



NSHE Strategic Goals 2021 Accountability Report

A Citizen's Guide to NSHE Performance

ACCESS.

SUCCESS.

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP.

WORKFORCE.

RESEARCH.

Nevada System of Higher Education Leadership

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Introduction

NSHE Strategic Goals: Planning for the Future of Nevada's Higher Education

The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) is in the process of making significant changes to the landscape of the State's public postsecondary education system. This report serves as the citizen's guide to NSHE performance and aligns our performance against our five strategic goals. The five goals outlined here are approved by the Board of Regents and designed to move the needle on Nevada's higher education outcomes. From increasing access to promoting research and workforce readiness, the metrics associated with these goals serve as a litmus test for measuring change and providing accountability in the System. These goals guide all eight NSHE institutions in supporting the the State's economy, with a current focus on reskilling a displaced workforce to align with future employer needs and demand for an educated workforce.

The goals and associated targets are ambitious, as they establish a roadmap for the future of higher education in the State. Continuous progress toward these goals will be expected, measured, and communicated in an on-going effort to provide evidence of improvement. With this notion at the heart of these strategic goals, System Administration established this public accountability report. Through the development of a core set of performance indicators, systemwide measures and benchmarks will be monitored and published regularly to identify advancement at both the System and institution levels.

Following the adoption of these strategic goals, this document identifies select metrics for each of these five strategic goals. These metrics are intended to be systemwide, "higher level" measures or "dashboard indicators" that collectively assess improvement and progress. The information presented in this document, along with more detailed data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, sex, and age are available through NSHE's Data Dashboard, accessible via the web at <https://ir.nevada.edu/>. The following bullets outline several principles upon which this performance reporting process is based:

- **Systemwide Measures:** It should be stressed that the goal of this report is to measure the effectiveness of Nevada's entire system of higher education in meeting the goals. As a result, the performance areas and their indicators will be applied to the System as a whole and should not be used to distinguish the performance of the various institutions relative to one another. Those performances should only be measured as an assessment of each institution's progress toward fulfilling its own strategic and academic master plans.
- **Mission Differentiation:** NSHE institutions—four community colleges, two research universities, a research institute, and a state college—each have their unique missions, goals, and histories. The University of Nevada, Reno, has existed for nearly 150 years while Nevada State College opened its doors in 2002. Naturally, while some performance areas and indicators will apply to all NSHE institutions, others will more adequately address the unique missions and situations of individual institutions. Even in the case of some of the common indicators, the various institutions must be understood in terms of their differences.
- **Longitudinal Measures:** A performance reporting system not only informs the public about the achievements of the NSHE and its institutions, but is also an opportunity to show

commitment to continuous progress and improvement. Accordingly, this set of performance indicators will report in ways that capture how performance evolves over time. To these ends, whenever possible and appropriate, accountability information will be presented in formats that include performance over multiple years.

- **Focus:** The NSHE believes it is important to give priority focus to a few performance areas and indicators that relate to fundamental issues of the educational enterprise and of public concern. Experience has proven repeatedly that complex, elaborate, costly accountability programs demand precious new resources to implement while, at the same time, diluting a sense of the priority performance areas.
- **Existing Data:** In order to maximize resources, performance indicators will be measured by System Administration; and to the extent possible, indicators will rely on existing data collection efforts and standard, independent reports such as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).
- **Continual Improvement:** In many ways, an undertaking as extensive and intensive as this accountability plan will always be a work under review. As experience is gained in assembling the needed information, there will be continuous evaluation of the assessment procedures themselves. Over time, it may be necessary to modify the performance areas and measures in response to the changing circumstances and needs of the NSHE.
- **Commitment to Quality:** The measurement of performance indicators in relation to goals set forth represents the NSHE's collective commitment to quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.

It is important to note that while this set of performance indicators will serve as a systemwide accountability report, many other assessment efforts occur throughout the NSHE. All institutions currently have a variety of evaluation and quality review procedures that relate to the nature of their core academic programs. Through these internal procedures, campus faculty and administrators are responsible for the quality of their academic programs and overall institutional effectiveness. These assessments are shared cyclically with regional accreditation officials, professional and disciplinary associations, and with the NSHE Board of Regents. It should be recognized that efforts by the institutions to provide public accountability may reach a level of detail that exceeds systemwide measures.

The following are NSHE's strategic goals, adopted by the NSHE Board of Regents in 2018. NSHE's laser-like focus on these goals has led to several impactful new initiatives ranging from high school dual credit programs and developmental education initiatives to need-based financial aid programs. Despite the success of these programs, the economic downturn due to COVID-19 may threaten them. As the state and NSHE face budget reductions, student success initiatives will have to be prioritized within our limited state resources.

GOAL 1: ACCESS

Obtaining a college credential is a powerful investment for an individual and for the community at large in creating and sustaining an educated workforce. Access is the first step toward student success. From certificates to doctoral programs, NSHE seeks to collaboratively increase the number of students participating in the State's higher education system. Nevada currently ranks 49th in the nation for the number of young adults participating in higher education, with only 26% of people ages 18-24 enrolled in higher education as of 2015, as compared to the national average of 36%. On the other hand, the State of Nevada has seen an increase of minority populations pursuing higher education and will continue to support the growth of underrepresented minorities.

GOAL 2: SUCCESS

Every institution in the state has a responsibility to facilitate the success of its students. With statewide increases in graduation and persistence rates, NSHE needs to ensure that degree and certificate attainment rates continue to climb. Each of the seven teaching institutions has made significant progress relative to its peer institutions and will continue the effort to measure against aspirational peer institutions in graduating more students.

GOAL 3: CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

NSHE recognizes that as a majority-minority system, variation in achievement between demographic groups is unacceptable. Despite efforts to increase completion for underrepresented students in higher education, the graduation rates remain low, particularly for Black and Hispanic student populations. The System is striving to increase the number and percent of underrepresented students graduating with a degree or credential by 2025.

