



SAN FRANCISCO BAY
UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

2025

Prepared By

SFBU Steering Committee

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Section A – Institutional Context and Response to Previous Commission Actions

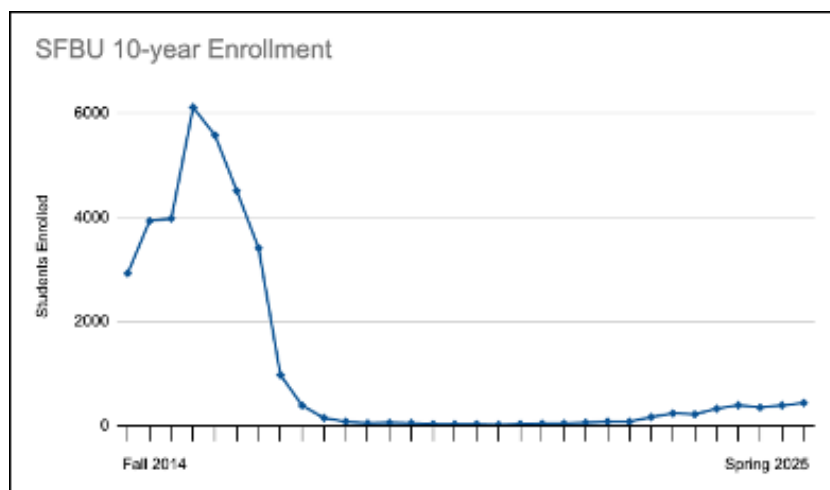
Description of the Institution

San Francisco Bay University (SFBU) is an institution undergoing purposeful reinvention. Since its founding in 1984 (formerly as Northwestern Polytechnic University) in Fremont, California, SFBU has served a diverse and largely international student body through affordable, industry-aligned programs in computer science and business. From 1984 through 1998, the university offered career-focused degree programs as an unaccredited institution and experienced modest enrollment growth (from tens of students to around 200 per trimester). Nearly all students at that time were local working professionals seeking to advance their careers with additional education.

In 1999, NPU became accredited with the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). In 2020, the institution earned initial accreditation from WSCUC and in 2022 adopted a new name, signaling a fresh vision and a transformative approach to higher education, developing an institutional identity connected to the innovative technology and business opportunities available in the San Francisco Bay Area, with curricular focus on business and computer science programs that prepare students to enter the workforce and bring their entrepreneurial aspirations into the competitive market. The focus on experiential and applied curricular experiences for students from diverse backgrounds and origins continues to drive the institution today.

NPU has operated continuously since 1984. NPU's student body began to shift toward international students following accreditation, initially from China and Taiwan, and later from India. From 1999 to 2013, an average of 650 students attended NPU each term. From 2013 through 2016, NPU dramatically increased international student enrollment to a high of 6,114 students in the fall of 2015.

Figure 1: NPU/SFBU 10-year enrollment overview, Fall 2014-Spring 2025



In 2016, NPU obtained direct approval to operate from the state of California by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE). Also in 2016, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) [withdrew recognition](#) of ACICS as an accrediting agency, a decision subsequently overturned in March 2018, leading to the Secretary of Education fully reinstating the agency retroactive to Dec. 12, 2016.

The federal decision to revoke recognition of ACICS and following legal battle contributed to turbulence in NPU's enrollment following a peak in fall 2015, with 148 students enrolled in the fall of 2017 and 30 in the fall of 2019. Despite these setbacks and the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic in spring 2020, NPU faculty and staff worked diligently to support students, transition to online instruction due to COVID-19, and pursue accreditation with WSCUC. The initial accreditation process with WSCUC commenced in August 2017, Candidacy was granted in 2019 after the first Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV1), and Initial Accreditation granted for a period of six years in 2020 following the institution's SAV2.

In 2022, the university changed its name to San Francisco Bay University (SFBU) and began a period of comprehensive institutional transformation. The [Board of Directors](#) now has nine members who bring a wealth and breadth of experience to responsibly govern the institution. In June 2023, SFBU welcomed its fourth President, Dr. Nicholas Ladany, who established a more comprehensive senior leadership team. A three-year strategic plan was developed alongside a refined mission statement, institutional vision, and

core values. Newly renovated facilities were opened to students at 161 Mission Falls Lane following the change of main campus in 2021. For greater alignment with the refined mission, vision, and core values, full- and part-time faculty were invited to reapply for their positions. Additionally, to deliver on the three-year strategic plan, SFBU launched an aggressive hiring campaign to fully staff existing offices and grow new academic and administrative departments.

