month/11->10 month	0	2	4	6
Reduced FTE	3	0	0	3
Eliminations	7	6	5	18
TOTALS	28	28	14	70
	40%	40%	20%	100%

SOU Forward Reductions

	FACULTY	UNCLASSIFIED	CLASSIFIED	TOTALS
Vacancies	6.24	12.55	17.35	36.14
Volunteer Reductions	0.71	1	0	1.71
Retirements	14.4	2	1	17.4
Eliminations	5.68	9.2	11.7	26.58
TOTAL	27.03	24.75	30.05	81.83
% of FTE Reductions	33%	30%	37%	100%

Total Reductions: SOU Forward and Resiliency Plan



	FACULTY	UNCLASSIFIED	CLASSIFIED	TOTALS
RESILIENCY PLAN	28.00	28.00	14.00	70.00
SOU FORWARD	27.03	24.75	30.05	81.83
TOTALS	55.03	51.75	44.05	151.83
	36%	34%	30%	100%

PROJECTED SAVINGS

The table below provides an overview of the anticipated savings to the General Fund and other institutional funds as a result of the RESILIENCY PLAN.

BY AREA	AMOUNT
President's Office	\$ 601,771.00
Provost's Office	\$ 369,240.00
Honors College	\$ 481,532.00
College of Arts & Humanities	\$ 1,717,379.00
College of Natural & Social Sciences	\$ 1,379,988.00
School of Business	\$ 161,597.00
School of Education	\$ 461,015.00
Hannon Library	\$ 277,696.00
Student Affairs	\$ 100,934.00
University Advancement	\$ 536,089.00
Finance & Administration	\$ 584,802.00
Intercollegiate Athletics	\$ 1,027,562.00
Additional Remissions	\$ 2,015,000.00
Contracts	\$ 1,000,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 10,714,605.00

CONCLUSION

The university's last five years have been marked by unprecedented fiscal crises. As caretakers of this cherished institution, university leaders recognized the need for dramatic transformational change. While the RESILIENCY PLAN does not guarantee a future without challenge, it does position SOU to better navigate the uncertainties that lie ahead. This transformation will create a more focused, responsive, and resilient university—one better positioned to be of service to our students, our community, and our state for generations to come.

Budget Update

Executive Summary (page 74) and Extended Pro Forma (page 86) added September 17, 2025

Executive Summary of Changes:

FY26 June Adopted Budget vs. FY26 Provisional Budget

In the June meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Board asked SOU to prepare a budget that would cut \$5 million out of the General Fund budget. The pro forma showed a deficit of approximately \$3.3 million, and it was mentioned that there was an issue in the student fees section that needed to be investigated. We estimated that the impact could be up to about \$1.7 million, meaning that a \$5 million cut would keep us in the black. After that meeting, a number of items came to light:

Revenues

- The student fee issue was a large issue and resulted in an impact of a \$1.9 million decrease in our fee revenue projection
 - One piece of this is the realization that some tuition dollars were incorrectly accounted for in the fee line, thereby double-counting a portion of the tuition revenue
 - The other piece of this is the impact from the single fee change; a change that we now understand was underscored by some faulty data as referenced in the bullet above
- Enrollment continued to trend down from the previous year, leading to an adjustment in our enrollment forecast from -3% to -5%

Expenses

- Personnel estimates continued to increase with early discussions of future labor negotiations
 - Actual expenditures at the end of June in the Supplies and Services section of the ledger indicated a larger-than-usual monthly expense, resulting in an overage of more than \$1 million
 - It was further noted in August that the state's revenue estimates were markedly lower than previous estimates. This could result in either budget holdbacks from the state or Continuing Service Level budgets that are inadequate to cover the actual increased cost of labor and Other Payroll Expenses.

All of these factors impact the unrestricted cash reserves of the university. If SOU continued down the existing trajectory, those reserves would have shortly been depleted. At that juncture, our ability to sustain mission-critical operations without interruption would be compromised.

Therefore, the proposed Resilience Plan is not merely a response to these projections but a proactive and essential measure to preserve the institution's core operational integrity. Its primary objective is to safeguard our remaining strategic reserves, ensuring the university maintains the necessary financial flexibility to continue its mission-critical work. Implementing this framework now is a prudent act of stewardship, designed to fortify our financial foundation and ensure our

Executive Summary (Continued)

long-term sustainability for generations of students and scholars to come. The measures you will find outlined in the plan, while significant, are essential for navigating this period and securing the university's future. They represent a series of carefully considered, albeit difficult, decisions.

Here is a breakdown of the key changes:

Revenue Changes (Net Decrease: **-\$1.63M**)

Total projected revenues have decreased significantly, primarily due to the correction of a long-standing accounting error and revised projections.

- **Fees:** A **\$1.95 million decrease** is the most significant change. An internal analysis in June/July revealed a multi-decade issue where some online education tuition was improperly coded and double-counted as fee revenue. Furthermore, the Single Fee update implemented in FY2025 resulted in a net decrease to fees revenue. This change corrects both projections.
- **Tuition:** Projections were reduced by **\$144,000** based on new forecasting models that anticipate enrollment declines from the new blended face-to-face and online modeling.
- **Raider Aid (Remissions):** A positive variance of **\$156,000**. This reflects the start of a multi-year plan to bring remissions (discounting) spending down to a target of 9% of Tuition and Fees by Fiscal Year 2031.
- **Other Tuition & Fee Adjustments:** A positive variance of **\$500,000**. This represents applying a portion of an unrestricted **\$2,000,000** gift directly as remissions for students for each year of the 2025-27 biennium. This generous donation will be used to provide a runway to adjust the remission process and offset revenue declines.
- **Miscellaneous Other Revenue:** A **\$195,000 decrease** based on updated projections.
- **State Funding:** There are no changes to the projected state funding for the biennium.

Expense & Transfer Changes (Net Decrease/Savings: **-\$5,196,000**)

The Provisional Budget reflects significant cost-saving measures as part of the resilience plan, primarily through reducing personnel costs and services.

- **Personnel Services:** A total of roughly **\$2.99 million in savings** has been identified.
 - These savings are the result of a planned reduction in the number of positions across all employee categories (Faculty, Unclassified, Classified).
 - Assumptions for salary increases have not been changed; the savings are entirely from a smaller workforce.

Executive Summary (Continued)

- **Supplies & Services (S&S):** A net **\$1,772,000 in savings**. This is the result of a major focus on reducing departmental spending and contracts of roughly -\$772k.
 - A positive variance of **\$1,000,000**. This represents applying a portion of an unrestricted **\$2,000,000** gift directly as an offset to the S&S expenses planned for FY26. This generous donation will be used to offset costs related to the Workday implementation.
- **Capital Expenses (CapEx):** A **\$79,000 reduction** by cutting capitalized purchases to match FY25 actuals.
- **Transfers:** A **\$432,000 reduction** in net transfers out of the Education & General fund, resulting from cuts to E&G support Athletics S&S budgets and the elimination of a staff position in JPR.

Conclusion and Outlook

The FY26 Provisional Budget reveals a challenging financial landscape. The proactive expense reductions achieved through the resilience plan, coupled with a very generous unrestricted donation, are indeed substantial. At the same time, necessary corrections to revenue accounting and more conservative enrollment projections are incorporated into this new budget plan.

The result is a projected ending fund balance of **\$652,000**, or roughly 1% of the General Fund budget. This highlights the structural nature of the university's deficit and underscores the critical importance of continuing the re-engineering and resilience planning efforts to ensure long-term financial stability.

FY 2025 Budget Update

- Year-end close currently in progress
 - Many updates still expected, both positive and negative
- Other Personnel Expenses (OPE) analysis yielded first tranche of updates
 - System update testing progressing for September implementation
- Fees feed from Banner exposed fairly significant error
 - Analysis revealed a multi-decade problem with Online Education tuition reported as fees; double-counted in all projections
 - Resolved on pro forma but requires comprehensive fees model update for all future projections

FY 2026 Education and General Fund (E&G) Provisional Budget Update



Assumptions Updates

- Student Credit Hour (SCH) forecasts manually set to:
 - 25-27 Biennium: FY26 (AY25-26): -5% | FY27 (AY26-27): -5.5%
 - 27-29 Biennium: FY28 (AY27-28): -4.0% | FY29 (AY28-29): -3.6%
- FY26 Tuition rates unchanged; 4.99% each year thereafter
- Labor – completely new estimates per resilience planning for FY26 onward and **Other Personnel Expenses** model
- S&S – Resilience plan updates to budgeted S&S but additional review/analysis over coming months to explore areas for contract changes or eliminations
 - Risepoint (AP MBA, MS.Ed) planned elimination after FY2027
- Transfers – Update to Athletics transfer and JPR support

Pro Forma Layout for Today

Presentation Methodology

1. Each slide will show:
 1. FY25 Budget
 2. FY25 Estimate to Complete
 3. FY25 Budget to Estimate Variance
 4. June FY26 Adopted Budget
 5. FY26 Provisional Budget (Resilience Planning)
 6. Comparison between June and Provisional
 7. FY27 Forecast Model

E&G Revenues

	2023-25 Biennium			2025-27 Biennium			
	2024-25 FY25 Budget (000's)	2024-25 EST FY25 (000's)	2024-25 VARIANCE (000's)	2025-26 JUNE BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 PROVISIONAL BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 BUDGET UPDATES (000's)	2026-27 FORECAST (000's)
REVENUES							
Total State Funding (SSCM,ETSF,SELP)	28,706	29,372	667	29,481	29,481	0	30,529
Tuition	34,845	34,471	(374)	35,387	35,243	(144)	34,282
Fees	4,247	2,642	(1,605)	4,647	2,702	(1,945)	2,628
Raider Aid (remissions)	(4,000)	(5,294)	(1,294)	(5,318)	(5,162)	156	(4,798)
<i>Oth tuition & fee adjustments</i>	(1,100)		1,100		500	500	500
Tuition, net of Raider Aid	33,992	31,819	(2,173)	34,716	33,283	(1,434)	32,611
Misc. Other Revenue	3,742	4,071	329	4,195	4,000	(195)	4,048
TOTAL REVENUES	66,439	65,262	(1,178)	68,393	66,764	(1,629)	67,188

FY2026 Adopted vs Provisional – Budget Updates

- No major updates to state revenue assumptions for 2025-27 Biennium
 - FY25 update identified (+\$667k)
- Tuition model **completely changed**; new projections for next four years
- Fees model overhauled to correct for ‘Tuition as Fees’ legacy mis-coding
- Update to Miscellaneous Other Revenues projections
- Major update to remissions to reflect \$5.1M target with future reduction plan
 - Year 1 reduction to Athletics (-\$95k), Honors (-\$61k)
 - \$500k of \$2M Gift to be used for Student Remissions in FY26 & FY27
 - Provides runway to adjust remissions process and address overages

E&G Labor

	2023-25 Biennium			2025-27 Biennium			
	2024-25 FY25 Budget (000's)	2024-25 EST FY25 (000's)	2024-25 VARIANCE (000's)	2025-26 JUNE BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 PROVISIONAL BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 BUDGET UPDATES (000's)	2026-27 FORECAST (000's)
<u>Personnel Services</u>							
Faculty	(14,678)	(14,048)	630	(14,791)	(14,103)	688	(12,565)
Unclassified Staff	(9,896)	(9,565)	331	(9,780)	(9,454)	326	(9,713)
Classified Staff	(7,426)	(7,244)	183	(7,797)	(7,245)	553	(7,614)
Students, GA's, etc	(1,499)	(1,503)	(4)	(1,589)	(1,498)	92	(1,457)
Salaries Sub-total	(33,499)	(32,359)	1,139	(33,957)	(32,300)	1,658	(31,349)
PERS & ORP (Retirement Pgms)	(7,534)	(7,602)	(68)	(8,213)	(7,653)	560	(7,428)
PEBB (Healthcare)	(7,793)	(7,693)	100	(8,303)	(7,746)	558	(8,009)
Other (FICA, SAIF, OPL, etc.)	(3,184)	(3,022)	162	(3,266)	(3,049)	217	(2,959)
OPE Sub-total	(18,511)	(18,317)	194	(19,783)	(18,448)	1,335	(18,396)
Net Personnel Services	(52,010)	(50,677)	1,333	(53,740)	(50,748)	2,992	(49,745)

FY2026 Adopted vs Provisional – Budget Updates

- No changes to assumptions for salary increases; only to number of positions
- Salary & Other Payroll Expenses (OPE) Updates:
 - FY26: Salaries -\$1.65M | OPE -\$1.33M | Total FY26 -\$2.99M
- Additionally
 - FY27: Salary -\$951k | OPE -\$52k | Total FY27 -\$1.00M
- Compounding savings manifest in FY27 for next fiscal / academic year
- Current cuts plan direct result of challenging revenue landscape and support

Supplies & Services	2023-25 Biennium			2025-27 Biennium			
	2024-25 FY25 Budget (000's)	2024-25 EST FY25 (000's)	2024-25 VARIANCE (000's)	2025-26 JUNE BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 PROVISIONAL BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 BUDGET UPDATES (000's)	2026-27 FORECAST (000's)
S&S Expenses	(12,231)	(13,452)	(1,221)	(13,699)	(12,999)	699	(13,324)
RisePoint Program Share (AP)	(1,249)	(1,226)	23	(1,307)	(1,314)	(7)	(1,308)
Capital Expenses (CapEx)	(125)	(12)	113	(92)	(13)	79	(94)
S&S Adjustments			0		1,000		0
Total S&S, CapEx, AP	(13,605)	(14,690)	(1,085)	(15,098)	(13,326)	1,772	(14,726)