GOAL 4: WORKFORCE

NSHE needs to ensure that its institutions are meeting the needs of Nevada's future job growth. Community colleges are the first-responders in an economic downturn, and remain nimble in adapting quickly to Nevada's workforce needs with job-focused, short-term certificates; meanwhile, four-year institutions identify skillsets for students to succeed in the workplace where four-year degrees are required.

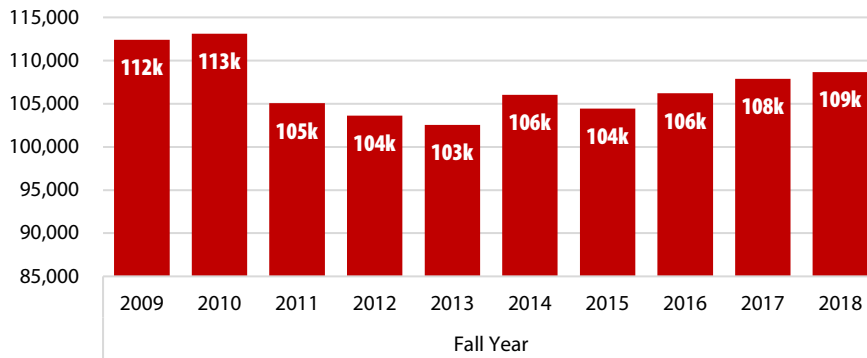
GOAL 5: RESEARCH

In recent history, Nevada was the largest state without a Carnegie Classification "Research University - Very High" institution. However, in 2018 both the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the University of Nevada, Reno earned the prestigious ranking. The System seeks to ensure continuity of these significant designations, as well as continue to engage in problem solving for the local communities, state of Nevada, and global community.



Strategic Goal 1 **ACCESS**

Figure 1. Fall Enrollment by Year - All NSHE Institutions

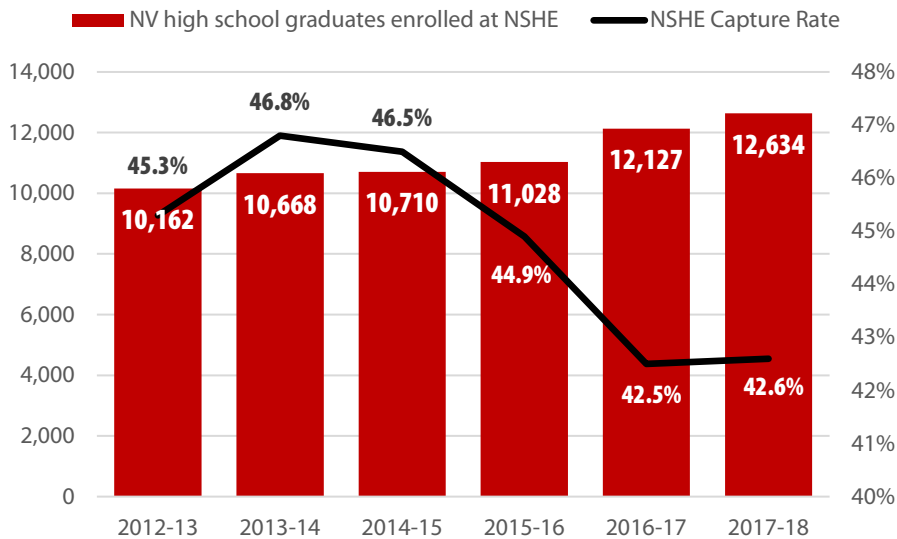


71% of two-year students attend part-time

30% of four-year students attend part-time

Figure 2. Capture Rate: NSHE Nevada High School Graduates Continuing to NSHE

Advanced and Standard high school diploma graduates that enroll at any NSHE institution within one year immediately following graduation



While the percent of recent high school graduates enrolling at NSHE following graduation has declined since 2014 due to an improved job market, the high school graduation class is growing, resulting in a higher number of students enrolling at an NSHE institution within one year following high school graduation.

Goal

Increase participation in post-secondary education

Context

Obtaining a college credential is a powerful investment for an individual and for the community at large in creating and sustaining an educated workforce. Access is the first step toward student success. From certificates to doctoral programs, NSHE seeks to collaboratively increase the number of students participating in the State's higher education system.

NSHE 'Access' Dashboards available at ir.nevada.edu

- NSHE Fall Enrollment
- Percent of 18 to 24-year-olds Enrolled in Post-secondary Education
- Percent of Population Aged 25 and Older Enrolled in Post-secondary Education
- Percent of High School Graduates Going Directly to Post-secondary Education
- Percent of High School Graduates Meeting Three or Four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

Data Source:
NSHE Fall Enrollment Dashboard

Strategic Goal 2 **SUCCESS**

Figure 3. 2014 and 2019 Graduation Rates - Four-Year Institutions

The percentage of students entering the institutions as undergraduate, full-time, first-time, degree-seeking in a cohort year who complete their program within 150% of normal time (6 years for bachelor's degrees).

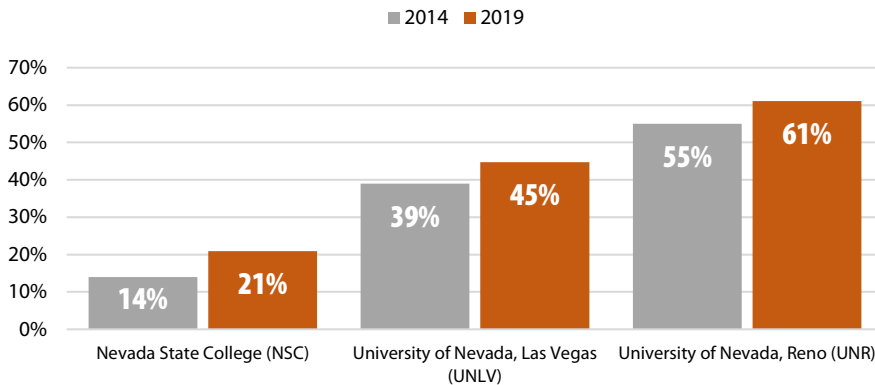


Figure 4. 2014 and 2019 Graduation Rates - Two-Year Institutions

The percentage of students entering the institutions as undergraduate, full-time, first-time, degree-seeking in a cohort year who complete their program within 150% of normal time (3 years for associate degrees, 1.5 years for certificates).