Throughout these changes, the SFBU community has remained resilient. Faculty, staff, and students continue to be driven by the rapidly evolving technological industry of the Bay Area. On campus, SFBU students are met with a radically welcoming, multicultural, and multilingual environment with faculty and staff who work diligently to reduce barriers so all students can thrive. The singular constant throughout SFBU's 40-year history is the commitment to the mission of the institution. The student experience and degree programs reflect the value of the uniquely global experiences of our students, faculty, and staff and use that diversity to inspire students to imagine innovative solutions to problems faced by communities in the Bay Area and around the world. As evidenced by our Spring 2025 capstone exposition, SFBU students are interested in topics that range from AI-powered monitoring systems for ICU patients to matchmaking services, home and business improvements using AI, education solutions for learners with diverse needs, and launching their own small businesses and start-ups. An SFBU education allows students to pursue what matters most to them while gaining critical, technical, and interpersonal skills that prepare graduates to lead in competitive industries.

The Six Pillars of the SFBU Experience

The holistic redesign of SFBU provides the unique opportunity to design its teaching philosophy from the ground up. Rather than following traditional models, SFBU is committed to pioneering a student-centered approach to learning that goes beyond the classroom to cultivate lifelong skills, critical thinking, and global adaptability. The six pillars of the SFBU student experience represent our commitment to nurturing well-rounded learners who are empowered to lead with purpose, adapt to global challenges, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. These pillars reflect our institutional values of inclusivity, innovation, and interconnectedness and are designed to ensure that every student's journey at SFBU is

one of discovery, growth, and success. Through these pillars, the institution aims to support not only academic excellence but also the development of essential life skills, cultural competence, and resilience, creating an environment where students thrive.

Student experience is designed around six foundational pillars, each designed to support students holistically and prepare them for both personal and professional success. These pillars are integrated across all aspects of the university, ensuring a cohesive and supportive environment and provide the structural coherence for learning and teaching and our organizational identity. Each of the Pillars operate as described:

Academics

SFBU's academic programs are built upon the Agility Praxis Pathway (APP), a transdisciplinary core curriculum developed in collaboration with industry leaders. This curriculum emphasizes practical skills, critical thinking, and adaptability, ensuring that students are well-prepared for the evolving demands of the workforce. Faculty members receive training in innovative teaching methods to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Life Literacy

Recognizing that success extends beyond academic knowledge, SFBU prioritizes life literacy by equipping students with essential life skills. Courses such as "How to Tell Your Story" and "How to Design Your Personal and Professional Life" guide students in self-reflection, goal setting, and effective communication. Additionally, the university offers financial literacy programs to help students manage personal finances and plan for the future.

Wellness

SFBU adopts a holistic approach to student wellness, addressing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. Services include access to licensed counseling, wellness workshops, and 24/7 virtual health support through platforms like TimelyCare. By fostering a culture of self-care and resilience, the university aims to support students' overall well-being throughout their academic journey.

Multiple Meaningful Relationships

The university emphasizes the importance of building a supportive network of relationships. Through small class sizes, mentorship programs, and community engagement initiatives, students are encouraged to form meaningful connections with peers, faculty, and industry professionals. This network serves as a foundation for personal growth and professional development.