FY2026 Adopted vs Provisional – Budget Updates

- FY25 growth still under detailed accounting review for audit
 - Additional changes by October meeting
- FY26 Total Reduction to S&S of ~\$1.77M
 - \$699k in S&S with focus on contracts and departmental reductions
 - \$1M of \$2M Gift to be used for S&S FY26 (see ‘S&S Adjustments’)
 - Capitalized purchases cut equal to FY25 actuals
 - FY27 onward; the CapEx budget will be restored
- Deeper analysis required of S&S to expose where dramatic growth occurred in last month of FY25 to ensure it won’t happen again

Transfers

	2023-25 Biennium			2025-27 Biennium			
	2024-25 FY25 Budget (000's)	2024-25 EST FY25 (000's)	2024-25 VARIANCE (000's)	2025-26 JUNE BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 PROVISIONAL BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 BUDGET UPDATES (000's)	2026-27 FORECAST (000's)
Budgeted Transfers (In & Out)	(2,706)	(2,706)	-	(2,928)	(2,496)	432	(2,479)
<i>Transfers Adjustments</i>			-				
Transfers Net (In & Out of E&G)	(2,706)	(2,706)	-	(2,928)	(2,496)	432	(2,479)

FY25 Ending Variance Analysis – Transfers

- Still no observable deviations from budget currently
 - Likely updates will be entered into Workday throughout year-end close
- Automatic processes still being established in Workday
- Estimate remains set to budget until accounting finalizes FY 2025

FY2026 Adopted vs Provisional – Budget Updates

- Updated savings estimates cut roughly -\$432k from June budget
- Resilience plan cuts to E&G supported areas:
 - Athletics – Permanent S&S Support reduction: \$320k
 - JPR – 1 Staff position (Salary + OPE: -\$112k)

E&G Fund Balance		2023-25 Biennium			2025-27 Biennium			
		2024-25 FY25 Budget (000's)	2024-25 EST FY25 (000's)	2024-25 VARIANCE (000's)	2025-26 JUNE BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 PROVISIONAL BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 BUDGET UPDATES (000's)	2026-27 FORECAST (000's)
TOTAL EXPENSES & TRANSFERS		(68,321)	(68,073)	248	(71,766)	(66,570)	5,196	(66,951)
FUND BALANCE	Recurring Cuts	0			5,000			0
	Non-Recurring 1-Time Revenue	1,458						
	Non-Recurring 1-Time Expense							
	Adjusted Ending Fund Balance	3,968	1,581		3,207	1,774		2,674
	% Operating Revenues (Adjusted)	5.97%	2.42%		3.62%	2.66%		3.98%
	Change in Fund Balance	(1,881)	(2,811)	(929)	1,627	194	(1,433)	237
	Beginning Fund Balance	3,269	3,269	0	458	458		652
	Ending Fund Balance	1,388	458	(929)	2,085	652	(1,433)	889
	% Operating Revenues (Regular Ops)	2.09%	0.70%	-1.39%	3.05%	0.98%		1.32%
Days of Operations		19.09	2.46	(16.64)	1.47	3.57		4.85
Months of Operations		0.64	0.08	(0.55)	0.05	0.12		0.16

Expenses
Changed

FY2026 Adopted vs Provisional – Budget Updates

- FY25 fund balance significantly changed from board listening session
- Future biennium projections turn decidedly negative *if -5.5% is real*
 - Further work across expense categories may yield more changes;
- Revenues not keeping pace with expense growth across multiple areas
- Fund balance *precariously* close to being fully depreciated; every effort must be made in FY26 to preserve as many resources as possible/feasible

E&G Pro Forma Projections to FY2027		2023-25 Biennium			2025-27 Biennium			
		2024-25 FY25 Budget (000's)	2024-25 EST FY25 (000's)	2024-25 VARIANCE (000's)	2025-26 JUNE BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 PROVISIONA L BUDGET (000's)	2025-26 BUDGET UPDATES (000's)	2026-27 FORECAST (000's)
REVENUES								
Total State Funding (SSCM,ETSF,SELP)		28,706	29,372	667	29,481	29,481	0	30,529
Tuition		34,845	34,471	(374)	35,387	35,243	(144)	34,282
Fees		4,247	2,642	(1,605)	4,647	2,702	(1,945)	2,628
Raider Aid (remissions)		(4,000)	(5,294)	(1,294)	(5,318)	(5,162)	156	(4,798)
Oth tuition & fee adjustments		(1,100)		1,100		500	500	500
Tuition, net of Raider Aid		33,992	31,819	(2,173)	34,716	33,283	(1,434)	32,611
Misc. Other Revenue		3,742	4,071	329	4,195	4,000	(195)	4,048
TOTAL REVENUES		66,439	65,262	(1,178)	68,393	66,764	(1,629)	67,188
EXPENSES & TRANSFERS								
Personnel Services								
Salaries Sub-total		(33,499)	(32,359)	1,139	(33,957)	(32,300)	1,658	(31,349)
OPE Sub-total		(18,511)	(18,317)	194	(19,783)	(18,448)	1,335	(18,396)
Net Personnel Services		(52,010)	(50,677)	1,333	(53,740)	(50,748)	2,992	(49,745)
Supplies & Services (S&S)								
Total S&S, CapEx, AP		(13,605)	(14,690)	(1,085)	(15,098)	(13,326)	1,772	(14,726)
Personnel and S&S before Transfers		(65,615)	(65,367)	248	(68,838)	(64,074)	4,764	(64,471)
Net from Operations Before Transfers		825	(105)	(929)	(445)	2,690	3,135	2,717
Transfers Net (In & Out of E&G)		(2,706)	(2,706)	-	(2,928)	(2,496)	432	(2,479)
TOTAL EXPENSES & TRANSFERS		(68,321)	(68,073)	248	(71,766)	(66,570)	5,196	(66,951)
Recurring Cuts		0			5,000			0
FUND BALANCE								
Non-Recurring 1-Time Revenue		1,458						
Non-Recurring 1-Time Expense								
Adjusted Ending Fund Balance		3,968	1,581		3,207	1,774		2,674
% Operating Revenues (Adjusted)		5.97%	2.42%		3.62%	2.66%		3.98%
Change in Fund Balance		(1,881)	(2,811)	(929)	1,627	194	(1,433)	237
Beginning Fund Balance		3,269	3,269	0	458	458		652
Ending Fund Balance		1,388	458	(929)	2,085	652	(1,433)	889
% Operating Revenues (Regular Ops)		2.09%	0.70%	-1.39%	3.05%	0.98%		1.32%
Days of Operations		19.09	2.46	(16.64)	1.47	3.57	88	4.85
Months of Operations		0.64	0.08	(0.55)	0.05	0.12		0.16

Education and General <small>(in thousands of dollars)</small>	2017-19 Biennium		2019-21 Biennium		2021-23 Biennium		2023-25 Biennium			2025-27 Biennium				2027-29 Biennium		2029-31 Biennium	
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26 JUNE BUDGET	2025-26 PROVISIONAL BUDGET	2025-26 BUDGET UPDATES	2026-27 FORECAST	2027-28 FORECAST	2028-29 FORECAST	2029-30 FORECAST	2030-31 FORECAST
	Actual <small>(000's)</small>	Actual <small>(000's)</small>	Actual <small>(000's)</small>	Actual <small>(000's)</small>	Actual <small>(000's)</small>	Actual <small>(000's)</small>	Actual <small>(000's)</small>	EST FY25 <small>(000's)</small>	VARIANCE <small>(000's)</small>								
REVENUES																	
Total State Funding (SSCM,ETSF,SELP)	21,273	21,651	23,074	23,937	26,220	27,001	27,856	29,372	667	29,481	29,481	0	30,529	31,659	32,935	34,378	35,765
Tuition	37,759	37,709	39,365	36,451	34,281	33,178	33,204	34,471	(374)	35,387	35,243	(144)	34,282	33,935	33,823	33,810	32,493
Fees	3,244	3,294	3,167	3,457	3,581	4,254	4,479	2,642	(1,605)	4,647	2,702	(1,945)	2,628	2,601	2,593	2,592	2,491
Raider Aid (remissions)	(4,243)	(3,638)	(3,965)	(3,245)	(3,915)	(4,002)	(4,853)	(5,294)	(1,294)	(5,318)	(5,162)	156	(4,798)	(4,384)	(4,006)	(3,640)	(3,149)
<i>Oth tuition & fee adjustments</i>									1,100		500	500	500				
Tuition, net of Raider Aid	36,761	37,365	38,567	36,663	33,947	33,430	32,830	31,819	(2,173)	34,716	33,283	(1,434)	32,611	32,152	32,410	32,762	31,836
Misc. Other Revenue	2,804	3,013	2,453	481	1,476	3,933	4,044	4,071	329	4,195	4,000	(195)	4,048	4,139	4,232	4,328	4,425
TOTAL REVENUES	60,837	62,029	64,095	61,081	61,643	64,364	64,730	65,262	(1,178)	68,393	66,764	(1,629)	67,188	67,951	69,578	71,467	72,026
EXPENSES & TRANSFERS																	
<u>Personnel Services</u>																	
Salaries Sub-total	(31,763)	(33,014)	(33,508)	(29,132)	(32,760)	(33,065)	(32,648)	(32,359)	1,139	(33,957)	(32,300)	1,658	(31,349)	(32,171)	(33,228)	(34,297)	(34,748)
OPE Sub-total	(17,012)	(17,331)	(18,469)	(17,249)	(17,815)	(18,480)	(19,313)	(18,317)	194	(19,783)	(18,448)	1,335	(18,396)	(19,069)	(19,840)	(20,636)	(21,249)
Net Personnel Services	(48,774)	(50,345)	(51,977)	(46,381)	(50,575)	(51,545)	(51,962)	(50,677)	1,333	(53,740)	(50,748)	2,992	(49,745)	(51,240)	(53,068)	(54,932)	(55,997)
<u>Supplies & Services (S&S)</u>																	
Total S&S, CapEx, AP	(9,287)	(11,732)	(10,477)	(10,461)	(12,228)	(14,066)	(15,497)	(14,690)	(1,085)	(15,098)	(13,326)	1,772	(14,726)	(14,220)	(14,540)	(14,868)	(15,202)
<i>Personnel and S&S before Transfers</i>	(58,061)	(62,077)	(62,454)	(56,842)	(62,803)	(65,611)	(67,458)	(65,367)	248	(68,838)	(64,074)	4,764	(64,471)	(65,460)	(67,608)	(69,800)	(71,199)
Net from Operations Before Transfers	2,776	(47)	1,641	4,240	(1,160)	(1,247)	(2,728)	(105)	(929)	(445)	2,690	3,135	2,717	2,490	1,970	1,668	827
Transfers Net (In & Out of E&G)	(2,481)	(1,739)	(1,913)	(1,526)	251	8	350	(2,706)	-	(2,928)	(2,496)	432	(2,479)	(2,526)	(2,611)	(2,694)	(2,731)
TOTAL EXPENSES & TRANSFERS	(60,543)	(63,816)	(64,367)	(58,368)	(62,552)	(65,603)	(67,108)	(68,073)	248	(71,766)	(66,570)	5,196	(66,951)	(67,986)	(70,219)	(72,494)	(73,930)
Recurring Cuts										5,000			0	0	0	0	0
FUND BALANCE																	
Non-Recurring 1-Time Revenue							1,122										
Non-Recurring 1-Time Expense																	
Adjusted Ending Fund Balance							4,391	1,581		3,207	1,774		2,674	2,638	1,997	970	(934)
% Operating Revenues (Adjusted)							6.78%	2.42%		3.62%	2.66%		3.98%	3.88%	2.87%	1.36%	-1.30%
Change in Fund Balance	294	(1,786)	(273)	2,714	(909)	(1,239)	(2,378)	(2,811)	(929)	1,627	194	(1,433)	237	(36)	(641)	(1,027)	(1,904)
Beginning Fund Balance	6,845	7,139	5,354	5,081	7,795	6,886	5,647	3,269	0	458	458		652	889	853	212	(814)
Ending Fund Balance	7,139	5,353	5,081	7,795	6,886	5,647	3,269	458	(929)	2,085	652	(1,433)	889	853	212	(814)	(2,719)
% Operating Revenues (Regular Ops)	11.7%	8.63%	7.92%	12.76%	11.17%	8.77%	5.05%	0.70%	-1.39%	3.05%	0.98%		1.32%	1.26%	0.30%	-1.14%	-3.77%
Days of Operations	43.04	30.62	28.81	48.74	38.15	29.91	17.05	2.46	(16.64)	1.47	3.57		4.85	4.58	1.10	(4.10)	(13.42)
Months of Operations	1.43	1.02	0.96	1.62	1.27	1.00	0.57	0.08	(0.55)	0.05	0.12		0.16	0.15	0.04	(0.14)	⁶⁶ (0.45)