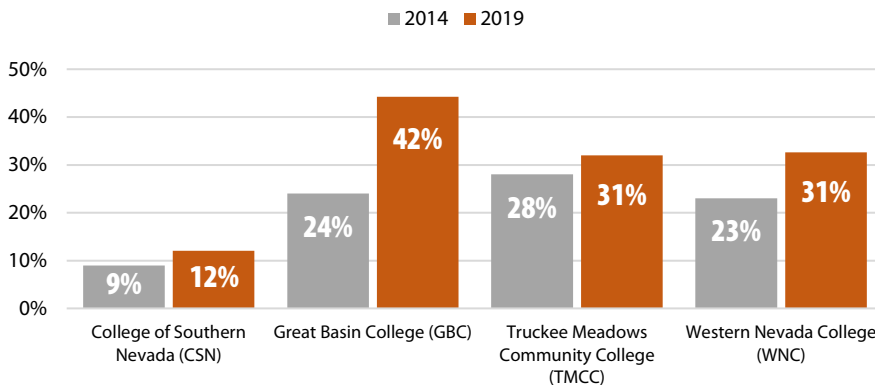


Figure 5. Number of Degrees and Certificates Awarded – All NSHE

	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	5-YEAR CHANGE
SKILLS CERTIFICATE	1,534	1,518	1,332	1,428	1,499	-2.3%
CERT. OF ACHIEV.	727	657	586	580	500	-31.2%
ASSOCIATE	4,814	5,180	5,638	5,558	5,759	19.6%
BACHELOR'S	7,478	7,778	8,152	8,589	8,943	19.6%
MASTER'S /DOCTORAL	1,926	1,996	1,972	2,114	2,087	8.4%
PROFESSIONAL	279	254	266	240	281	0.8%

Goal

Increase student success. See *2025 Student Success Goals* (p. 21) for more specific student success goals for the next five years

Context

Every institution in the state has a responsibility to facilitate the success of its students. With statewide increases in graduation and persistence rates, NSHE needs to ensure that degree and certificate attainment rates continue to climb. Each of the seven teaching institutions have made significant progress in outperforming their comparison peer institutions and will continue the effort to emulate their aspirational peer institutions in graduating more students.

NSHE 'Success' Dashboards available at ir.nevada.edu

- Graduation Rates
- IPEDS Education Outcomes
- IPEDS Graduation Plus Transfer-out Rates
- Number of Students Earning a Certificate or Degree
- Systemwide Persistence Rates

NCES National Graduation Rates

- 61% for 4-year public postsecondary institutions
- 27% for 2-year public postsecondary institutions

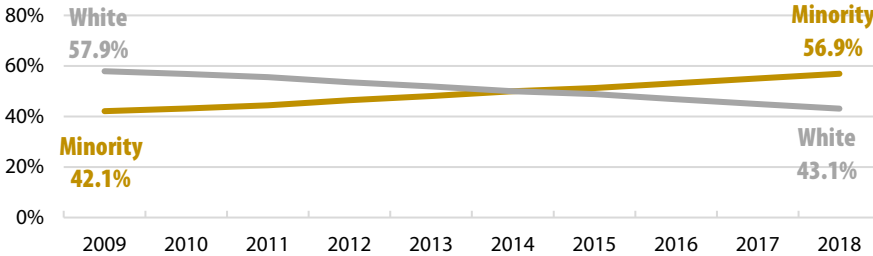
Data are for degree-granting postsecondary institutions participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Graduation rates include students receiving bachelor's/associate degrees or certificates from their initial institution of attendance only.

Data Sources:
NSHE Awards Conferred
Graduation Rates

Strategic Goal 3

CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Figure 6. Longitudinal Fall Enrollment by Minority Status



2015 NSHE became a majority-minority system **57,808** minority students enrolled in NSHE in Fall 2018

Figure 7. Fall Enrollment by Ethnicity - All NSHE Institutions

ETHNICITY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	5-YEAR CHANGE
AM. INDIAN/ AK. NATIVE	829	779	755	745	739	-12.2%
ASIAN	9,897	9,967	10,202	10,590	10,874	9.0%
BLACK	7,812	7,342	7,278	7,310	7,563	-3.3%
HISPANIC	24,028	24,604	26,785	29,029	30,265	20.6%
NATIVE HI/ PACIFIC ISLANDER	1,234	1,157	1,121	995	1,035	-19.2%
TWO ETHNICITIES OR MORE	5,863	6,201	6,685	6,998	7,332	20.0%
<i>MINORITIES TOTAL</i>	<i>49,663</i>	<i>50,050</i>	<i>52,826</i>	<i>55,667</i>	<i>57,808</i>	<i>14.1%</i>
WHITE	49,649	47,626	46,489	45,321	43,814	-13.3%
TOTAL	99,312	97,676	99,315	100,988	101,622	2.3%

Non-resident alien and race/ethnicity unknown excluded.

Hispanic and multi-ethnic students are the fastest growing populations at NSHE, both increasing 20% in the past five years.

Goal

Close the achievement gap among underserved populations

Context

With NSHE becoming a majority-minority system based on enrollment, the success of students of color is a key priority.

Despite efforts to increase completion for underrepresented students in higher education, the graduation rates remain low, particularly for Black and Hispanic student populations. The System is striving to increase the number and percent of minority students graduating with a degree or credential by 2025.