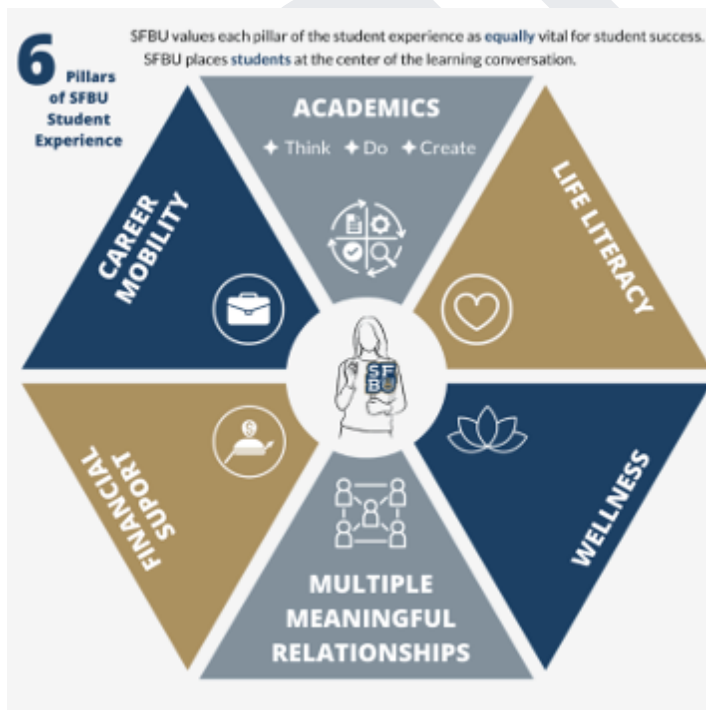
Financial Support

Understanding the financial challenges many students face, SFBU offers comprehensive financial support, including scholarships and aid packages. The university also integrates financial literacy into its curriculum, teaching students practical skills like budgeting, understanding credit, and planning for long-term financial stability. For aspiring entrepreneurs, SFBU provides resources and seed funding opportunities to support student-led ventures.

Career Mobility

SFBU is committed to enhancing students' career prospects by aligning academic programs with industry needs. The university collaborates with Silicon Valley partners to identify in-demand competencies and incorporates them into the curriculum. Students benefit from career services, internships, and networking opportunities that facilitate a seamless transition from education to employment.

Figure 3: The six pillars of the SFBU student experience



Collectively, these six pillars reflect SFBU's dedication to providing an inclusive, innovative, and student-centered educational experience that prepares graduates for the complexities of modern life and work.

SFBU Students

In Spring 2025, SFBU enrolled a total of 512 students, with 332 graduate and 180 undergraduate students. The majority of new students are full-time, in-person, and international and the majority of SFBU's 332 graduate students are enrolled in the Master of Science in Computer Science program (55%), followed by the Master of Business Administration (40%). SFBU's MS programs in Business Analytics, Data Science, and Electrical Engineering represent 5% of graduate student enrollment. 87% of graduate students received a scholarship from SFBU during the 2024-2025 academic year. 89% of graduate students are international, 83% are full-time students, and 21% are transfer students. SFBU's graduate students are 55% female and 45% male. Just under 60% of our graduate students identify as Asian, 23% identify as Black or African American, 2% identify as White, and 16% are of an unknown race/ethnicity. Of SFBU's 180 undergraduate students, 67% are enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and 33% are enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program. 96% of undergraduate students received a scholarship from SFBU during the 2024-2025 academic year. 78% of undergraduate students are international, 98% are full-time students, and 33% are transfer students. SFBU undergraduate students are 63% male, 36% female. 63% of undergraduate students identify as Asian, 30% are of an unknown race/ethnicity, 3% identify as Black or African American, 2% as White, and 1% of students identify as Hawaiian.

SFBU is proud to welcome students from 44 individual countries at the time this report was written. Multiculturalism and the celebration of diversity is a lived experience on our campus. Both international and domestic student populations are multilingual and multinational, further emphasizing the unique range of racial and ethnic communities in the Bay Area.

Process to Prepare the Institutional Report

The process to prepare the institutional report officially began in the spring of 2024. With a national search for SFBU's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) in progress, the institution chose to hire an external consultant with extensive experience with WSCUC accreditation to begin the self-study process at SFBU. Dr. Michele Starkey joined SFBU in May 2024 as an external consultant with the charge of compiling a steering committee and organizing the self-study process. The SFBU Reaffirmation of Accreditation Steering Committee met for the first time on June 28, 2024, to discuss the WSCUC's reaffirmation of accreditation process and deliverables.

After completing the national search, SFBU hired a full-time Director of Accreditation and Assessment and ALO, Ella Frazer, in August 2024. SFBU's new ALO worked closely with Dr. Starkey to seamlessly transition leadership of this process. Dr. Starkey was an invaluable resource to this institution in beginning our first reaffirmation of accreditation with WSCUC and truly paved the way for an efficient and meaningful reflection on SFBU's mission, the student experience, and areas where improvements were needed. Additionally, SFBU's first reaffirmation coincided with the launch of WSCUC's updated 2023 standards and a new format for the institutional report.