**Southern Oregon University
Board of Trustees**

RESOLUTION

**Authorization of Significant Reductions to the University Budget
and Academic Programs to Address Structural Financial Deficits
and Support the Strategic Vision of Southern Oregon University**

Whereas, the Board of Trustees of Southern Oregon University (“board”) is responsible for upholding its fiduciary duty to ensure the university meets its financial obligations, is operating in furtherance of its stated purposes, and is operating in compliance with the law;

Whereas, the Board of Trustees, on June 20, 2025, directed the university administration to take immediate action to begin to balance the University budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26 and make structural budget reductions of \$5,000,000 to be presented in a draft plan of action, and if the budget reductions were determined to be inadequate to support the future, long-term viability of the University and allow it to thrive, the University Administration was further directed to propose an alternative draft plan of action;

Whereas, enrollment trends, increasing expenses, and anticipated impacts of federal actions bring uncertainty, and the university’s primary sources of revenue: state funding, as well as tuition and fees based on enrollment, are expected to be inadequate to fund the university’s financial obligations of at least a continuing service level, an alternative plan was proposed;

Whereas, the Board of Trustees has reviewed the proposed “Toward a *(More)* Resilient SOU: A Plan to Reimagine the University” dated September 2025, and is supportive of the plan’s strategic vision to create a more focused, more responsive, more resilient SOU that is focused on increasing:

1. Enrollment;
2. Student success;
3. Competitive compensation; and
4. Financial reserves;

Whereas, the Board of Trustees received nearly 175 email messages from the university community about the August 1, 2025 version of the resiliency plan as well as the August 27 amendments to this plan, and held a special meeting to conduct a public comment listening session on August 27 related to the resiliency plan;

Whereas, the university community submitted over 100 pages of ideas and proposals to decrease costs, rethink business processes, or reconfigure academic and student support programs; and senior administrators and campus leaders received over 1,000 emails, phone calls, and written messages with recommendations, comments, and

proposals, many of which were also addressed to the trustees, and all of which were considered by the university's leadership in the development of the resiliency plan;

Whereas, President Rick Bailey held a Campus Conversation in August, updated the campus each week during the summer, sharing progress toward understanding the university's finances, data collection, decision-making, and process; and other university leaders met multiple times with the university's shared governance partners and union leaders to seek feedback and participation;

Whereas academic leaders were pivotal in the process, as they submitted thoughts and ideas about how to maintain core academic programs while also recommending changes based on enrollment trends, graduation rates, and other considerations to become a more focused, more responsive, more resilient SOU;

Whereas, the board has the authority to establish, eliminate, control, or substantially reorganize academic programs and units of operation, and understands that the proposed resiliency plan calls for academic program eliminations and modifications; workforce reductions; expenditure reductions; restructuring and reorganization; targeted reductions in intercollegiate athletics; and related revenue and enrollment considerations for these; and

Whereas, the resiliency plan will help ensure that SOU can continue offering high-quality education and extra-curricular programs, supportive services for SOU students, and targeted services to the community as a regional institution despite the budget reductions necessary to maintain the fiscal stability of SOU;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, the university president is directed to take such actions as may be required, consistent with the delegation of authority to implement *Toward a (More) Resilient SOU: A Plan to Reimagine the University*, in order to achieve the strategic vision and financial targets outlined in the plan, including the removal of the of the following majors and minors from the university's offering of academic programs:

MAJORS

- Chemistry
- Financial Mathematics
- Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies
- International Studies
- BAS Management
- Mathematics
- Mathematics/Computer Science
- Power and Politics
- Spanish Language and Culture
- Sustainable Tourism Management
- Outdoor Adventure and Expedition Leadership (graduate program)

MINORS

- Early Childhood Development
- Esports Management
- Ethics
- International Studies
- Latin American Studies
- Management
- Marketing
- Philosophy
- Rhetoric and Reason
- Social Sciences
- Special Education
- Tourism Management

Be it further resolved, that the implementation of *Toward a (More) Resilient SOU: A Plan to Reimagine the University*” may require additional significant changes in the university's academic programs as defined by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. Such changes must be approved by the Board of Trustees prior to submission to the Commission; and

Be it further resolved, that if the financial condition of the university is not improved as currently projected or better, the university president shall notify the board immediately upon becoming aware of such projections. This notification shall be made without undue delay to ensure the board is afforded sufficient time for prudent deliberation and to authorize any corrective action as necessary; and

Be it finally resolved, that with this board action and directive, the University President is also required to submit regular progress updates to the board regarding the implementation of the plan, including updates on personnel reductions, actual savings realized, variances with justification from projected personnel and cost reductions; challenges that arise as a result of the plan’s implementation, and other factors deemed appropriate by the University President or required by the Board of Trustees of Southern Oregon University.

Public Comment Addendum

Section Added September 17, 2025

Public Comment Memo

September 17, 2025

TO: Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees
FROM: Sabrina Prud'homme, University Board Secretary
RE: Aggregated Public Comments to the Board

The Board of Trustees has received significant written public comments in addition to the public comment listening session that was held on August 27, 2025. These messages have already been provided to the board, but I am including them in the public record as well.

If a message was marked as *comments/testimony* or *public comments/public testimony*, or the like, it has been included. The following messages also include the balance of the comments that speakers were unable to deliver in the meeting, comments provided before and after the meeting, or, in one case, a communication to selected trustees that a sender or recipient has requested be included in the public record. If a message was sent to the board but not clearly marked as indicated above, it has not been entered into the public record, although the board has received it.

The email addresses, student identification numbers, and phone numbers of senders and some recipients have been redacted from these messages, although some may be subject to the public record. More information may be available upon request.

Thank you.

SJP

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Malekai Ren Pola [REDACTED]

Date: Mon, Sep 15, 2025 at 11:03 AM

Subject: Supporting an Urgent Revision of the Resilient SOU Plan

To: trustees <trustees@sou.edu>, Sabrina Prudhomme <Prudhomms@sou.edu>, SOU Presidents Office <presidentsoffice@sou.edu>, SOU ProvostsOffice <provostsoffice@sou.edu>

Good morning,

I hope this email finds you well. I am here to express support for an urgent revision to the Resilient SOU Plan. This revision would remove all cuts toward the College of Arts and Humanities' support staff via the Dean's Office. The current cuts place CAH at extreme risk of employee burnout and a dramatic decrease in quality of our division, both in support toward faculty and students. The creative industries, in particular, have specific needs that require additional staffing to support performance endeavors, which are the primary recruitment initiative for our programs. SOU has the budget to adequately support staffing for our college and give employment opportunities to classified staff affected by post-exigency cuts.

As previously stated in the last special meeting, I urge the Board and executive administration to take action, not empty words, to support your creative industries. The creative industries are the heart of the Rogue Valley, and will look poorly on SOU's reputation to prioritize other industries instead of equal treatment and celebration. My faculty, staff colleagues, and most importantly, my students, deserve the best quality environment for their endeavors. Please reach out to me for any questions. I am more than happy to shed light on our division's specific needs. Many thanks for your time and have a wonderful rest of your day.

--

Best regards,

Malekai Ren Pola (*they/them*)

Office Specialist for Theatre and Visiting Groups

[Oregon Center for the Arts](#)

Southern Oregon University

1250 Siskiyou Blvd, Ashland, OR 97520

[REDACTED] | TTHR 130/131

[SOU Land Acknowledgement](#)

Text 907-312-5085 or visit land.codeforanchorage.org to find the land acknowledgement for your area. e.g. text Ashland, OR to 907-312-5085.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Maggie Vanderberg <vanderbem@sou.edu>

Date: Mon, Sep 15, 2025 at 1:39 PM

Subject: [Board of Trustees] Please consider the long term impacts of the revised plan