NSHE 'Closing the Achievement Gap' Dashboards available at ir.nevada.edu

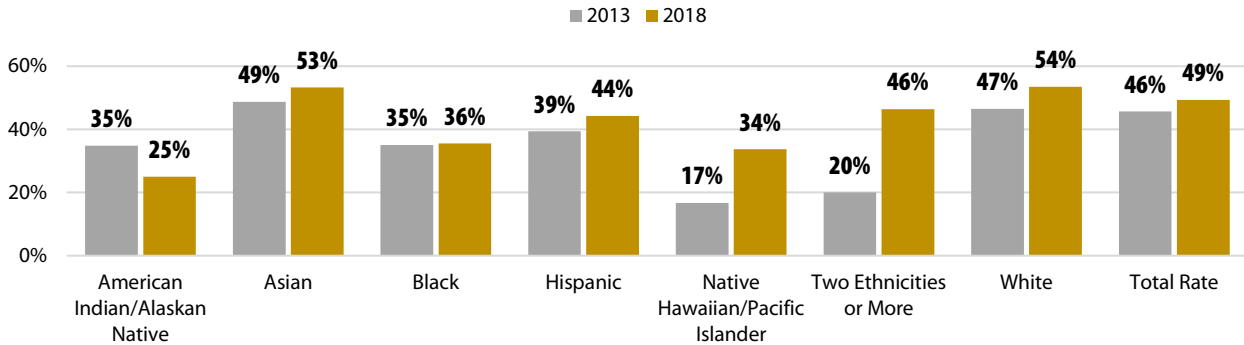
- Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity
- Enrollment Distribution
- Number of Students Earning a Certificate or Degree
- Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity
- Systemwide Persistence Rate by Race/Ethnicity
- Percent of Minority Students Meeting Three or Four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

Data Sources:
Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity
Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Figure 8. NSHE 4-Year Institution Graduation Rates by Ethnicity – 2013 and 2018

The percentage of the number of students entering the institutions as undergraduate, full-time, first-time, degree-seeking in a cohort year who complete their program within 150% of normal time (6 years for bachelor's degrees).



Graduation rates for nearly all student populations are increasing.

Figure 9. NSHE 2-Year Institution Graduation Rates by Ethnicity – 2013 and 2018

The percentage of the number of students entering the institutions as undergraduate, full-time, first-time, degree-seeking in a cohort year who complete their program within 150% of normal time (3 years for associate degrees, 1.5 years for certificates).

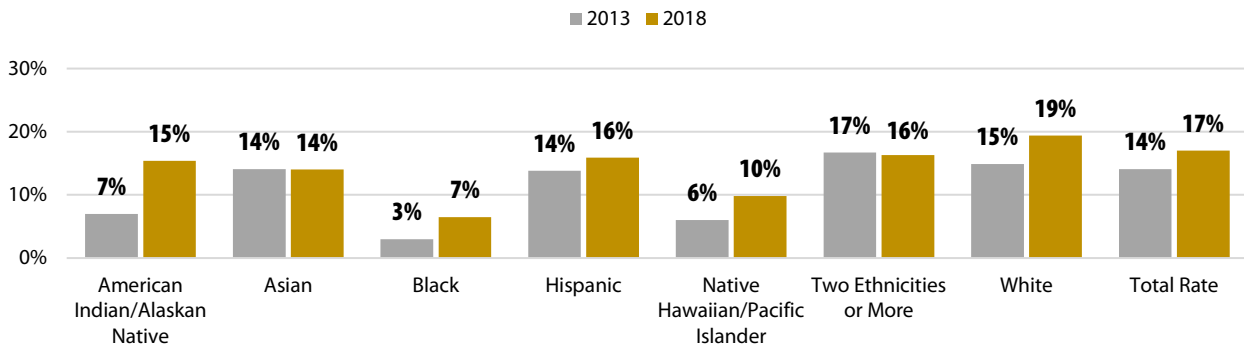


Figure 10. NSHE Awards Conferred: 2013 to 2018

ETHNICITY	2013-14	2018-19	5-YEAR CHANGE
AM. INDIAN/ AK. NATIVE	116	108	-7.4%
ASIAN	1,251	1,710	26.8%
BLACK	656	897	26.9%
HISPANIC	2,344	4,234	44.6%
NATIVE HI/ PACIFIC ISLANDER	157	128	-22.7%
TWO ETHNICITIES OR MORE	600	1,166	48.5%
<i>MINORITIES TOTAL</i>	5,124	8,243	37.8%
WHITE	7,951	8,255	3.7%
TOTAL	13,075	16,498	20.7%

**AWARDS
CONFERRED TO
MINORITY
STUDENTS
INCREASED BY
MORE THAN
ONE-THIRD.**

Awards exclude skills certificates, second majors, postbaccalaureate certificate and post-master's certificates. Non-resident alien and race/ethnicity unknown excluded.