By the start of the Fall 2024 semester, the steering committee was ready to dive into the self-study. Using the Compliance with WSCUC Standards Worksheet (Appendix I of this report) as a general guide, SFBU organized their self-study inquiry around the four standards and related criteria. Completing and institutional self-study during this period of institutional transformation was not a simple task. As SFBU welcomed new leadership, staff, and faculty, our inquiries evolved, new steering committee members had to be trained on accreditation and updated on our progress, and gaps between our practices and the WSCUC standards were identified and addressed.

The benefit of this approach is that we now have a community of faculty, staff, and students who have been immersed in the standards of accreditation while core functions of the institution were being built. Not only has this increased fidelity with the standards across units, but also given SFBU the opportunity

to build an institutional practice of reflection, collaboration, and improvement that centers students and empowers faculty and staff to pursue enhancements to the student experience. One example of this commitment to critical and collaborative reflection is SFBU's practice of hosting "postmortem" meetings after the initial weeks of each academic semester, a practice initiated by SFBU's Provost starting in 2024. When students arrive on campus, SFBU faculty and staff track questions, issues, and inefficiencies that come up during New Student Orientation and the first weeks of each semester in a shared document. Then, in the postmortem, staff and faculty gather from across the institution to discuss each row of that spreadsheet. This allows staff to identify pressing issues and ineffective procedures, collaborate on sustainable solutions to the student experience, and create a plan for improvement.

By the end of Fall 2024, steering committee members had provided first drafts of the four institutional essays for this report and gathered the majority of information included in the Compliance worksheet. This allowed the institution to identify areas of misalignment and existing gaps in our academic programs and student support structures as those units were being rebuilt or established at SFBU for the first time. Due to the pace of change at SFBU, the fall 2024 drafts were all rewritten at least one time to account for new processes, new staff, and SFBU's continuously refined vision of student success.

With all of this information gathered by steering committee members, the ALO completed a review of the products generated by the self study and provided an incomplete, rough draft of the institutional report to the steering committee in early February 2025. Steering committee members met on March 4, 2025 to discuss the direction of the institutional report and shape the narrative.

A completed second draft was provided to the steering committee and SFBU leadership on Friday, April 25, 2025. Following edits and corrections to the report, and with the approval of the President, the ALO then supplied the institutional report to the SFBU Board of Directors for review and discussion during their quarterly meeting on May 16-17, 2025.

Following the review of the report by the Board, the report was then made available to SFBU faculty, staff, students, and alumni as well as select external constituents. Community members were able to

provide feedback via a web form on the SFBU website. [Include additional details after community feedback period.]

Response to Previous Commission Requirements

The institution reviews the most recent team report and Commission action letters and notes how it has responded to requirements and recommendations. Describe the approach to addressing each requirement. What progress has been made?

The university began the seeking accreditation process with WSCUC in 2017. The Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 (SAV1) occurred in fall 2018, and in March 2019 the Commission granted Candidacy and scheduled a second SAV in fall 2020. Following the SAV2, the Commission granted initial accreditation for a period of six years on July 8, 2020. SFBU also provided an interim report to WSCUC in fall 2022, responding to the six issues articulated below. A 2025 update to each of the six issues is included.

1. Continue maturing its governing Board so that the Board may fulfill its designated role in guiding the institution. The Board should ensure that it is involved in reviewing and approving all of the university's strategic and operational plans; that it determines an appropriate governance relationship between itself and the newly-established Faculty Assembly; that it brings to bear appropriate external resources to help in further Board development and enhancement; that it structures and implements a formal process of systematic self-evaluation; and that it institutes a process to refresh Board membership, such as establishing a provision for term limits [2013 CFR 3.9].

The Board of Directors now has nine members who bring extensive experience in education, business, and technology. Our Board has five fully operational committees related to audits, finance and investments, academic affairs, executive compensation and housing, and governance. Members take an active role in the review and approval of institutional plans, as evidenced by the attached meeting minutes. The Board at SFBU has continued to follow guidelines on self evaluation published by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) since the training session offered by Dr. Ellen Chaffee in 2022,

as reflected in our most recent interim report. A detailed description of SFBU's Board of Directors is included below in the Section B, Standard 3 essay.

2. Reform and reconfigure the Faculty Assembly committee structures to maximize efficiency and streamline committee participation [2013 CFR 3.10].