To: <trustees@sou.edu>

Hi,

While eliminating the math and chemistry degrees may bring short-term financial relief, doing so also risks long-term damage to our reputation, recruitment ability, academic integrity and community impact. I urge you to please ask the SOU leadership to create a plan that supports math and chemistry degree pathways for students. In an era of misinformation and rapid technological change, math and science are essential for equipping graduates with the analytical skills and scientific literacy that our society needs.

~~~~~

Maggie Vanderberg, Ph.D

Professor and Department Chair of Computer Science

NSF ASCEND Faculty Fellow

Southern Oregon University

1250 Siskiyou Blvd.

Ashland, OR 97520

[REDACTED]

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Chemistry Contact Email Account <chemistry-contact@sou.edu>

Date: Friday, September 5, 2025 at 4:04:38 PM UTC-7

Subject: Chemistry's Impact and Ongoing Potential

To: Sheila Clough <trusteeclough@sou.edu>, Brent Barry <trusteebarry@sou.edu>, Trustee Chavez <trusteechavez@sou.edu>, Michelle Fuentes <trusteefuentes@sou.edu>, Ryan Goodrich <trusteegoodrich@sou.edu>, Debra Lee <trusteelee@sou.edu>, Christina Medina <trusteemedina@sou.edu>, Daniel Santos <trusteesantos@sou.edu>, Hala Schepmann <trusteeschepmann@sou.edu>, Trustee Shelby <trusteeshelby@sou.edu>, [REDACTED] trustees <trustees@sou.edu>

Cc: [REDACTED]



Chemistry

Dear Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees,

I am writing to you today in my role as Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Physics at SOU. I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Department during last week's Board of Trustees meeting, and I would like to highlight some additional information regarding the value Chemistry brings to SOU along with our recent efforts and initiatives. (Attachment also available for ease of reading.)

Most importantly, it is our *belief in the potential of our students* that drives and motivates us. Providing them a high quality, technical education facilitates their ability to *meet their potential* while also *lifting up their peers and advancing their communities*. Notably, a *chemistry degree essentially guarantees employment* with a very good living wage and many opportunities for career advancement. This can be seen by the ongoing demand for our students and graduates in Southern Oregon's leading industries, including food and beverage, wine and craft brewing, forensic and environmental testing (e.g. water, soil, and trace metal analysis), and healthcare industries.

Thank you for your commitment to our institution and the consideration and time you give on behalf of us all!

Sincerely,



Hala G. Schepmann, PhD
Professor of Bioorganic Chemistry
chemistry@sou.edu

Chemistry has led in decreasing program costs while maintaining excellence in content delivery

- Outsourced low enrolled courses
 - o Partnered with **Western Oregon University's Chemistry Department to synchronously deliver their Physical Chemistry classes to our students**
 - § In a reciprocal fashion, WOU Chemistry has inquired about the possibility of **SOU Chemistry offering our Analytical Chemistry and Instrumental Analysis courses to their students**
- Built **streamlined degrees** in Medicinal, Environmental, and Forensic Chemistry

Supporting our region, generating revenue, and recruiting and retaining students

- Participation in **SOU Youth Programs**
 - o Chemistry faculty have led 6 ACADEMY and 1 Summer Better Than Others Camps since 2017
 - o Chemistry is launching a **Hands-on NMR instrumentation course** for high school students interested in chemistry, physics, biology, geology, and/or medicine
 - § Inaugural launch planned for June 2026
 - § **First time Youth Programs will offer a weeklong course for high school students**
 - § Will serve as **model and catalyst for future SOU offerings tailored to high school students**
- SOU's **Chemistry Club** offers numerous activities and programs throughout each school year for SOU students and our regional community
- Chemistry averages **seven tours and demonstrations annually** to high school and community college students and their families, teachers, and faculty
- **Opportunity to develop targeted recruitment to a hands-on discipline**
 - o Male college enrollment at record low
 - o "Career and technical education can also help to engage male students in high school and college."
 - § <https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2025/05/harvard-men-gender-gap-education-employment>

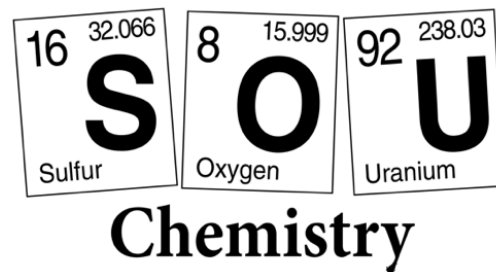
Is it possible that we are on the threshold of rising enrollments in STEM and SOU will miss out?

- **Public, Four-Year Colleges**
 - o Enrollment up 1.7% Spring 2024 compared to Spring 2023
 - o Enrollment up 2.5% Spring 2025 compared to Spring 2024
 - § <https://nscresearchcenter.org/current-term-enrollment-estimates/>
- Return to pre-COVID STEM enrollment levels at **Ashland High School**
 - o ~70% first year students enrolled in Biology>Chemistry>Physics sequence
 - § ~150 students enrolled in Chemistry classes
 - § ~30 students enrolled in Biochemistry class
 - Personal communication with AHS Chemistry Instructor Jesse Stonewood, 9/2/25
- Increasing enrollments at **Rogue Community College**
 - o 14% increase in FTE enrollment Fall 2024 compared to Fall 2023
 - o Nearly 10% increase in headcount Fall 2024 compared to Fall 2023
 - § <https://www.roguecommunity.net/rogue-community-college-continues-enrollment-surge-outpaces-state-averages/>
- Increasing enrollments in **SOU Chemistry and Physics** courses
 - o 33% increase in SOU Physics class enrollment
 - o 68% increase in SOU Organic Chemistry class enrollment

Chemistry has been an enthusiastic and effective fundraiser for the institution and we are eager to work with our Advancement Team to “Future Proof SOU Chemistry”

- **Heartfelt response from SOU Chemistry Family**
 - o Includes Biology, Chemistry, and Psychology alumni
 - o This is a perfect opportunity to allow our community to show their support!

-- Attachment --



Chemistry's Impact and Ongoing Potential

September 4, 2025

Dear Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees,

I am writing to you today in my role as Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Physics at SOU. I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Department during last week's Board of Trustees meeting, and I would like to highlight some additional information regarding the value Chemistry brings to SOU along with our recent efforts and initiatives.

Most importantly, it is our *belief in the potential of our students* that drives and motivates us. Providing them a high quality, technical education facilitates their ability to *meet their potential* while also *lifting up their peers and advancing their communities*. Notably, *a chemistry degree essentially guarantees employment* with a very good living wage and many opportunities for career advancement. This can be seen by the ongoing demand for our students and graduates in Southern Oregon's leading industries, including food and beverage, wine and craft brewing, forensic and environmental testing (e.g. water, soil, and trace metal analysis), and healthcare industries.

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Andrew Kenneth Gay
Former Faculty Trustee (2021-23)
Dean, College of Arts & Humanities
and Executive Director, Oregon Center for the Arts
Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd
Ashland, OR 97520

13 September 2025

Dear Trustee Schepmann and Trustee Goodrich,

In the coming week, I know you will both face what is likely to be the most consequential vote of your term as a Trustee. As a former Faculty Trustee, I wanted to share a few insights about how I made my decision on a similar matter, SOU Forward, in case my experience is helpful. While this will be a difficult decision for every member of the Board, I expect it is most grueling for our Faculty and Student Trustees.

Deciding whether or not to support SOU Forward (or to abstain from voting altogether) was among the most difficult choices I have ever had to make. When facing such an impactful decision, I found it helpful to consult the Governor's Board Member Handbook, which states:

Whatever your motivation, it is important to remember that you have been appointed to the board to serve all Oregonians. Board members should seek input from all interested parties and carefully consider their concerns and different points of view. However, your primary responsibility as a board member is always to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

If you were recommended by a professional association or special interest group, you will be expected to provide the board with your technical or lived expertise 11 and bring the point of view of the group to the board. However, you were not appointed to serve only as the representative of a specific group. If the interest of the group that recommended you conflicts with that of the public, your first responsibility is to the public. All board members must work for the benefit of the public first.

(https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Documents/Board_Member_Handbook%20_July_2024.pdf)

Going into the SOU Forward vote, I understood that I was appointed by then-Governor Kate Brown to bring my expertise as a faculty member to every issue the SOU Board of Trustees confronted, but my responsibility was not to the faculty of SOU alone but to "all Oregonians." The State Legislature, in its wisdom, understood that university boards would best serve the public if they brought a broad set of experiences and expertise to the table, including the experience and expertise of faculty, staff, and students, but the law is also clear that Trustees must make their decisions for the greater good of the entire State of Oregon.

Most Trustees are not experts in leading a university. For this reason, Boards appoint a University President with the necessary expertise, who likewise assembles a Cabinet of administrators who have the knowledge needed to manage all aspects of the university's mission and operations. I came to understand that the Board's role, in a nutshell, was to bring its expertise to the President as a sounding board and a filter to

analyze each situation, ask probing questions, seek better data, and ultimately determine whether the President and their team were on-track in their leadership.

With SOU Forward, the most difficult question I had to consider was whether or not to abstain from voting. Abstaining is no coward's way out. A Trustee can and should abstain whenever there is a conflict of interest, but this can be difficult to navigate for the Faculty, Staff, and Student Trustees. Every decision made by the Board impacts these members to some degree, and if conflict of interest is interpreted too broadly, they might never be allowed to vote on any issue. I spent many hours closely examining whether I had a conflict of interest with SOU Forward. I did not agree with all aspects of the plan, and I had friends, colleagues, and programs I cared about that would be negatively impacted by the plan. Did that constitute a conflict? In the end, I decided I was not conflicted. I did not believe anyone could perceive my vote, either for or against SOU Forward, as personally motivated. However, had just a few circumstances been different, I very well may have decided that voting would be a conflict of interest. Each Trustee must consider this very carefully for themselves, as I'm sure you will.

Could I vote no? As I shared, I did not agree with everything included in SOU Forward, and had it been up to me, the plan may have looked different. However, having thoroughly reviewed Oregon's board governance laws and SOU's own bylaws, it was clear to me that agreement with all aspects of the plan was not the question before me as a Trustee. The only question before me was whether passing SOU Forward or not passing SOU Forward would better serve Oregonians. The Board had appointed President Bailey as SOU's leader, and in that capacity, President Bailey and his team had presented clear and compelling evidence that significant cuts were necessary for SOU to continue its operations. Furthermore, management decisions about how to achieve those cuts clearly fell within the purview of the President. If I believed the cuts needed to be made and believed President Bailey was the right leader for SOU, then I felt I could not serve all Oregonians by voting against SOU Forward.

I voted yes. I did so through tears and with a great deal of pain. I did so because I trusted (and still trust) President Bailey's leadership and character. Before voting yes, I asked challenging questions, requested more information, studied the plan carefully, and also carefully reviewed my own ethical and legal responsibilities as a Trustee. But in the end, I found there was only one appropriate vote, and I do not regret it.

Today's circumstances are not all the same, but the rules that guide Board decision-making are. I do not envy any Trustee who faces this difficult vote on a new round of challenging cuts for SOU. I am, however, grateful for President Bailey's leadership and for your selfless service. May your conscience and your heart guide you in your duty as you decide how to vote this week.

Respectfully,



Andrew Kenneth Gay
Former Faculty Trustee (2021-23)
Dean, College of Arts & Humanities
and Executive Director, Oregon Center for the Arts
Southern Oregon University



-- Replies --

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rick Bailey <baileyr1@sou.edu>

Date: Friday, September 5, 2025 at 4:05:46 PM UTC-7

Subject: Re: Chemistry's Impact and Ongoing Potential

To: Chemistry Contact Email Account <chemistry-contact@sou.edu>

Cc: Sheila Clough <trusteeclough@sou.edu>, Brent Barry <trusteebarry@sou.edu>, Trustee

Chavez <trusteechavez@sou.edu>, Michelle Fuentes <trusteefuentes@sou.edu>, Ryan

Goodrich <trusteegoodrich@sou.edu>, Debra Lee <trusteelee@sou.edu>, Christina Medina

<trusteemedina@sou.edu>, Daniel Santos <trusteesantos@sou.edu>, Hala Schepmann

<trusteeschepmann@sou.edu>, Trustee Shelby <trusteeshelby@sou.edu>, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] trustees <trustees@sou.edu>, Casey Shillam

<shillamc@sou.edu>, [REDACTED]

Good Morning Dr. Schepmann

Thanks very much for this additional information and for your unwavering support for the SOU Chemistry program. We appreciate your advocacy and your commitment to our students and our university. We will take this new message under consideration.

Very Respectfully

Rick

Richard J. Bailey, Jr., Ph.D.

President

Southern Oregon University

(541) 552-6111

presidentsoffice@sou.edu



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Chemistry Contact Email Account <chemistry-contact@sou.edu>

Date: Friday, September 5, 2025 at 4:05:46 PM UTC-7

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<trusteeschepmann@sou.edu>, Trustee Shelby <trusteeshelby@sou.edu>, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] trustees <trustees@sou.edu>, [REDACTED]



Thank you Rick, we very much appreciate that.

Sincerely,

Hala

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Stasie Maxwell [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:46 PM UTC-7

Subject: Native Alum Comments for Retained Native Studies Program

To: Rick Bailey <baileyr1@sou.edu>, trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Greetings President Bailey, Provost Shillam, and Honorable Board of Trustees,

I am writing to share my comments on the Amended Plan which includes retaining the Native Studies Program.

As a Native alum, whose mother (Dr. Jean Maxwell), taught at SOU for 30 years, I am very privy to the struggles that decades of Native students and Native faculty have had to

engage in to 1) create space for Native students on Native homelands, 2) retain the spaces Native students and Faculty have fought for (these last few weeks is only one egregious occurrence in a long line of struggles) and 3) increased support and space for Native students on stolen Native lands.

Konoway Nika Tillicum, a Native-immersion program, the first of its kind, was established in 1996 ~ **during tight financial times**. Additionally, former both Provost and President Steve Reno, **in tight budget times**, supplied the funding for a symposium attended by Tribal educators from all over Oregon, Tribal parents, and Tribal representatives from each of the federally recognized Tribes of Oregon to build the vision and structure of Konoway as a Native-run program for Native youth. Next year, Konoway will go into its 30th year; Konoway Nika Tillicum is proof that SOU has and can support Native students on Native homelands **despite** tight financial times.

To echo Kenwani's comments today, I urge the Board and President Bailey to continue putting into policy SOU's commitments to Native students and the Sovereign Nations of the Nine Tribes of Oregon. **Additionally, Dr. Brook Colley, Emeritus Director David West, current Director of Konoway Brent Florendo have countlessly offered guidance and suggestions for how to best support Native students and Tribal communities, please listen to them.**

Attached are three documents for your review. To expound on my comments today at the Board of Trustees meeting 8/27, and to echo my Feb 2024 email to President Bailey, I urge the Board and upper Administration to engage in building a better understanding of how to best work with Tribal communities and Native students, including how to responsibly be an institution on Native homelands. **In my current job, I developed a Best Practices for Cultivating Tribal Partnerships document, please read it and I urge you to incorporate the actions. I am happy to give a free workshop on these practices to the Board, President, Provost, and other upper Administration.**

Finally, I understand from Dustin Walcher that there were or are **Five Critical Questions** that the Board was considering for all programs as the financial situation continued to worsen. As a Native alum, one question I see missing to ensure good relations between the institution, Native students, and Sovereign Nations, is something along the lines of, "as a predominantly white institution operating on stolen lands, how does this project (or decision) uplift Native students and Tribal sovereignty?"

My hope moving forward is that never again do alums and community members have to organize to protect Native Studies. To uplift my email signature, **Article 25 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:** *Indigenous people have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual and material relationship with the lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources, which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used, and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.*

The Institution of SOU rests on Native homelands, President, Provost and Board, please ensure that the Institution respects and centers Tribal Sovereignty forever into the future.

Thank you for your time and with respect,

Stasie Maxwell
Inupiaq (Native Village of Unalakleet)
B.S. Psychology & Certificate of Native American Studies
SOU Commencement Speaker 2021
SOU McNair Scholar
NASU Co-Chair 2019-2021
1st Generation Konoway kid

--

Stasie Maxwell