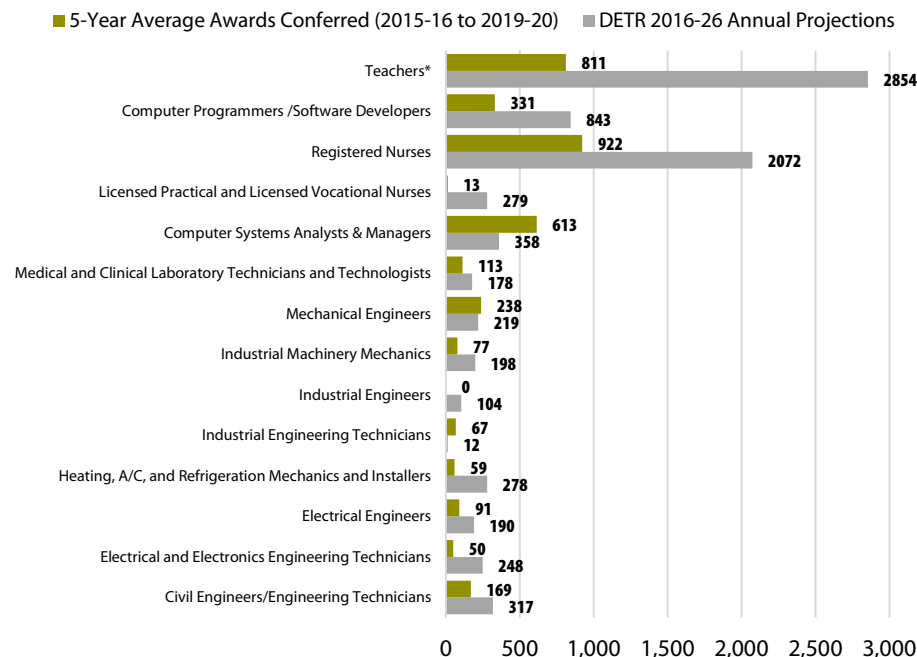
Strategic Goal 4
WORKFORCE

Figure 11. DETR Annual Career Projections Compared to Annual NSHE Graduates

	DETR 2016-26 Annual Projections	Number of Awards Conferred				
		2015- 16	2016- 17	2017- 18	2018- 19	2019- 20
Civil Engineers/ Engineering Technicians	317	152	160	167	183	185
Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	248	57	47	48	43	56
Electrical Engineers	190	79	96	99	88	94
Heating, A/C, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	278	58	68	47	65	57
Industrial Engineering Technicians	12	41	46	51	104	94
Industrial Engineers	104	0	0	0	0	0
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	198	113	59	70	62	81
Mechanical Engineers	219	209	212	255	253	263
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists	178	169	138	106	98	55
Computer Systems Analysts & Managers	358	595	389	634	636	813
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	279	23	12	23	0	5
Registered Nurses	2072	795	848	909	982	1075
Computer Programmers /Software Developers	843	288	288	359	333	387
Teachers*	2854	788	829	799	794	847

*Bachelor's or higher award graduates

Figure 12. DETR Annual Projections vs 5-Yr Avg. Awards Conferred



Goal

Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada

Context

NSHE needs to ensure that its institutions are meeting the needs of Nevada's future job growth. Community colleges must remain nimble in their ability to adapt quickly to Nevada's workforce needs, and universities must identify skillsets for students to succeed in the workplace.

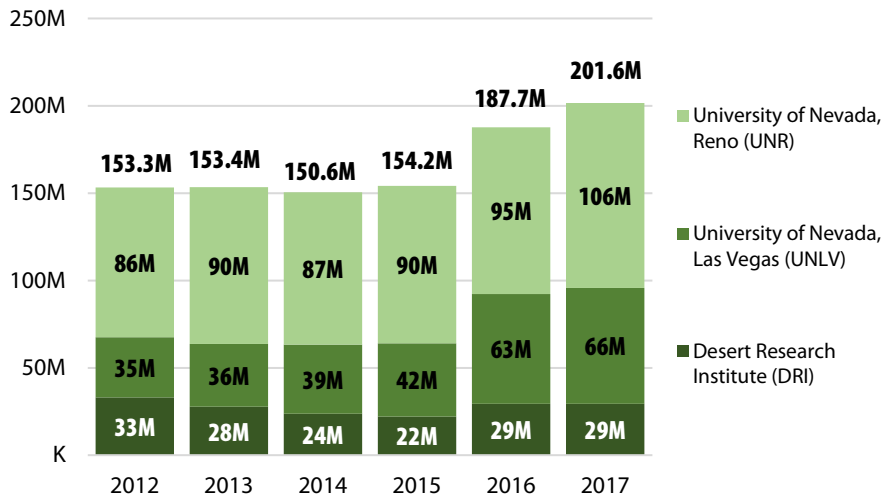
NSHE 'Workforce' Dashboards available at ir.nevada.edu

➤ In-Demand Occupations

Data Source(s):
NSHE Data Warehouse, DETR
Employment Projections

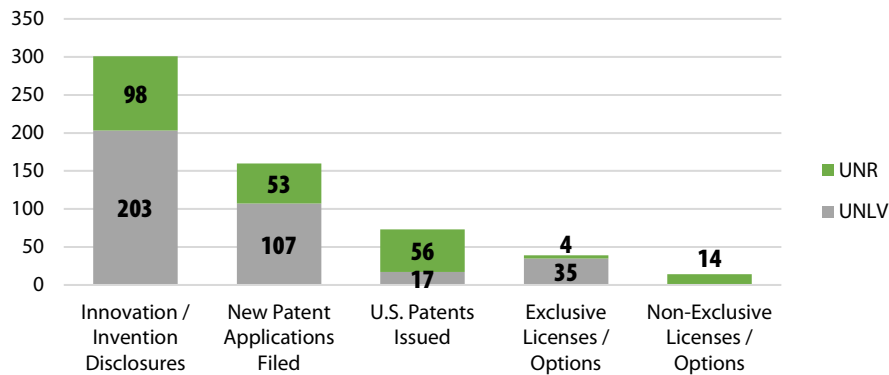
Strategic Goal 5
RESEARCH

Figure 13. Higher Education R&D Expenditures



\$1,000,859,000
NSHE research and development (R&D) expenditures from 2012 to 2017

Figure 14. Total UNLV and UNR Inventions & Patents from FY2013 to FY2017



Research is not only a critical component to the nature of higher education, but an economic driver for the State of Nevada, as well. Research, and related expenditures, impacts quality of life for Nevadans, creates jobs, brings revenue to the State, and creates student learning opportunities.

Goal

Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21st century Nevada and raise the overall research profile

Context

In 2018, both the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the University of Nevada, Reno earned the prestigious ranking “Research University-Very High” ranking from the Carnegie Classification. The System seeks to ensure continuity of these significant designations, as well as continue to engage in problem solving for the local communities, state of Nevada, and global community.