The SFBU Faculty Assembly was originally formed in 2019 and recently restructured in the fall of 2024 as part of a larger reshaping of Academic Affairs. All SFBU faculty were hired or rehired under new contracts from 2024 onwards. The reconfiguration of the department and reorganization of the faculty required a new structure for the Faculty Assembly, regardless of the commendable work done by predecessors to invest in a functioning and reliable shared governance structure after SFBU received this recommendation from the Commission in 2020. In Fall 2024, the Faculty Handbook, By-Laws, and Faculty Assembly structure were examined and revised. In January 2025, the Faculty Assembly was re-launched and governing documents approved. More information on the Faculty Assembly and shared governance is included in the description of the institution above, as well as Section B, Standard 3 of this report.

3. Utilize the institution's formal academic processes more intentionally to support the faculty's demonstrated leadership in the development of flexible and innovative courses and programs that respond to the needs of a changing workforce and student population and that sustain and enhance a quality curriculum that is reflective of the character of NPU [2013 CFR 3.10].

The recent restructuring within SFBU aims to accomplish this recommendation. Full-time faculty at SFBU sign 12-month contracts and are on campus throughout the calendar year, as is expected of staff. SFBU faculty prioritize teaching and student-centered service to the institution, meaning they spend less time in traditional governance structures and more time supporting part-time faculty, planning field trips, connecting with industry professionals, and reviewing and updating degree curricula. Again, Section B, Standard 3 of this report continues this discussion of faculty governance and leadership.

4. Vigorously pursue marketing and enrollment strategies that complement the institution's ambitious enrollment projections and clearly reflect and implement a well-defined branding of the

institution's mission and vision. Achieving appropriate levels of course and program enrollments will support the institution's educational model of project-based learning and student-to-student collaboration and interaction [2013 CFR 4.6].

SFBU is incredibly proud of the tireless efforts of our marketing and admissions teams to launch a branding and marketing program and increase enrollments in all programs in-line with SFBU's budget projections. SFBU has initiated local advertising campaigns for the first time in the history of the institution, featuring digital and physical advertisements, including a partnership with our local transit agency in Fremont. We have a completely redesigned website, increased staffing in enrollment management and student support services, and are utilizing emerging technologies to track students from application through degree completion via Salesforce. These initiatives are discussed in greater detail in Section B, Standard 3.

5. Put in place a faculty staffing plan that is well articulated with the university's enrollment plan and brings a cadre of highly qualified, demographically and experientially diverse faculty with doctorates from a range of higher education institutions [2013 CFR 4.6].

As mentioned above, all SFBU faculty were either hired or rehired under new contracts beginning in 2024. All full-time faculty at SFBU hold a doctoral degree. Details on SFBU's new faculty body are included in Section B, Standard 3.

6. Develop and implement a comprehensive program of academic support and financial resources to attract and retain domestic students [2013 CFR 4.6].

The recruitment and retention of domestic students is a key component of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. SFBU has not been approved for Title IV federal financial aid at this time; the institution has submitted an application and is awaiting approval from the department of Federal Student Aid. Although SFBU offers an affordable tuition model and seeks to diminish the total cost of attendance (by instituting a no-cost textbook policy in Fall 2025, for example), we recognize that the cost of higher education is still too high. SFBU offers a significant institutional discount. In Spring 2025, 97% of undergraduate students and 87% of graduate students received some sort of institutional scholarship. Of those students, undergraduate

students had an average of 81% of their tuition covered, and graduate students benefited from an average of 78% of their tuition covered by institutional scholarships. Immigration status is not a barrier to SFBU scholarships and all students, regardless of nationality, are considered for the same pool of financial support. SFBU hopes to be permitted to offer federal student aid for domestic students starting in Fall 2027.

Other Topics

Since initial accreditation was achieved in 2020, SFBU has launched an online Graduate Certificate in Business Management in 2022, an in-person Master of Science in Data Science (MSDS) in 2024, and an in-person Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBAn) in 2024. SFBU is currently undergoing a substantive change review of four reduced-credit undergraduate degrees in online and in-person modalities in Computer Science and Business Administration. That review is scheduled for May 29, 2025 and details will be added to this report at that time.

Master of Science in Data Science (MSDS) – New Program (September 2023)

1. The institution will need to provide evidence of how the assessment plan informs program change or improvement, both from learning outcomes assessment and program review. (CFR 2.6, 4.7)

SFBU Action: SFBU is preparing to demonstrate effective assessment in the MSDS program during our 2025-2026 Reaffirmation of Accreditation. The MSDS program launched in Fall 2024 and is pending Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) approval. SFBU's current focus is growing MSDS enrollment and implementing assessment practices in line with this growth.

Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBAn) – New Program (September 2023)

1. Academic Administration should complete its current plan to hire full-time faculty for the proposed program as soon as possible in Year One of the new program to add coherence and focused strategic attention to the program in totality. (CFRs 3.1, 3.6, 3.10)

SFBU Action: SFBU recruited Dr. Johnathan Mun as a full-time Professor in the School of Business. Dr. Mun brings a wealth of experience from his previous role at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, with a research portfolio primarily focused on Integrated Risk Management. His extensive work in this field, along with multiple professional certifications, makes him a valuable resource for instruction and curriculum development in quantitative analysis at SFBU. Additionally, the university appointed Dr. Cassondra Smith, MBA, PMP, as a postdoctoral teaching fellow in Business. Dr. Smith brings extensive industry expertise in fashion marketing and valuable teaching experience from her prior Adjunct Faculty role at Berkeley College, enhancing SFBU's academic offerings, while continuing to draw from a pool of highly qualified part-time faculty with significant industry experience.

2. Library staff should design a more structured, assertive approach to student support particularly for graduate level programs and include assessment protocols of the adequacy of that support. (CFRs 2.13, 3.5)

SFBU Action: SFBU currently has one part-time staff librarian. As enrollments grow, the librarian position will convert to full-time. Our librarian has grown digital and physical resources for SFBU students, including establishing an inter-library loan program, revising and expanding digital resources for computer science students, and hosting numerous training sessions for students during orientation and in select computer science courses. Additional details on library resources are included in Section 4.C.

3. Administration must be ready to provide evidence of co-curricular assessment for all service areas of the University. (CFR 2.11)

SFBU Action: SFBU is compiling evidence of co-curricular assessment for our Reaffirmation of Accreditation visit in 2025-2026. The co-curricular assessment model has been redeveloped according to SFBU's six pillars of the student experience: academics, life literacy, wellness, multiple meaningful relationships, financial support, and career readiness. This recalibration is warranted given recent changes

in leadership, staff, and student support services. SFBU looks forward to demonstrating advancements in co-curricular assessment during our upcoming institutional visit.

4. Program faculty should consider an assessment protocol demonstrating how the optional practicum offering supports or enhances the proposed program. (CFRs 2.10, 4.1, 4.3, 4.5)

SFBU Action: Currently, students enrolled in the CPT course complete an exit interview with the course instructor and submit a final report on their experience. The employer is also surveyed by the institution. Computer science faculty are considering ways to utilize student and employer reflections and feedback in their programmatic assessment practice.

5. Future substantive change proposals should include additional clarity regarding the institution's unique perspective and distinction between "grading" and "assessment," how those activities are implemented, and why they are considered as separate faculty activities. (CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 4.4, 4.7)

SFBU Action: SFBU will take care to address this in future Substantive Change proposals.

SFBU has also submitted substantive changes aimed at establishing Distance Education programming. We received approval to offer distance education in the Master of Business Administration in 2020, the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 2021, the Master of Science in Computer Science in 2022, and the Bachelor of Computer Science in 2025. Comments from the WSCUC Substantive Change Committee are summarized below.

- Ensure students completing online courses have access to university resources in a timely manner.
 - SFBU Action: SFBU implemented the Student Success Hub to ensure students complete online courses and have access to university resources in a timely manner.
- Faculty and staff also play a central role in supporting student progression and require regular meetings each term. This is further explained in Section IV.B.1.a On-going Academic Advising and Academic Support.

- Disseminating findings from the assessment of student learning processes to faculty, staff, and students.

- SFBU Action: SFBU's Institutional Research team presents aggregate findings from academic assessments of student learnings to administration using PowerBI dashboards for faculty and staff on a semesterly basis. The findings are based on faculty evaluations of signature assignments using Canvas. The PowerBI dashboards allow community members across campus to engage with IR for questions and to disaggregate the results by program, student population, cohort, and student demographics. SFBU recently transitioned from LiveText to Canvas in Fall 2024 to streamline assessment scoring. SFBU is also in the process of launching Salesforce as our primary SIS, which allows us to utilize Qualtrics and Tableau to enhance our ability to share data on student learning outcomes throughout the semester, and to enable faster responses to emerging students' needs.

- Appropriately scaling student support resources alongside enrollment growth from online offerings.