Indigenous Partnerships Program Manager
[Join the community](#) I [Donate](#) I [REDACTED]

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VESPER  MEADOW
EDUCATION PROGRAM

-- Attachments--

DOMINANT AND INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEW MANIFESTATIONS

This chart is not intended as a rigid binary, but a true dichotomy best viewed as a continuum. It is meant to encourage seeking complementarity and dialogue. Absolutism is discouraged with the realization we are all participating in DW precepts to some degree. The chart assumes that all diverse cultures, religions, and philosophies can be grouped under one of the two worldviews. "Indigenous Worldview" does not belong to a race or group of people, but Indigenous cultures who still hold on to their traditional place-based knowledge are the wisdom keepers of this original Nature-based worldview. **All people are indigenous to Earth and have the right and the responsibility to practice and teach the IW precepts.** All have the responsibility to support Indigenous sovereignty, dignity, and use of traditional lands.

Common Dominant Worldview Manifestations

1. Rigid hierarchy
2. Fear-based thoughts and behaviors
3. Living without strong social purpose
4. Focus on self and personal gain
5. Rigid and discriminatory gender stereotypes
6. Materialistic
7. Earth as an unloving "it"
8. More head than heart
9. Competition to feel superior
10. Lacking empathy
11. Anthropocentric
12. Words used to deceive self or others
13. Truth claims as absolute
14. Rigid boundaries and fragmented systems
15. Unfamiliarity with alternative consciousness
16. Disbelief in spiritual energies
17. Disregard for holistic interconnectedness
18. Minimal contact with others
19. Emphasis on theory and rhetoric
20. Acceptance of authoritarianism
21. Time as linear
22. Dualistic thinking
23. Acceptance of injustice
24. Emphasis on rights
25. Fighting as highest expression of courage
26. Ceremony as rote formality
27. Learning as didactic
28. Trance as dangerous or stemming from evil
29. Human nature as corrupt or evil
30. Humor as entertainment
31. Conflict mitigated via revenge, punishment
32. Learning is fragmented and theoretical
33. Personal vitality minimized
34. Social laws of society are primary
35. Self-knowledge not prioritized
36. Autonomy for self
37. Nature as dangerous
38. Other-than-human beings are not sentient
39. Low respect for women
40. Linear thinking

Common Indigenous Worldview Manifestations

1. Non-hierarchical
2. Courage and fearless trust in the universe
3. Socially purposeful life
4. Emphasis on community welfare
5. Respect for various gender roles and fluidity
6. Non-materialistic
7. Earth and all systems as living and loving
8. Inseparability of head and heart
9. Competition to develop positive potential
10. Empathetic
11. Animistic and biocentric
12. Words as sacred, truthfulness as essential
13. Truth seen as multifaceted, accepting mysterious
14. Flexible boundaries and interconnected systems
15. Regular use of alternative consciousness
16. Recognition of spiritual energies
17. Emphasis on holistic interconnectedness
18. High interpersonal engagement, touching
19. Inseparability of knowledge and action
20. Resistance to authoritarianism
21. Time as cyclical
22. Complementary duality
23. Intolerance of injustice
24. Emphasis on responsibility
25. Generosity as highest expression of courage
26. Ceremony as life-sustaining
27. Learning as experiential and collaborative
28. Trance-based learning as natural and essential
29. Human nature as good but malleable
30. Humor as essential tool for coping
31. Conflict resolution as return to community
32. Learning is holistic and place based
33. Personal vitality is essential
34. Laws of Nature are primary
35. Holistic Self-knowledge is most important
36. Autonomy for group and future generations
37. Nature as benevolent
38. All lifeforms are sentient
39. High respect for women
40. Non-linear thinking

For non-Indians who are concerned about misappropriation, see the peer reviewed article, *"The Indigenization Controversy: For Whom By Whom."* <https://ices.library.ubc.ca/index.php/criticaled/article/view/186438>

Worldview Chart and introduction by Wahinkpe Topa (Four Arrows), a.k.a. Don Trent Jacobs, Ph.D., Ed.D. Originally published in *The Red Road (chanku luta): Linking Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives to Indigenous Worldview*, 2020. Featured in *Restoring the Kindship Worldview*, 2022, by Four Arrows and Darcia Narvaez, Ph.D. Find Four Arrows and more on Indigenous Worldview at www.KindredMedia.org

Cultivating Best Practices for Building Tribal Partnerships

January 12th, 2024

Stasie Maxwell, Indigenous Partnership Program Manager*

Case Study: Indigenous Gardens Network

The Indigenous Gardens Network (IGN) is a hub of collaborative projects between the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, supported by Southwest Oregon partners (SWO partners). The goal is to increase Tribal community access to traditional homelands and engage in First Food restoration projects that support reconnection to culturally significant plants through tending, cultivation, and harvesting.

Established in 2020 during the COVID pandemic, a series of group listening sessions engaged Tribal members to identify existing barriers to this type of work in southwest Oregon, set goals for First Food restoration and Food Sovereignty, and establish how the IGN would be governed. Between 2021-2023, the IGN has identified a few projects to begin working on and formed subcommittees to accomplish the work. Monthly and bi-monthly meetings continue, as well as seasonal site visits to southwest Oregon to coordinate with partners and projects.

Some things we've learned along the way:

1. **We work to protect our Tribal partners from outside distractions and ignorance** from bureaucracy that may hinder their access or work, and from unwanted interactions with the public. Many aspects of the relationships are nuanced and informed by support personnel who are Native and with the support of non-Natives are actively learning the ways to build good relationships with Tribal people.
 - a. **Example:** Native support staff vet incoming non-Native organizations and their representatives, sharing the purpose of the IGN and how the structure works.
2. **The IGN centers Tribal partners, their communities, and their identified goals.** Their site visits are fully funded, lodging is arranged, meals are provided, we strive to give gifts each time and to provide them with stipends for their time.
 - a. **Example:** The IGN supports the communities of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Each Tribe has a

Tribal-council approved liaison from their Tribal staff representing their Tribe and communities in the work of the IGN.

3. **Tribal leadership and vision guide the work**, while local partners and staff from the SWO partners do much of the program management work to acquire funding, organize meetings and trip logistics, purchase materials, provide maps or other helpful resources, volunteers when needed.
 - a. **Example:** The support staff of IGN are women of color, women in science, and Native women (who don't have ancestral ties to place) and we constantly working to check in with each other and hold each other accountable that we are moving at the pace of our Tribal partners and in service to their goals.
4. **We've remained flexible with timelines and grant deliverables** and have appreciated the flexibility and understanding from funding partners. At times, Tribal partners have changed their plans due to many factors such as: Tribal staff and Tribal Council changes, and changing capacity as Tribal partners have lives and jobs separate from the IGN.
5. **This work can be deeply emotional.** We are undoing harm from colonial trauma, not just on the land, but in our bodies, hearts, minds, and spirits. The importance of this work cannot be over-emphasized. Because this work can be emotional, it is extra important to practice active listening, self-reflection, self-awareness, somatic self-soothing, emotional regulation, and mindful responses.
6. **Relationship building is nuanced and informed by Indigenous worldview.** Some of the symptoms of white supremacy that we face externally and work to change internally: worship of the written word, urgency, quantity over quality, and linear concepts of time.
7. **Because of our willingness to mindfully engage, become humbled, be corrected, and grow**, we have had the privilege of becoming friends with and being in community with our Tribal partners. We have the joy of receiving gifts from them, from service berry fruit leather, to earrings and necklaces to the gift of their friendship and the honor of being invited into their homes. We have received the gift of tending the land alongside them and witnessing their connection to place and hearing songs sung to the land. We have received the gift of learning from them, and the gift of their laughter and shared humor.

Cultivating Your Own Best Practices

Building partnerships with Indigenous people is essential

- Building partnerships that center Indigenous voices and self-identified goals directly addresses historical injustices and land dispossession by uplifting Tribal sovereignty and self-determination.
 - **Local example:** This is specifically important in what is now known as Southern Oregon. In 1856 Tribal people were forcibly removed from their homes and homeland by the US Government and relocated to reservations. Because of that,

there is now little access to their homelands or representation for their descendants.

- Indigenous worldview provides interconnected perspectives on social, economic, environmental and spiritual systems. These perspectives can enrich quality of life and help address current issues in Indigenous communities and also provide benefits to non-Native people. For example, Traditional Ecological Knowledge provides deep understandings of relationships specific to place, and provides sustainable solutions in ecosystem management.
 - **Local example:** With support from conservation partners, the land has begun to see the return of its ancestral stewards and with the support of community volunteers at Vesper Meadow, riparian restoration and seeding will benefit first foods like Camas lily as well as numerous other plants, pollinators, and other animal relatives.
 - **Actionable idea from the workshop:** How to integrate interconnectedness, reciprocal relationships, and other “ways of being” into an organization as a whole, and not just in relationships with Indigenous people.
- By integrating non-Western voices, the field of conservation can turn to a more holistic approach that will address current environmental and societal issues caused by settler colonial culture and worldview.
 - **Local example:** Cultural fire is beginning to return to the homelands now known as Vesper Meadow through partnership with the Traditional Ecological Inquiry Program led by Siletz Elder Joe Scott. Tribal partners with the Indigenous Gardens Network have goals of bringing cultural fire back to the oak savannahs now known as Table Rocks.

Transactional versus Reciprocal relationship

Respect and reciprocity are two cornerstones of relationship building with Native people and Tribal communities. Reciprocity implies mutual benefit, however keep in mind that sometimes that mutual benefit can be a reconnection between Tribal communities and their homelands; the land benefits from being reconnected to its original stewards.

Tips for engaging with reciprocity:

1. **Learn about Tribal Sovereignty**, and work to center and support it.
(<https://youtu.be/BOYcgvEU0V0?si=gIbFB-4pPdrIJ46H>)
2. **Strive to first ask how your organization can support current Tribal projects and initiatives** instead of asking how Tribes can support or partner with your work - unless they reach out to collaborate on your projects on their own.
 - a. Be authentic and honest. Be clear about what resources or support you can offer a Tribe or Native communities and what you can't or what levels of support may take time to overcome barriers to.
 - b. **Local example:** Prior to being hired by Vesper Meadow Education Program, I asked several Native people (local elders, and Siletz Tribal member), what -they-

wanted me to accomplish in the position. I included their requests in my application cover letter.

3. **Plan to take the time necessary and start early in your program/project development process when engaging with Tribes.** Include Tribal members in the goal setting, project outlining, and original agreements.
 - a. **Actionable idea:** Cultivate a 1-2 page document, or short video explaining who your organization is, and what resources or funding you can offer to Tribes or how you are poised to support their initiatives or current projects.
4. **Recognize that Native values may conflict with current policies and practices or your own personal ethics - work creatively to remove organizational or personal barriers.** If or when you get triggered, take a step back and remember your power and your privilege, and put those aside in respect of supporting Tribal and cultural sovereignty and Tribal-identified goals. Talk to your fellow coworkers, self-educate and do the work to move past your own personal or organizational barriers to supporting Tribal identified needs. Do not put the burden on Indigenous staff members or Tribal partners to educate you on why subsistence rights and cultural sovereignty are to be uplifted over colonial practices or personal ethics.
 - a. **Local example:** There have been tensions among staff members, namely vegans and vegetarians who have been triggered and had a hard time understanding and supporting the idea of Tribally led initiatives like rites of passage that include animal tracking and hunting. Remember the example that unless your organization is working towards Land Back, that returning access of ancestral homelands to Tribes and then dictating what they can or cannot do on their own homelands is nothing short of racism, white privilege, and white supremacy.
 - b. **Local example:** Native-led organizations have been bringing back the practice of cultural burning and educating non-Native organizations along the way. Barriers still exist and some organizations may require a red card for those attending a cultural burn - this is a barrier because cultural burning can be intergenerational and is insulting/offensive that Tribal people have to jump through bureaucratic hoops to engage in cultural practices on their homelands
5. **Understand that some attempts to collaborate may be met with hesitancy or resistance.** Be patient and ask questions of what they may need to proceed. Recall that harmful, violent and oppressive policies and actions against Native people and their culture both existed and continue to exist. Be patient and open-minded about the timeline of your partnership building.
 - a. Visit Tribes' websites and research if there is a best way to contact appropriate Tribal leaders, staff, elders and knowledge-keepers.
6. **Focus on building trust**
 - a. Hire Native people or Tribal members as liaisons for projects and as full-time staff members, or build a Native Advisory Council. Financially compensate whenever possible, or provide stipends and gifts.
7. **Attend Tribal and Native community events as appropriate**

- a. Many Tribes host pow wows that are open to the community. Universities often have Native Student Unions that host community events and many universities have pow wows organized by the student unions. Many cities have Indigenous-led events such as story-telling in the winter, or public learning opportunities for Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). These opportunities give you a chance to experience Native culture, values, diet, dancing, singing, and more.
8. **Be flexible with timing and funding**
 - a. **Actionable idea:** Have a line item in your budget planning for grants that specifies a certain amount of each grant that goes either towards funding Tribal initiatives in your organization with Tribes, or to donate to Tribes initiatives directly.
 - b. Have a line item in your End of Year grant reports to funders listing out the standard your organization is holding itself to support Tribes and Native communities, even if there are no “deliverables” with Tribes in the grant - as a way to communicate to funders that your organization prioritizes and uplifts Tribal sovereignty and initiatives.
9. **Remain non-judgmental and speak up and correct your fellow coworkers, partner organizations, friends, and family members** when they say or behave in ways that you have learned are ignorant and are therefore rooted in white privilege, white supremacy, or white fragility.
 - a. **Examples** of how to be supportive:
 - i. From one coworker to another: “I hear that you are having a hard time with this. However, the program that is being suggested is supporting Cultural Sovereignty, which means it is our job to support and uplift their sovereignty. I am happy to support you later in understanding why this is important, but for now, we need to stop questioning or objecting and instead listen to and support Tribal sovereignty and initiatives.”
 - ii. To a Tribal partner or Native coworker: “I am having a hard time with what you are proposing. I am going to take some time to self-reflect and seek out support in understanding why I feel so resistant. In the meantime, I’ll find another coworker to listen and support you in the program you are developing.”
10. **Work on healing yourself:** Settler colonialism affects everyone. Somewhere in your own history, colonization violently disrupted your cultural and ancestral connection to place and land. By learning about the history of the place (land) that you reside on and your own ancestral history and ties to place (land), you are fulfilling your responsibility to land and water. For more information, listen to Oren Lyon’s (Haudenosaunee) talk on Responsibility vs Rights (<https://youtu.be/USwPW29W-aY?si=n450JacdMhGKw-X4>)
11. **Thoughts on Land Acknowledgements:** Land acknowledgements are important but can be tricky. There should ideally be ongoing action at your organization, not just a static statement on your website or that you read at events. Land acknowledgements can be tricky to develop - ideally, they are done with Tribes although that is not always feasible.

- a. **Recommended resource:** Land Acknowledgement Guidance Document from Legislative Commission on Indian Services (all nine federally recognized Tribes of Oregon have a representative on the Commission):
<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/shared/Documents/Publications/Administration/LandAcknowledgementGuidanceDocument.pdf>

Plan to invest in the relationship

We work to understand our power and privilege and other forms of oppression that can be unconsciously perpetrated against Indigenous people; unconscious and ignorant behaviors or language can harm the partnership we seek to develop.

(<https://chinookfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Supplemental-Information-for-Funding-Guidelines.pdf>)

Tips for relationship building:

1. **Relationship building looks different with each Tribe, each Tribal department or organization, and each Tribal member.** Practice flexibility, be observant, be mindful, engage in self-reflection, ask questions, and keep trying.