NSHE ‘Research’ Dashboards available at ir.nevada.edu

- Higher Education R&D Expenditures
- DRI: Federally Financed R&D Expenditures in Atmospheric and Earth Sciences
- Doctoral awards conferred per 100 undergraduate and graduate AAFTE
- Doctorate-holding Non-faculty Researchers in Science, Engineering, and Health
- Qualitative: Links to descriptions of research projects at NSHE institutions providing solutions to critical issues
- Inventions / Patents

*Data Source(s):
National Science Foundation,
National Center for Science and
Engineering Statistics, Higher
Education R&D Survey (most recent)
NSHE Higher Education R&D
Expenditures*

Initiatives Supporting NSHE Strategic Goals

The Board of Regents adopted several strategies and reforms that in concert with one other, will increase both access and success for students, and most importantly close achievement gaps among historically underrepresented minorities in higher education. The following are highlights of programs and initiatives adopted in the past two years.

While these initiatives have contributed to NSHE achieving its strategic goals, their vitality is threatened due to the uncertainties following the COVID-19 pandemic. As the state economy and state support allocated to NSHE are impacted by the pandemic, scaling activities, implementation efforts, and staffing resources may be reduced, negatively impacting long term strategic objectives.

Corequisite Support for Gateway Mathematics and English

Traditional remediation does not work. For many years, far too many NSHE students have entered into long pathways of traditional developmental education that, instead of opening the door to college access, have closed it. For the thousands of students who enter traditional remediation each year within NSHE, few will graduate, often due to the increased cost and time required to engage in traditional developmental education. Historically, for every 100 students placed into traditional developmental education within NSHE's community colleges, only eight will graduate. The remaining 92 students will have either dropped out or will remain spiraling in the system, accumulating additional costs and time. An 8% graduation rate is unacceptable and prompted a comprehensive change in NSHE policy in 2016.

Recognizing both NSHE institutional data and growing national research supporting reform in remediation, the NSHE Board of Regents adopted a milestone policy eliminating traditional remediation pathways. The NSHE Corequisite and College-Ready Gateway Policy (*Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1*) requires all students to be enrolled in college-level gateway English and math courses in their initial year of enrollment, with or without corequisite support, effective Fall 2021. Corequisite instruction is a nationwide movement of delivering just-in-time support for college-level coursework in place of traditional remediation.

Price Predictability for Registration Costs

To allow students and parents to appropriately budget for college costs in advance, the Nevada Board of Regents established a Predictable Pricing Program in March 2019. This program establishes the cost of base tuition fees for at least a four-year period and helps ensure students in public higher education are aware of the base tuition fees for at least a four-year period to budget for tuition expenses appropriately.

The "Predictable Pricing Program" will base future registration fees and non-resident tuition for undergraduate and graduate students on the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI). HEPI serves as the higher education version of the consumer price index (CPI). This index tracks the inflation of college costs on a four-year cycle. This program applies all of NSHE's seven-degree granting institutions. Predictable pricing is not only the right thing to do for future students

and families, but price transparency is also associated with better retention and graduation by low-income and underrepresented students.

Mandatory Advising for Undergraduate Students

The NSHE Board of Regents adopted aggressive student success goals to increase both the graduation rates and the actual number of students graduating over the next five years. Inherent in supporting student success is providing robust academic advising to all students.

In June 2019, the NSHE Board of Regents adopted the Academic Advising and Counseling policy (*Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 22*). Effective Fall 2020, upon initial enrollment, all first-time students must meet with an academic advisor or counselor before the date of matriculation. All continuing, degree or certificate-seeking students shall be required to meet with their academic advisor or counselor periodically until degree completion. Further, by the academic year 2023-2024, all institutions must maintain a student-to-advisor ratio of no greater than 350:1.

Increasing High School Dual Credit Opportunities

Senate Bill 19 (Chapter 100, *Statutes of Nevada 2017*) enacted during the 2017 Session of the Nevada State Legislature required school districts across the state to establish dual enrollment opportunities. Students across the state have the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. In some instances, dual-enrolled students earn a full 60 credits and an associate degree by the time they reach high school graduation. Cohort-based models, such as “Jumpstart” at WNC, have proven to be highly successful in getting students well on their way toward a college credential while still in high school. Expanding dual enrollment in Clark County, the College of Southern Nevada has been working with the Clark County School District using dual enrollment to ensure students arrive ready to enroll in college-level math and English courses. CSN and TMCC have high schools based at their colleges that offer college credit to all attendees using dual enrollment.

While the opportunities for dual enrollment in Nevada increased over the last several years, more work remains to ensure that access to dual enrollment is available and encouraged for all high school students, regardless of their zip code or socioeconomic background. Current practices reveal that students participating in dual enrollment tend to be far more likely to attend college. If used effectively, dual enrollment can be a tool to encourage at-risk students to pursue a college credential after high school and lower their out-of-pocket expenses.

Improving Transfer and Articulation

A 2020 audit of transfer and articulation agreements between Nevada’s public higher education institutions showed a marked improvement of collaboration between the seven degree-granting institutions. Transfer and articulation agreements are meant to create pathways for students to move credits seamlessly between one institution and another.

NSHE’s audit reviewed transfer agreements within the northern and southern regions of the state. In southern Nevada, this included agreements between the College of Southern Nevada and either University of Nevada, Las Vegas, or Nevada State College. In northern

Nevada, this included agreements between Great Basin College, Truckee Meadows Community College, or Western Nevada College and the University of Nevada, Reno.

After reviewing nearly 600 regional transfer agreements for the academic year 2019-20, the audit found an initial result of 77.8 percent of transfer agreements in full compliance with Board policy. This is an increase in the overall satisfactory completion of 1.8 percentage points over the 2018 audit results. Additionally, compliance is as high as 90 percent between institutions. After the correction phase, agreements in compliance increased to 95.4 percent overall.

Access and Affordability

The Silver State Opportunity Grant (SSOG) is Nevada's first state-supported, need-based financial aid program for students attending a community college or state college within the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). Approved as a pilot program by the 2015 Legislature and reauthorized into the Executive Budget with an increase in appropriations by the 2017 Legislature, the SSOG program exists to serve low-income Nevada residents in their pursuit of higher education.