- SFBU Action: SFBU has scaled student support resources alongside enrollment growth within our existing online program and in preparation for the online BSCS. The SFBU Student Success Hub provides students with a central location for all student services, both onsite and online, and SFBU staff are available for high touch advising and support services. SFBU has also partnered with AlmaAI as a course development and student support tool. AlmaAI is available to all SFBU faculty for course design and planning. Students can utilize AlmaAI in their courses for assistance with specific assignments or as a Teaching Assistant. One major benefit of this technology is the ability to pinpoint potential learning gaps or areas for improvement while students are still in the course, which allows faculty and students to bring in support resources before final grades are due. See Attachment I.C.1 AlmaAI Course Design.pdf

- Miscellaneous tips on writing proposals for the Substantive Change Committee, including clarifying student headcount and faculty FTE, etc.
 - SFBU Action: This recommendation has been incorporated into our proposals.
- Paying special attention to the percentage of adjunct faculty and ensuring consistency with instruction and student support.
 - SFBU Action: The budget, Attachment V.A.1.e BSCS-O Budget Forecast.pdf, illustrates how SFBU plans to increase full-time and adjunct faculty alongside enrollment growth.

Standard 1 – Defining Institutional Mission and Acting with Integrity

Institutional Purposes

Institutional Mission, Values, and Commitment to Student Success

SFBU is redefining higher education to meet the needs of our students and propel them into fulfilling roles that make a difference in the world. Through affordable tuition and extensive institutional financial support, collaborative learning, and strong student support services, SFBU tears down barriers to undergraduate and graduate degree completion.

The SFBU Mission: San Francisco Bay University provides diverse learners with inclusive, innovative and inspirational education for lifelong personal and professional success.

The SFBU Vision: San Francisco Bay University will set the standard as a national and international model of engaged and transformative higher education in service of the common good.

SFBU Bayhawk Core Values:

- Care for the whole student
- Deliver teaching excellence
- Provide access and inclusion
- Offer affordable Higher Education opportunities
- Reflect the vibrancy of the Silicon Valley

SFBU's mission, rooted in providing high-quality, affordable education, reflects its strong commitment to fostering the success of all students (CFRs 1.1, 1.2). This mission is underpinned by core values of equity, inclusion, and social responsibility. The university actively promotes a culture where every student, regardless of socio-economic background, race, or gender, can thrive academically and personally. This is demonstrated through numerous initiatives, such as the availability of scholarships, inclusive admissions policies and practices, and holistic student support services designed to ensure that marginalized or underserved populations have the tools they need to succeed (CFR1.2).

SFBU's commitment to equity is not merely aspirational but operationalized in its day-to-day functions, ensuring that all students receive equitable opportunities for learning and personal growth. For example, the university emphasizes diversity in its revised core curriculum, promoting cross-cultural understanding and global competencies that are essential in today's interconnected world. SFBU also strives to address the varying needs of students by providing resources tailored to enhance academic performance through multiple meaningful relationships, including counseling, tutoring, mentorship, and career readiness programs. This focus on equity ensures that SFBU does not only admit a diverse student body but also supports these students throughout their academic journey, removing barriers to their success.

[Mission, Vision, Core Values](#)

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

The [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#) reflects ambitious priorities and recognizes the potential for radical and innovative change at SFBU. Students remain at the center of everything we do at SFBU. The priorities moving this institution forward over the next three years focus on building brand recognition while optimizing operational effectiveness to support growth. Additionally, SFBU will develop a holistic approach to serving and supporting all students as we launch an innovative and bold curriculum, including reduced credit undergraduate degrees and in content areas new to the institution. Finally, SFBU plans to cultivate relationships and partnerships of consequence in Silicon Valley and beyond to advance curricular goals and improve the student experience while also raising our profile in the region. Each of these priorities will help grow SFBU enrollment while moving toward a new era of higher education. As of April 2025, 98% of all initiatives are in process and 45% are completed.

The plan articulates six priorities stemming from SFBU's mission, vision, and core values. Those priorities are brand recognition, operational effectiveness, student success, innovation, partnerships, and enrollment.

INCLUSIVE, INNOVATIVE, AND INSPIRATIONAL

A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SAN FRANCISCO BAY UNIVERSITY • 2023-2026



Figure 2: SFBU's strategic priorities

Commitment to Integrity and Transparency in Decision-Making

SFBU's mission and purposes also support a participatory management model that values openness, consultation, and transparency. The university fosters a transparent approach to decision-making, ensuring that key stakeholders—including students, faculty, and community members—are actively involved in institutional processes. This approach upholds the institution's commitment to integrity by providing multiple avenues for input and feedback, ensuring decisions are made collaboratively and in the best interest of the university and its students (CFRs 1.3, 1.4, 1.5).