 - a. Educate yourself beforehand; this may include learning their history, attending a community event or rally, reading a historical or contemporary book, or developing a personal friendship.
2. **Approach partnerships with Creativity, Patience, Preparation, Planning, Respect in relation to Indigenous worldview**
 - a. Engage in face-to-face meetings before connecting via email, phone calls, or text whenever possible
 - b. Sharing food and gift-giving is an integral part of building community
 - i. **Local example:** some gifts given from Vesper Meadow to visiting Tribal partners have included: elderberry syrup made from elderberries gathered at Vesper, a map of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument with circled areas for specific cultural plant interests
 - c. Be willing to get comfortable with being uncomfortable
 - i. Relationship building includes the understanding that misunderstandings, mistakes, and missteps will happen. Initiate or show up for restorative conversations to acknowledge issues, repair harm and rebuild trust when needed.
3. **Provide time and funding towards education**, both for yourself, your organization, and any Native or Tribal staff or liaisons you may have. Many systemic barriers exist for Native and Tribal people around Western education and career building. Additionally, remember that Indigenous knowledge was not and is not “certified” or “licensed” so be open-minded and supportive of “non-credentialed” Native staff members, liaisons, Tribal council members, etc. Consider how the standards of professionalism are defined by white supremacy culture.
(https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_bias_of_professionalism_standards)

Learn about Indigenous Worldview

It is our responsibility in working with Tribal communities to do our own research to understand Indigenous worldview, local Tribal history and current events.

- **Local example:** Vesper Meadow staff make an annual effort to travel to Grand Ronde and Siletz to engage with and build relationships with their communities. We have visited the Grand Ronde Chachalu Museum, attended the annual Siletz pow wow, and virtually attended the 2023 Grand Ronde Culture Summit.

1. **Remain open to learning about other ways of knowing and being.** Indigenous worldview differs from Western Worldview in many ways. There are commonalities across Indian Country and also Tribal-specific differences or place-specific nuances as well. Some resources:
 - a. Relational Worldview Model
(<https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfrontlineworkers/chapter/indigenous-ways-of-knowing-and-being/>)
 - b. Kinship Worldview
(<https://kindredmedia.org/2022/07/restoring-the-kinship-worldview-read-the-books-introduction/>)
2. **Consider that historic and current Native cultures are place-based peoples.** This means that their language, culture, cultural practices, ceremonies, diet, and more are or were tied to place (land)
 - a. **Importance of Place-based human-land relationships:** Learn about and consult with Tribes that have direct ancestral ties to the specific place you are working with. Note that this can be a complicated issue, as related to a myriad of issues such as Federal recognitions, that some Tribes may live within their traditional homelands while others may not, there may be disagreements between Tribes about ancestral territories....and for many other reasons, this can be a traumatic issue to ask of Tribal people while also being confusing for non-native people to understand. Be willing to work with your discomfort, and strive to stay open-minded and open-hearted as you learn about and support Native people and their connection to place.
3. **Learn about Intergenerational trauma, collective trauma, and become trauma-informed.** Trauma-informed care is becoming well known in the social services sector, however, being mindful of an individual's or group's potential traumatic life experiences provides a framework of how to engage with trustworthiness, empowerment, choice, and collaboration.
(<https://www.acesaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Trauma-resilience-practice-paper.pdf>)
 - a. **Take time to self-educate about widespread traumatic issues affecting Indian Country.** The US Government's policies of removal of children, dispossession of land, the outlaw of language, ceremonial practices, and more. Some of these practices continued to exist until 1978, and some continue today (the Rogue Valley exists on stolen lands.) Educating yourself about the political,

legal, and racialized oppressions that local Native communities face can help you understand how recent and existing traumas continue to impact Native people, Tribes, and communities.

- b. **Local example:** Land that you or your organization manages or owns, or any land in Rogue Valley has inherent traumatic associations due to past and continued settler-use/damage to the land, and how they have been stolen with little to no recognition/understanding by current owners. Keep in mind that Indigenous worldview doesn't include private land possession or as a commodity that can be bought and sold. The continued actions under the dominant worldview that cause damage to the land and water also inflict trauma on Indigenous communities who forced to "stand by and watch" as their land and water relatives are made sick and access is blocked to former villages, cultural and ceremonial sites.
- 4. **Learn or develop a "felt sense" for social interactions** and be aware that some common Western social customs and greetings are not as common among Tribes, Native communities, or Native people.
 - a. Do not be offended if Native people don't look you in the eye much, do not keep their video on during zoom meetings, or do not want to exchange hugs or even a hand shake. Some Native people will engage in those social behaviors, some will not - take your social cues from them first.

Be Mindful of Phrasing

Asking questions and sharing information is a good thing. However, the way a question is asked or how an article is written can cause harm.

1. **Do not refer to Native languages, lands, cultures, or ceremonies as “lost”** - they were violently taken, or illegal to practice - never “lost”
2. **Ask for permission to share.** When sharing information publically or writing an article about a project or program in partnership with Tribes, ensure you understand what is ok to share and what needs to remain confidential or private. This can include language and phrasing, and when it is appropriate to take or share photos and when it is not.
3. **Being mindful of how you talk and share things in writing.** Phrasing examples:
 - a. “Why do you want land back?” could be asked a better way such as:
 - i. “Are you willing to share what land back would mean to you and your community?”
 - ii. “Could you direct me to some resources to learn about land back?”
 - b. “Public land” in the context of working with Tribes is more accurately their ancestral homelands - move towards language and phrasing as “I’d like to discuss collaborating on a restoration program on your homelands”
 - c. Do not use phrases like “I’m a native Oregonian”
 - d. If your Native or non-Native coworkers bring DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion, justice) suggestions to you, do not say things like, “I’m a Democrat, I’m a good person, I don’t understand why we have to spend time or money on things like

this” because that is white privilege and white ignorance, and your dismissal of that suggestion is rooted in white supremacy.

4. Develop mindful ways of apologizing and rectifying missteps. Instead of saying, “I’m sorry” (which is a static phrase, and often results in an “it’s ok” response), practice saying things like, “I can see that my ignorance/misstep caused some harm/hurt. I feel bad/sad about that, how can I make things right with you?” Asking how hurt can be resolved turns it into an open ended question with the possibility for action.

**I wish to recognize that I do not live and work on my own anIndigenous ancestral homelands. I encourage readers to open their hearts and minds, do their own research to learn from those Indigenous to where you reside, self-educate, and ask questions of the Indigenous people who are ancestral to the land where you live; in this way, I ask forgiveness for any way I have misspoken and welcome any corrections, edits, or additions to this living document by those who have ancestral ties to place.*

Gratitude to the edits, additions, and support given by Jeanine Moy, Program Director of Vesper Meadow Education Program.



Stasie Maxwell <stasie@vespermeadow.org>

PLEASE REPLY: ECOS Garden Space and NAP

Stasie Maxwell

Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 9:55 AM

To: Rick Bailey

Cc:

Uvlaalluataq (good morning everyone),

As a Native voice on this thread, I am going to uplift SOU's land acknowledgment and its mission of "[We foster access, equity, inclusion and diversity in thought and practice](#)." Since STLG is and potentially ECOS will be housed under Native American Programs, I am also going to ask non-Native staff, the Administration and the President to think and act through Indigenous worldview - as in, with "diversity in thought and practice." **To help you act and think through Indigenous worldview, on these self-identified Native initiatives on campus, I will uplift a few important points:**

-The land that SOU resides on was -violently- stolen not that long ago. The original stewards of what is now known as Ashland and the greater Rogue Valley were forcibly removed to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. As a result, Tribal and Inter-Tribal students and communities live in a predominantly white valley without much cultural, linguistic, or worldview representation. For SOU to live up to its mission, and to be equitable, Native people on campus, and their self-identified goals, must be centered and uplifted.

-To explain an important aspect of Indigenous worldview in relation to land (in this case, the ECOS garden), Native people see land, plants, water, animals, etc as relatives. So, when Native students hear, "we will raze this area to the ground", what that means to us and how we live within the world, is that "we will raze plant relatives to the ground". Can you see how that is violence in action to Native students and our relationship to place? As a point toward your own healing - your ancestors would have lived with a similar worldview. Western worldview as we know it, which has sold the illusion that land is a commodity that can be bought and sold, has existed for [less than 1% of humanity](#). I ask you to act and think in Indigenous worldview for your own wellbeing as well. **While working within the STLG and ECOS conversations, I will ask you to center land as a relative.**

In review of Amanda's timeline, what I continue to see missing, is something we have asked for since the beginning. What is the budget breakdown of costs for the ECOS area? I understand SOU was not recouping costs, but what is the breakdown of those costs? Can someone link that into Amanda's timeline?

The Five Critical Questions is insightful and worthy, thank you for sharing, Dustin. As an Indigenous alum, one critical question I see missing is something along the lines of, "as a predominantly white institution, existing on stolen lands, how is this project uplifting and centering students of color and Indigenous worldview on our campus?"

As a last note of support for how to act and think equitably, and through Indigenous worldview when engaging in Native-led projects, I have attached a few resources on Indigenous worldview. I am available through Vesper Meadow to be contracted to educate on these ways of cultivating best practices for working in partnership with Native students, faculty, etc. You are welcome and encouraged, Rick, to forward these resources to your Administration staff, EDI, and the Board of Trustees.

In community,

Stasie

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Stasie Maxwell

Indigenous Partnerships Program Manager

[Join the community](#) | [Donate](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

"How firm we stand and plant our feet upon our land determines the strength of our children's heartbeats." - Polly Koutchak (Iñupiaq of Uṅalaq̄liq [Unalakleet])



3 attachments



Worldview-Chart-Starry-Sky-12-2021-FINAL-1.png
9885K



Cultivating Best Practices for Tribal Partnerships.pdf
196K



Further Resources - Cultivating Best Practices for Tribal Partnerships.pdf
135K

-- Reply --

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rick Bailey [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Re: Native Alum Comments for Retained Native Studies Program
To: Stasie Maxwell [REDACTED]
Cc: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>, [REDACTED]

Good Morning Stasie

Thank you for your thoughtful message and for your insightful testimony yesterday. We appreciate your advocacy and your guidance. We are giving serious consideration to all of the comments yesterday. Kenwani brought up an idea of how best to connect all of the educational opportunities at SOU into a Native American Programs initiative (something I know Dr. Colley has also advocated for). I love the idea of having a council guide us in those efforts, where prominence and reverence would be given to the descendants of the Shasta, Takelma and Latgawa peoples. More to come. Thank you again for sharing your views and for your thoughtful advocacy.

Very Respectfully

Rick

Richard J. Bailey, Jr., Ph.D.
President
Southern Oregon University
[\(541\) 552-6111](tel:5415526111)
presidentsoffice@sou.edu



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Fiona Boyle [REDACTED]
attachment

No text just

Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Testimonial
To: trustees@sou.edu trustees@sou.edu

-- Attachment --

My name is Fiona Boyle, I am an Upcoming Junior at SOU who is pursuing a Psychology major and Chemistry and Criminology Criminal Justice Minor. I am also part of the UCAM program. This is my feedback regarding the ways that SOU's financial situation has impacted the honors college and my college education. Although I am aware this is a selfish ask, I ask that the honors college honors my scholarship offer for the entire 4 years. While it didn't determine my attendance at SOU it did affect other families with tighter budgets and that should be considered when making this decision. The loss of peer-to-peer collaboration specifically within each cohort could have major impacts on the connections made in the cohort. Having peer-to-peer interactions builds community in the cohorts and helps honors students who may be far away from home feel less lonely due to the connections they build in this program. It is very important for me to be able to complete and be given my Honors College certificate when I graduate as it will be a testament to the hard work I have put into this program and my education. It will also be a way of showing my personal growth in becoming an out of state independent college student and someone who is involved in their community. The program specific classes that could be cut from the honors college are very important to the structure of the program and the students involved. They are the reason many of us have made friends and connections that will last our entire college education.

Please consider this when making the decision that will impact every single person who is a part of this college and the programs involved.

Thank you

Fiona Boyle



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Samantha Randahl <[REDACTED]>
Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Saving SOU chemistry
To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Good afternoon,

Unfortunately I was not able to speak in the meeting on behalf of the SOU chemistry department. I wanted to express my feelings on the possibility that this program might be cut. Both myself and my husband both attended SOU and obtained chemistry degrees. At this point we are both top of our fields in STEM. He is working for a world wide chemistry company who provides instrumentation necessary for both medical and other chemical needs. I am clinical director in a family practice clinic managing 8 other physicians and more than 500 patients ranging from newborn to elderly.

The SOU chemistry department was vital for my success. Having the opportunity in a small university versus a large university set me above the rest of the students that attended my medical school. On top of the rigorous education that was the chemistry department and the skills necessary to succeed the foundation it set me up for was incredible. There are several of my classmates who have also gotten their doctorate degrees and would also agree that SOU set us up for major success.

It would be detrimental to the STEM community to discontinue the SOU chemistry department. The number of successful individuals that come out of that program is HUGE and the SOU chemistry is vital to the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration
Dr. Samantha Randahl
SOU chemistry Alumni 2014

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Sophie Grow <[REDACTED]>
Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Re: SOU Provisional Plan Relating to Majors and Honors College
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>.
[REDACTED]

Good afternoon,

I would like to follow up with my earlier comment relating to the Honors College and the loss of the Power & Politics major.

The reduction of the Honors College to the proposed "Honors Program" could see the loss of many elements of the Honors College curriculum that draws so many students to SOU. The Democracy Project, Explore and Reflect assignments, Take the Lead projects, along with the connection between cohorts, faculty, and staff are only some. These elements of our curriculum hold so much power to the level of education we receive as Honors Scholars. Community involvement, civic engagement, and creating a better world is what the Honors College achieves through this curriculum. As a sophomore in the Honors College, I am one of the most affected cohorts. I was assured of this substantial curriculum when I registered for SOU and am concerned that the Honors College will no longer create the impact in student's education that it has in the past. So many doors have been opened thanks to the Honors College, most notably traveling the world. What the Democracy Project and similar study away trips hosted by the Honors College provide is more than just a study abroad trip. The experience and knowledge we gain about another country creates a deep impact on a personal and educational level. Connections are made around the world and students are more prepared to jump into advocacy and travel with confidence because the ability to travel with the Honors College teaches you about the country beyond what tourists or students normally see.