The Nevada Promise Scholarship (NPS) is the state's newest scholarship program and is targeted at all graduating high school seniors, regardless of income or academic performance. Modeled after the highly-successful Tennessee Promise, NPS aims to encourage all graduating high school seniors to begin thinking about and taking proactive steps toward college. The program operates as a last-dollar scholarship, providing up to three years of coverage of registration fees and other mandatory fees to eligible students at a Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) community college after all other forms of gift aid available to a student have been applied.

In addition to reforms supporting student success and closing the achievement gap, additional efforts are being made to support workforce and research goals.

Workforce

Creating a well-prepared, educated, and technically skilled citizenry for public service, economic growth, and the general welfare remains central to the mission of the NSHE. Each institution works to identify employers' skills needs and align program outcomes to meet that demand appropriately. Over the past two years, nursing and allied health and fields in emerging pathways (such as advanced manufacturing, automation, information technology, HVAC, automobile mechanics) have been prioritized as having the most immediate need for more qualified graduates to fill job vacancies. Finding students and/or qualified faculty for these fields has remained a constant challenge to growing enrollments.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, Nevada has faced record-breaking unemployment driven heavily by many service industry workers in hospitality and tourism. In

response to this, community colleges have engaged with partners in workforce development centers to provide services to displaced workers, including college-level training for individuals to upskill or reskill to a high-skill, high-demand, high-wage career path. For many, the challenge of enrolling in college courses during a pandemic has proven to be a challenge in and of itself, with classes being mostly taught online. As colleges and universities continue to grapple with this challenge, it remains more important than ever that NSHE institutions continue to provide ample pathways to prosperous careers for all Nevadans.

Research

In 2018, for the first time in the state of Nevada, both public, doctoral-granting institutions joined 128 other universities across the nation in receiving the “RU/VH: Doctoral Universities – Very High Research” designation from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Along with the prestige of joining the ranks of the most notable research institutions in the nation, this classification brings wide-reaching benefits. From attracting top researchers from around the world to broadening existing research efforts, this designation can attract new business and contribute to strengthening the state’s economy. This designation also makes NSHE universities more competitive for research grants.

The Desert Research Institute (DRI) is a recognized world leader in basic and applied environmental research. Committed to scientific excellence and integrity, DRI faculty, students, and staff have developed scientific knowledge and innovative technologies in research projects worldwide.

Performance Pay

Established by the Board of Regents in September 2020, the NSHE Task Force on Performance Pay Support and Administration was charged with reviewing historical and current funding levels for faculty merit increases to identify funding options for future performance increases. The Task Force may include recommendations for addressing the System’s significant salary compression issue identified by the 2018 study conducted by the external compensation consulting group Arthur J. Gallagher & Company. The Task Force was further charged with reviewing funding sources for performance pay in the context of affordability to determine the potential impact on student fees should the state continue not funding performance increases for academic and administrative faculty. To that end, the Task Force recommended, and the Board ultimately approved authorizing the institutions to award merit annually and address salary compression and/or inversion within the institutions’ state-supported operating budgets.

For the 2021 Session of the Nevada State Legislature, the Task Force recommended transitory language for inclusion in the Appropriations Act to authorize NSHE to utilize state appropriated General Fund dollars to award merit compensation and, when necessary, address salary compression and inversion. Requesting this language in the Appropriations

Act allows the Board of Regents to acknowledge the issue and notify the Legislature that NSHE will resolve the matter within its overall state appropriation, thereby not seeking additional funding earmarked for performance pay. Faculty representatives on the Task Force opposed the inclusion of the language as unnecessary. They indicated that the Board should continue to seek separate state funding for performance pay from the Legislature as has been done in the past. This recommendation does not preclude the Board of Regents from again requesting state funding for performance pay in the budget request for consideration by the 2021 Session of the Nevada State Legislature.

Looking Forward: NSHE's Next Frontier

In addition to initiatives already underway, NSHE is looking to the future in identifying System-led strategic initiatives that will scale and accelerate progress on the Board's five strategic goals.

Strategic Goal 1: Access

Expanding Dual Credit Opportunities

Despite broad opportunities for dual enrollment across Nevada, there are gaps in enrollment, specifically for low-income, first-generation, and minority students. Access to dual enrollment should be available to all Nevada high school students, with no regard to zip code or socio-economic factors.

In partnership with the Nevada Department of Education, NSHE formed a Dual Enrollment Task Force to examine barriers to increasing access to dual enrollment programs. There are three key challenges to increasing access to dual enrollment across Nevada:

- Price;
- Faculty Qualifications; and
- School/District Supports.

The Task Force, comprised of key stakeholders from K-12 and higher education, will work to better understand models and best practices and develop recommendations to address each of these challenges. The Task Force work will be co-led by NSHE and NDE and a final report and recommendations will be presented to the Chancellor and Superintendent in Spring 2021.

Strategic Goal 2: Student Success

Delivering a Modern, Equitable Online Instruction Platform

The pandemic revealed the vital need for equitable, high-quality online instruction, and the infrastructure and high-speed capacity to deliver it, more apparent and more urgent. NSHE will elevate this conversation through a collective look at contemporary trends in online instruction delivery, expanded high-speed internet, and quiet, safe workplaces. Through a System-led approach, we will focus in 2021 on finding scalable, equitable solutions for students across the state.

Strategic Goal 3: Closing the Achievement Gap

Systemwide DEI Initiative

NSHE actively engaged a number of stakeholders to increase our diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts across the System. While there are several initiatives that NSHE is

focused on developing and expanding for both faculty and students, the hiring and retention of diverse faculty is one of the most critical efforts. Hiring, recruiting, and retaining faculty that are reflective of the students that NSHE serves better supports underrepresented student populations.

Additionally, NSHE is improving climate through inclusion. Inclusion at all levels of NSHE, from undergraduate and graduate students to classified and professional staff, NSHE is committed to supporting diverse populations to find creative solutions to today and tomorrow's challenges.