The Power & Politics major is on the list to be cut from SOU's academic offerings. There is no minor or certificate available as a replacement to this degree path. The elimination of the Power & Politics major severely diminishes the opportunity for political education in our rural corner of Oregon. Political education is of extreme importance in this current climate and will continue to be in the future. The politics degree path ensures opportunities for our school to create the next generation of political leaders. I understand the decisions on what programs to cut are extremely difficult. I encourage the exploration of alternatives to make sure that we do not lose this aspect of SOU.

Sincerely,

Sophie Grow

[REDACTED]

Power & Politics and Communication Double Major
Business Administration Minor
Certificate in Conflict Management

"She believed she could, so she did"

~R.S. Grey

-- Reply --

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rick Bailey [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7

Subject: Re: SOU Provisional Plan Relating to Majors and Honors College
To: Sophie Grow [REDACTED]
Cc: Carson Howell <howellc1@sou.edu>, Rob Patridge
<patridger@sou.edu>, trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>, Casey Shillam
<shillamc@sou.edu>, Honors College <honorscollege@sou.edu>

Good Morning Sophie

Thank you very much for your testimony yesterday and for your follow up message -- we will definitely take this into consideration as we work toward the final plan. Thanks again

Very Respectfully

Rick

Richard J. Bailey, Jr., Ph.D.
President
Southern Oregon University
(541) 552-6111

presidentsoffice@sou.edu



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cherstin Lyon [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Written Comments - Honors College
To: [REDACTED]

Dear Trustees, President Baily, and SOU leadership,
I am submitting written comments and a proposal due to the anticipated short public comment period at today's BOT meeting. Thank you all for providing this opportunity for the campus community to gather and to speak and be heard. This is an impossibly difficult time for the university. Thank you for your leadership through this process.

I specifically propose that we remove language from the provisional plan that states "Transition Honors Program to be embedded in the majors." I propose we replace it with "Develop Honors Program as a replacement for the standalone Honors College," and that we develop this in consultation with Honors College stakeholders, departments that will be included as collaborators or impacted directly or indirectly, and any other relevant stakeholders such as the faculty senate, etc. I propose this revised language for three major reasons, and my formal proposal for a teachout plan and for development of a replacement program is attached for your review and consideration.


1) We already have a smattering of Honors Programs in the Majors. It is unclear if this means replacing the Honors College with this program we already have in place, or with a different program that either replaces the current system of granting Honors in the majors, enhances this, or something else.

2) A more effective strategy would be to create a smaller Honors Program that does not rely on "Honors in the Majors" but instead collaborates with supplemental programs, particularly experiential learning opportunities in the majors and across campus that would not create an additional workload for faculty but that would enhance what a smaller program can do by developing strong collaborations with existing programs on campus. The new Honors program could bolster those programs while retaining a cohort model for a smaller Honors program that uniformly all Honors scholars past and present report is the most important and most meaningful part of the current program that they would not want to see removed as we move forward with a new model.

3) There are models available across the country that we can draw from that will help us avoid predictable pitfalls and inefficiencies as we move forward with this transition from an Honors College to a program. Honors programs in the majors have numerous problems embedded in the structure that would be especially difficult for SOU as it moves forward with limited funds and strained resources. I am confident this process can be done in a timely manner so that a replacement program can be made available as a transitional tool and off ramp for current Honors Scholars who will be most heavily impacted by the decision to close the Honors College.

Very respectfully,
Cherstin Lyon

--

Cherstin M. Lyon, Ph.D.
(she, her, hers)
Director, Honors College
Professor of History
Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd
Ashland, OR 97520


-- Attachment --

-- Reply --

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rick Bailey [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Re: Written Comments - Honors College
To: Cherstin Lyon <lyonc1@sou.edu>
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Thanks very much for your testimony yesterday and your follow on comments here, Cherstin. We will definitely take these into consideration.

Very Respectfully

Rick

Richard J. Bailey, Jr., Ph.D.
President
Southern Oregon University
(541) 552-6111
presidentsoffice@sou.edu



----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sierra Garrett** [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Public Comment on SOU's Provisional Plan
To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Hello, Trustees.

I would like to share a letter of public comment on SOU's Provisional Plan, specifically related to the Honors College at SOU.

Cheers,
Sierra Garrett
SOU Alumna- Class of 2025

-- Attachment --

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Sierra Garrett, I am a proud alumna of the Honors College Class of 2025, and I stand in support of protecting the Honors College at SOU. Though I think my personal experiences and growth within the program are important, I understand that numbers, figures, and previous writings sometimes act as a common language. With this, I'd like to remind you of a few parts of SOU's mission statement, which is publicly viewable and should act as a guiding force for SOU's actions.

Part two of SOU's mission statement reads, "We achieve student success, professional preparation, and civic engagement through service excellence, evolving technologies, and innovative curriculum." In its current form, Honors College scholars are required to participate in 18 community events or experiences, lead two service projects, volunteer 8 days, *and* participate in a service learning or study away experience outside of class to become better people and students. There are no other programs within SOU that require that level of engagement, and most programs don't have *any* of those requirements. These requirements guide Honors scholars into building relationships with the community, creating job-related connections, and overall serving the region we find our university in. *Our service* is who we are, not just who we claim to be.

Part four of the mission reads, "We prepare our learners to be responsible, engaged citizens in our democracy." In order to effectively engage in a democracy, students must be able to have conversations with those who don't look, talk, or think like them. Honors students spend a *whole year* in courses on fallacies in arguments, logic and lines of argumentation, and varieties of reasoning, all of which prepare us for the complex conversations that occur in this state and this nation's democracy. Beyond that, the Honors College hosts the Democracy Project every summer and actually brings students (Honors and not) to democratic countries around the world to have those conversations in action, rather than theory. We are having to make these financial decisions as a university because our democracy is failing us, and cutting a program that prepares students to effectively engage in our democracy is extremely harmful. *Our engagement* is who we are, not just who we claim to be.

Finally, part five of the mission reads, "We promote economic vitality, sustainability, cultural enrichment, and social well-being in our region, the state, the nation, and the world." SOU prides itself on being "a *regionally-engaged* learning community," which is a direct quote from SOU's mission statement introduction. In every single class, Honors implores students to consider "wicked problems" like homelessness, hunger, and climate disaster, all problems that *our region* faces in unfortunately high degrees. *Our region* contains a large population of Indigenous peoples, so the Honors College has the Native Honors Scholar Initiative, which provides funding and unique support to Native American and Native Pacific Islander students that is not offered in

other programs at SOU. *Our region* (and our campus) thrives when we use solar to sustainably power our lives, and it was in an Honors College class that I once came up with a project to bring more solar to campus and fund the Student Food Pantry at the same time. That \$92,000 project, which I got funded through the Student Green Fund before graduating, will be underway very soon. That project came out of my time in the Honors College, and hundreds of projects that tend to our community have come out of Honors College classes and extracurriculars over the years. *Our regional attentiveness* is who we are, not just who we claim to be.

An Honors Program will not fill the same interests, needs, or benefits that the Honors College does. I understand that SOU is limited by money and that tough decisions have to be made, but the work of the Honors College is written into who we are at SOU, not just who we claim to be. I encourage you to consider that the Honors College will not hold the same impact or value as a proposed Honors Program, and I thank you for your time today.

Sincerely,
Sierra Garrett
SOU Honors College Class of 2025
Honors College Advisory Board
SOU Democracy Project: Scandinavia, India
Associated Students of Southern Oregon University

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jonathan Neill [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:45 PM UTC-7
Subject: Special meeting 8/27 comments
To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Hello,

I want to write today to provide my experience as a non-traditional student, and to echo what Dr. Schepmann, Dr. Badger, and others said about student enrollment and success.

In 2019 after several years of blu-collar work I had to make a choice between starting a career with Jackson County Public Works and pursuing a degree, and I chose the latter. I wanted to pursue a degree in chemistry because it's such a versatile degree in a field that I love. The fact that SOU offered a chemistry program was instrumental in my decision, since it meant that I could successfully graduate without having to move my family to Corvallis or somewhere else, which would have pushed me to take a career instead of pursuing an education at all.

Dr. Schepmann's mention of local labs and businesses whom rely on well-educated chemists struck a chord with me, as well as the outstanding quality of SOU's chemistry program, because without SOU offering a chemistry degree, our local community would be at a severe loss of skilled workers to recruit from.

For me, personally, SOU's offering of a chemistry major was largely the factor that encouraged me to pursue higher education at all. For that I'm grateful and deeply saddened at the implication that chemistry and other hard sciences seem to be of secondary importance, or not considered "mission critical." I hope that there will be a way to continue providing students with a path to study the sciences in addition to the humanities, since SOU is renowned for both, not just one.

We extend our respect as well to all other displaced Indigenous peoples who call Oregon home. Hayu masi.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: John Frohnmayer [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:28 PM UTC-7

Subject: Testimony from John Frohnmayer re. honors college

To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Southern Oregon University

August 27, 2025

Trustees and Administration

My name is John Frohnmayer. I was Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts under the George H.W. Bush administration and in that position and for the 20 years thereafter I have visited over 120 colleges and universities, many of them at the invitation of an honors college. I have seven comments about honors colleges:

1. An honors college is the hallmark of a quality university.
2. Honors colleges enable students to take charge of their own education. Self education is critical to a life well-lived.
3. Honors colleges enable students to learn from each other. They promote cross-disciplinary thinking. Reflecting 60 years back on my education, I realize how much I learned from my classmates.
4. Honors colleges attract the best and the brightest—the most motivated, the present and future leaders.
5. Honors colleges attract outside talent such as civic leaders, office holders, writers, artists. Often these rich resources are free and free is a very good price.
6. Honors college graduates are the very best ambassadors for the University. They, perhaps better than any other group, can recruit quality students for Southern Oregon University.
7. Honors colleges, as a discrete unit of the University, enhance belonging, and the feeling of belonging is the number one attribute of retention.

In summary, elimination of the honors college as a discrete and identifiable unit would be short-sighted.

Respectfully submitted

John Frohnmayer

johnfrohnmayer@yahoo.com

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Tony Isom [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:28 PM UTC-7

Subject: Isom Honors Testimony

To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Hi all,

Attached below is my written comment/feedback for the shutting down of the honors program.

Thank you

--

Honors Program Scholar

SOU Student Athlete

Housing - RHA

Bridge Program

-- Attachment --

Anthony Isom



8/26/2025

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Tony Isom and I am an Undergraduate Student in my Junior year, an Honors Scholar, a Collegiate Wrestler, RHA president, and a part of the Bridge Program here at Southern Oregon University (SOU). Currently, with the budgetary crisis at the college, there is the possibility of limiting the Honors Program to a very small position in terms of providing students with learning opportunities and a growth centered environment.

To clearly state, I firmly believe that if a decision is made to cut this program or severely limit it in comparison to how it has been in the last couple of years, it will have detrimental effects on not only my learning, but also the education and future of other college students.

The Honors College is a unique experience in comparison to the various other programs at SOU. In which, it provides educational opportunities to students to not only expand but also challenge their current knowledge in comparison to the standard curriculum. Personally, the classes I've taken these past two years, including Honors Logic and Reasoning, Leadership and Contemporary Figures, and Honors Foundations, have pushed me to think differently than I usually do and allowed me to expand my knowledge into areas I wouldn't normally get into when considering my major. Specifically in my Logic class, it pushed my classmates and I to look at current day politics and arguments through a critical lens to see if it made logical sense or not. If I didn't or future students won't get this class in the future, a majority of current college scholars won't have the means to navigate the world of misinformation around us. In total, the classes provided in this program are unique due to the fact that they challenge an individual to understand and be able to navigate life once they take the next steps on their journey. If removed, there would be an invaluable loss of education that would affect the steps a graduate would take into the world.

The Honors College is more than just an educational program. It has several key requirements that push scholars to explore and help the world around them. These projects are the following: Explore and Reflects, Volunteering, SEE Reflection, and Take the Lead Projects. I am currently done with the first two and almost done with my SEE Reflection. For this reason, I would say that by accomplishing these tasks, I've been able to connect and assist the community around me in ways I wouldn't normally be able to. For instance, I've assisted the local bike swap event in Ashland, gone to musician performances on campus, and have had the opportunity to complete an internship in which I helped run the Waste Water Treatment Plant in my hometown. Without

these requirements, I wouldn't have had the incentive to do the majority of these projects and help people outside the campus overall. Thus, if the Honors College is shut down, scholars in all cohorts more than likely wouldn't assist communities in need and explore opportunities they would otherwise miss.

Personally, the Honors College was one of the main reasons why I chose SOU over other colleges. This is due to the fact that I wanted to push myself to become greater than the legacy that overshadows me, since my father also went to SOU and wrestled before me. I wanted to make an impact that both honors and surpasses this history, and has a positive influence on the campus and the world around me. However, with this potential shutdown, I wouldn't be able to accomplish this goal, and also other students with similar or even greater goals wouldn't be able to even have an opportunity to make a difference. Therefore, with the potential shutdown of the Honors College, it would be a large deterrent for people, including myself, looking to attend SOU.

For these reasons, I urge SOU to reconsider shutting down the Honors Program and instead allow the program to remain as it is currently.

Sincerely,
Tony Isom

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Samantha Randahl [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, August 29, 2025 at 12:00:27 PM UTC-7

Subject: Speak for SOU chemistry

To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Good morning,

Unfortunately I have been out of town without internet to be able to sign up to speak at today's Zoom meeting. I would love an opportunity to express the necessity for SOU to continue to have a chemistry department. I am with patients until noon but am free noon to 1pm. Hopefully I can be granted an opportunity to speak.

Thank you,

Dr. Samantha Randahl

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Maggie Vanderberg [REDACTED]

Date: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at 10:42:02 AM UTC-7

Subject: Fwd: Comment Submitted about Provisional Plan

To: Sheila Clough <trusteeclough@sou.edu>, Brent Barry
<trusteebarry@sou.edu>, Trustee Chavez <trusteechavez@sou.edu>, Michelle
Fuentes <trusteefuentes@sou.edu>, Ryan Goodrich
<trusteegoodrich@sou.edu>, Debra Lee <trusteelee@sou.edu>, Christina Medina
<trusteemedina@sou.edu>, Daniel Santos <trusteesantos@sou.edu>, Hala
Schepmann <trusteeschepmann@sou.edu>, Trustee Shelby
<trusteeshelby@sou.edu>, [REDACTED] <barrythalden@sou.edu>

Hi All,

I am reaching out because I wanted to make sure you are aware of the concerns I
expressed in the email below. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to
reach out.

~~~~~

Maggie Vanderberg, Ph.D  
Professor and Department Chair of Computer Science  
NSF ASCEND Faculty Fellow

Southern Oregon University  
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.  
Ashland, OR 97520  
[REDACTED]

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-- Attachment --

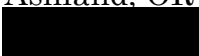
The proposed elimination of both the chemistry and math majors poses a significant risk to our institution's ability to attract and retain students who seek STEM opportunities. Without them, we severely limit pathways for students pursuing careers in medicine/health care, computer and data science, environmental science, and other STEM fields. This will be especially impactful for students that are interested in STEM disciplines who may be unsure or undecided on exactly which field they want to go into. This reduction is likely to signal to prospective students that SOU is not the best choice for them.

In addition, the impacts extend beyond enrollment. Alumni who built their careers on degrees in chemistry or mathematics may feel a diminished connection to the university, reducing their likelihood to contribute financially or engage with current students. Likewise, local businesses, industries, and community partners who depend on graduates with strong analytical, quantitative, and problem-solving skills may view the university as a less viable source of talent. These shifts risk eroding both our academic reputation and our relationships with the broader community.

Sustaining these programs is absolutely crucial to all STEM programs. And, I am quite happy to see that the Chemistry Chair has found alternate funding to make this possible.

~~~~~

Maggie Vanderberg, Ph.D
Professor and Department Chair of Computer Science
NSF ASCEND Faculty Fellow

Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, OR 97520


----- Forwarded message -----

From: John Pugh <artofjohn@gmail.com>

Date: Monday, August 25, 2025 at 5:32:56 PM UTC-7

Subject: Concerned about 2025 Provisional Plan

To: SOU Presidents Office <presidentsoffice@sou.edu>

Cc: [REDACTED] Board of Trustees <trustees@sou.edu>

Hi Rick,

I hope you're doing well. I'd like you to know how I enthused about the potential future relationship with you, and the University. I think you should know that I just purchased a home on Madrone Street with enough land to build a large new studio. It's just above the SOU campus! I'm not exactly sure what this means, but I hope it means something...

I've attached a letter on the upcoming provisional plan. I'm currently finishing a mural in Denver, and although I can't attend the public meetings, I want to voice my opinion on the subject. I hope that you will please read my letter.

I look forward to seeing you soon,

Yours Truly,
John

--

John Pugh

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

-- Attachment --

August 22, 2025

President Rick Bailey
Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, OR 97520

RE: 2025 Provisional Plan: To President Rick Bailey:

Hi Rick,

This is John Pugh, and I am writing to voice and reiterate the concern with the proposed 2025 provisional plan of Southern Oregon University. Specifically, the proposal to remove the Native American Studies (NAS) minor and certificate. Educating about Indigenous worldviews and their diverse approach to harmonizing with the natural environment, especially during the current climate crisis and political turmoil, seems to me one of the most critical subjects, now and for future generations.

I've been working closely with Dr. Brook Colley, Chair of NAS. At first, I was trying to get information and a picture of what it was like here for the trompe l'oeil mural project I am doing for downtown Ashland. The theme, '*Where the Crow Lights*', is a Shasta Village located at what's now the entrance to Lithia Park. Yet, after many hours with Brook, my understanding expanded to a shift of consciousness that goes far beyond the mural project. I believe that the wisdom and teachings of Indigenous ancestors are urgent for a planet that seems to need reclamation and recovery - including for ourselves.

This relationship with Brook led to developing a friendship with Russell Beebe and relationships with Grandma Aggie's family; daughter Nadine and granddaughter Tanya. I've also had many meetings and meals with David West, the longtime past director of NAS, who contributed a tremendous amount of feedback and suggestions. He actually sent me on a pilgrimage down the Klamath River to the sea.

One mutual acquaintance, Tiana Gilliland, has become a friend, and we have been discovering much about her Shasta Indian Nation together. There are many examples of connections that were generated either directly or indirectly from NAS.

Native American Studies is a resource that honors the experience and the wisdom of the past 22,000 years in the Rogue Valley, and it merits top billing. To 'contemplate the universe' in our own backyard, and to explore the knowledge that has been acquired from a far less distracted society since time immemorial, is Southern Oregon's greatest gift to pass on.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours Truly,
John Pugh

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Leila Penitusi <[REDACTED]>

Date: Monday, August 25, 2025 at 1:19:16 PM UTC-7

Subject: Testimonial in Support of the Honors College

To: Leila Penitusi <penitusil@sou.edu>

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

To Whom It May Concern,

I hope this email finds you well. Attached is my written testimony as a student in the Honors College program, sharing my perspective on why this program is such an essential part of what makes SOU the institution that it is.

I appreciate your time in listening to the voices of students, and I would be grateful for my voice to be considered as part of this important discussion.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Leila Penitusi

-- Attachment --

Leila Penitusi

Southern Oregon University – Junior, Honors Scholar

Health & Exercise Science / Communications Minor

[REDACTED]

July 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Leila Penitusi, and I am a Junior at Southern Oregon University, majoring in Health and Exercise Science with a focus on Health Promotion & Education, and a minor in Communications. I am also an Honors Scholar, Vice President of the Samoan Club, and a student worker on campus.

I am writing because the Honors College has been a foundational part of my SOU experience, and the idea of shutting it down is heartbreaking- not only for me, but for current and future students who deserve the same opportunities it has given me.

The curriculum in the Honors College has shaped my worldview in ways that traditional courses alone could not. The one-on-one connections with professors and the engaging discussions with peers allowed me to explore real-world topics from multiple perspectives. We often learned as much from one another as we did from our professors. That sense of academic community made classes exciting and meaningful, pushing me to think critically, engage deeply, and grow as a student.

The program has also opened countless opportunities. It motivated me to step into leadership roles, serving first as secretary and now as Vice President of the Samoan Club. It encouraged me to take on projects with creativity and confidence. Through the Honors College, I was awarded the Native Pacific Honors Scholar Scholarship, which connected me with peers who shared similar experiences and backgrounds when it came to cultural heritage and allowed me to strengthen my cultural identity while studying far from home.

One of the most meaningful aspects of the Honors College has been the Explore & Reflect requirement. It pushed me out of my comfort zone to try new experiences and then reflect on how they impacted me. One highlight was the Yurok River Trip with Dr. Lyon and a small group of Honors Scholars, where we visited the Yurok Tribe and learned about their history and traditions. Beyond the incredible learning opportunity, what inspired me most was simply being

invited. Dr. Lyon knew how much I missed home, and she thought of me as a student who could connect with the Yurok Tribe's culture- one that shares similarities with my own Samoan heritage. That gesture made me feel cared for and seen, and the experience itself felt like a "home away from home." It reminded me that the Honors College isn't just about academics- it's about people, belonging, and growth.

In terms of career preparation, the Honors College inspired me to pursue an ultrasound shadowing opportunity this past spring. The encouragement and mentorship I received pushed me to search for hands-on learning experiences beyond the classroom. As a result, I was able to shadow a technician, gain real-world exposure to healthcare work, and establish a professional connection that gave me a clearer vision of my future in healthcare.

On a personal level, the Honors College has been my anchor. I came all the way from American Samoa, and it was because SOU Admissions and the Honors College traveled to my island that my parents were comfortable enough for me to attend. The reassurance they felt in knowing I would be supported academically, financially, and personally is what made this journey possible because they knew their little girl was going to be fine. Without the Honors College, I wouldn't be here.

The scholarship support tied to the program has also been critical. In my first year, I received very little financial aid, and paying SOU's tuition was extremely difficult. Thanks to the Honors College, I finished my sophomore year without paying anything out of pocket for tuition. That lifted a huge burden off my parents and gave me the chance to focus fully on my education instead of worrying about finances.

Now, as I enter my junior year, hearing that the Honors College may be shut down feels like the rug is being pulled out from under me- just as I near the finish line. It would take away not only the community, support, and opportunities that make this program unique, but also my sense of trust in SOU's commitment to its students.

The loss of the Honors College would signal that students' futures are not being prioritized. I urge you to reconsider. Please protect this program, and by doing so, protect the students it continues to empower.

Sincerely,

Leila Penitusi

Junior, Honors Scholar

Southern Oregon University

-- Reply --

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rick Bailey [REDACTED]
Date: Monday, August 25, 2025 at 1:19:16 PM UTC-7
Subject: Re: Testimonial in Support of the Honors College
To: Leila Penitusi <penitusil@sou.edu>
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], trustees <trustees@sou.edu>

Good morning Leila

Thank you very much for lending your voice to the discussion, and for your thoughtful letter. We will keep your perspective in mind as we work toward the development of a final plan. Ultimately we are doing this work so that we can keep the institution affordable and accessible for all students, and we really appreciate your views. Thanks again for sharing with us.

Very Respectfully

Rick

Richard J. Bailey, Jr., Ph.D.
President
Southern Oregon University
(541) 552-6111
presidentsoffice@sou.edu



----- Forwarded message -----

From: John Frohnmayer [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, August 22, 2025 at 5:20:53 PM UTC-7

Subject: Comment at the Board's public session

To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Trustees I am a donor to SOU and a passionate supporter of the Honors College concept. As Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (1989-92) and as a frequent teacher and speaker since then I have visited over 120 colleges and Universities, often at the behest of honors colleges.

I realize your task is enormous and hateful, but I would like to share some brief experiences that emphasize the unique learning opportunities that happen in these educational units. Thank you. John Frohnmayer, BA, MA,
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Eliot Feenstra [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at 10:42:02 AM UTC-7
Subject: In support of GSWS
To: trustees@sou.edu <trustees@sou.edu>

Please distribute my comment to all trustees in advance of the upcoming meeting.

To the SOU Trustees,

I am writing in support of the GSWS program and Dr. Sojka's work at SOU, which has an important local impact. My name is Eliot Feenstra and I worked with Dr. Sojka when I was working as a community organizer with the Rogue Action Center from 2020-2023. Our mission was to listen to and organize in the LGBTQ+ communities in Josephine and Jackson counties. Although we estimated over 10,000 LGBTQ+ people live in our counties, there are few organizations that exclusively represent or support our communities year-round in this area. Our communities face high rates of discrimination and public hostility as well as supporting vibrant gatherings and community-building efforts.

As we developed a community organizing plan and led a needs assessment, Dr. Sojka, who sat on our leadership team, played a significant role in helping to shape and move forward this local work. Stable leadership capacity is one of the big issues for sustaining and building queer community infrastructure in our rural area. Dr. Sojka and GSWS are important resources both for SOU students and community and for the surrounding community. Numerous GSWS students and leaders have stayed in the local area and are continuing to work in and contribute to supporting our local LGBTQ+ communities.

I urge you to prioritize and sustain these vital programs which benefit students and our local communities.

Thank you!

Eliot Feenstra
Portland, Oregon
[REDACTED]

Adjournment