Strategic Goal 4: Workforce Development

Convening a Statewide Conversation

NSHE's community colleges and universities have remained nimble in their ability to adapt quickly to Nevada's workforce needs, including developing health care programs, such as contact tracing certificates, to meet the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaboratively, we are addressing the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada in the face of the current unstable economy. Many Nevadans are looking to grow in terms of higher education to help get ahead in their current role or pivot to a new career by completing short-term, job-focused training certificates.

Moreover, NSHE remains focused on growing Nevada's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs offered by NSHE's community colleges that support increased capacity in programs that are tied to workforce demand statewide. CTE programs include those that specialize in the skilled trades, applied sciences, and career preparation pathways, including construction trades, mechanic repair technologies, precision production, and transportation and materials moving. One example is Air Conditioning Technology (HVAC), which serves as a primary employment category for industrial, commercial, and residential businesses across our state; and supports a family of sustainable career pathways for Nevadans.

Strategic Goal 5: Research

The Power of Scale

Recently, two of our institutions (UNLV and UNR) have been designated R-1, very high research-intensive institutions. Combined with a world-class research institute, the Desert Research Institute (DRI), Nevada's collective capacity to generate life-changing research has never been higher. The three research institutions are currently leading a systemwide conversation about how to improve their collective research funding and impact through collaboration. Additional information about this emergent initiative will be forthcoming.

Chancellor's Mental Health Task Force

The success of all five strategic goals depends on the health and well-being of our communities. The COVID-19 global pandemic caused disarray across every facet of our general way of life, and increased stress and anxiety in all facets of our campus communities. From record unemployment and economic downturns to grocery shopping and getting together with family, this pandemic altered our world. Higher education, most greatly our students, have been dramatically impacted. Mental health has always been a concern for students, and the pandemic heightened that concern. Students are concerned about many issues, such as where their next meal may come from based on being recently unemployed, to how their timeline to graduation has been affected by the pandemic.

In response to this escalating demand, and evolving student needs based on the pandemic, NSHE convened a Mental Health Task Force to address these challenges. The Task Force will conduct a comprehensive assessment of student mental health across NSHE to develop actionable, evidence-based, and scalable recommendations to better meet the needs of our student population.

2025 Student Success Goals

At NSHE's Student Success Summit in January 2019, the Board of Regents adopted institutional student success goals set through 2025. The goals include specific targets set for the first-time, full-time graduation rate; number of students conferred an award; and persistence rates. Each institution developed an action plan outlining what steps will be taken to achieve its respective student success. The goals are available below.

Target: Graduation Rates

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2025
UNLV	41.5%	42.9%	39.1%	40.5%	40.6%	50.0%
UNR	53.6%	51.4%	54.8%	58.6%	54.4%	65.0%
NSC	15.9%	13.8%	14.1%	13.7%	15.3%	30.0%
CSN	9.0%	9.1%	9.4%	7.1%	7.2%	17.5%
GBC	26.8%	23.4%	24.0%	20.7%	24.1%	30.0%
TMCC	15.8%	21.0%	27.9%	30.4%	30.6%	31.5%
WNC	15.0%	19.3%	23.0%	17.1%	22.0%	32.0%

Target Rates:

Definition: undergraduate, first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who complete their program within 150% of normal time. Source: IPEDS.

Target: Number of Students Conferred Awards

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
UNLV	5,198	5,170	4,956	5,182	5,238	5,445	5,518	5,642	5,733	5,877	5,977	6,074	6,178	6,279
UNR	3,240	3,324	3,372	3,726	3,978	4,157	4,646	4,972	5,197	5,553	5,491	5,626	5,784	5,891
NSC	272	302	361	375	410	408	567	549	590	631	672	712	753	794
CSN	2,179	2,489	4,029	4,163	4,341	4,634	4,651	4,874	5,118	5,362	5,606	5,850	6,095	6,339
GBC	380	333	549	636	645	695	692	712	730	748	767	786	806	826
TMCC	1,082	1,480	1,980	2,045	2,148	2,028	2,039	2,059	2,080	2,101	2,122	2,101	2,122	2,143
WNC	495	497	774	819	865	830	849	870	910	950	990	1,030	1,070	1,100

Target Rates:

Definition: Number of students conferred an award includes certificates of less than 30 credits, certificates of at least 30 credits, associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral awards; students earning multiple awards are only counted once. Source: IPEDS.

Target: Persistence Rates

	FALL 2012, RETURNED FALL 2013	FALL 2013, RETURNED FALL 2014	FALL 2014, RETURNED FALL 2015	FALL 2015, RETURNED FALL 2016	FALL 2016, RETURNED FALL 2017		FALL 2019, RETURNED FALL 2020	FALL 2020, RETURNED FALL 2021	FALL 2021, RETURNED FALL 2022	FALL 2022, RETURNED FALL 2023	FALL 2023, RETURNED FALL 2024	FALL 2024, RETURNED FALL 2025
UNLV	80.4%	81.0%	80.1%	80.9%	79.6%	Target Rates:	79.9%	80.7%	81.8%	82.9%	84.0%	85.0%
UNR	86.2%	86.8%	86.0%	87.0%	86.9%		87.5%	88.0%	88.5%	89.0%	89.5%	90.0%
NSC	64.4%	62.0%	65.2%	69.4%	74.8%		81.3%	82.0%	82.0%	82.0%	82.0%	82.0%
CSN	49.0%	49.0%	52.9%	57.6%	68.3%		71.2%	71.6%	72.0%	72.4%	72.7%	73.1%
GBC	43.5%	56.4%	52.8%	57.1%	63.3%		64.0%	64.5%	65.0%	65.5%	66.5%	67.0%
TMCC	56.9%	52.3%	57.9%	57.5%	64.1%		66.2%	67.0%	67.7%	68.4%	69.2%	70.0%
WNC	46.6%	55.5%	53.1%	51.4%	63.4%		64.0%	65.0%	66.0%	67.0%	68.0%	69.0%

Definition: Number of students conferred an award includes certificates of less than 30 credits, certificates of at least 30 credits, associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral awards; students earning multiple awards are only counted once. Source: IPEDS.