SFBU ensures transparency by regularly communicating updates on institutional policies, strategic initiatives, and financial planning through open forums and bi-weekly campus newsletters sent to students, faculty, and staff. This commitment to transparency extends to its academic policies, financial aid distribution, and the assessment of student learning outcomes, all of which are conducted in a manner that prioritizes fairness and accountability. The university's governance structure further promotes ethical leadership, ensuring that those in decision-making roles are held accountable for their actions through regular reviews and assessments.

This culture of integrity ensures that SFBU's institutional goals, rooted in promoting equity and student success, are implemented with clarity and fairness. By fostering a transparent and inclusive governance model, SFBU upholds its mission to serve its diverse student population while maintaining the highest standards of ethical responsibility. The SFBU Board of Directors meets quarterly, with committees operating continuously throughout the year. SFBU operates on a semester schedule with two, 16-week semesters in the fall and spring and one accelerated, 8-week summer session. Full-time faculty members work continuously through the calendar year, as do staff. The Faculty Assembly meets at least once per semester and provides an opportunity for adjunct faculty to weigh in on decisions and seek leadership positions, such as participating in the reaffirmation of accreditation process. Staff and all faculty also seek opportunities to connect, reflect, and refine during regular retreats hosted each semester.

SFBU's mission, values, and institutional culture provide the foundation for a commitment to the success of all students. By aligning with WASC's policies on equity and inclusion, the university fosters a learning environment where diversity is embraced, and every student is equipped to thrive. Furthermore, the institution's transparent, open, and consultative approach ensures that its operations remain grounded in integrity, ensuring that SFBU continues to uphold its mission while preparing students for global citizenship and academic excellence. This essay sets the stage for the ongoing exploration of how SFBU integrates equity, inclusion, and transparency across its institutional practices (CFR 1.8).

Leadership

SFBU's leadership team dedicates itself to fulfilling the University's mission of providing inclusive, innovative, and inspirational learning experiences tailored to each individual's needs. This team of qualified, energetic leaders brings decades of experience in higher education and industry from across the country:

- Dr. Nicholas Ladany, President (joined SFBU in June 2023)
- Dr. Heather Herrera, Vice President for Strategy and Innovation (September 2023)
- Dr. Lisa Millora, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (January 2024)
- Dr. Brad Fuster, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (June 2024)
- Brian Kim, J.D., General Counsel (April 2024)
- Dr. Stephanie L. Krusemark, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (March 2024)
- Sheri Boscaro, CPA, Chief Financial Officer (February 2025)
- Jolee David, Vice President for Advancement (March 2025)

The inclusive, student-centered institutional commitments to delivering affordable, innovative, and high-quality education that empowers diverse learners for lifelong success. Guided by its mission, vision, and Bayhawk Core Values, SFBU integrates equity, access, and social responsibility into all aspects of its operations. The university's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan outlines six priorities—brand recognition, operational effectiveness, student success, innovation, partnerships, and enrollment growth—that reflect SFBU's bold direction and rapid progress. Through transparent governance, a participatory leadership model, and strong institutional support services, SFBU fosters a culture of integrity and excellence. A newly established leadership team brings national expertise to advance the mission, while continuous improvement efforts, including curriculum reform and expanded student support, demonstrate the university's deep commitment to transformative education and the success of all students.

Standard 2 – Achieving Educational Objectives and Student Success

In this essay, institutions analyze the effectiveness of their fundamental education activities of teaching and learning, which may be supported by research and scholarship conducted by the faculty. The four subsections are:

(1) Degree programs -- Degree programs clearly define the entry requirements, curriculum content, and expected learning outcomes.

(2) Faculty – Faculty members serve as the primary designers and assessors of students' performance in these programs.

(3) Student learning and performance -- The institution establishes the expected levels of achievement within each degree program and provides evidence of achieved outcomes

(4) Student support -- The institution describes the appropriate array of support services and co-curricular programs to facilitate the goals of the degrees and assesses the effectiveness of these programs and services.

Degree Programs

San Francisco Bay University (SFBU) offers undergraduate and graduate programs in alignment with our mission to provide inclusive, innovative, and inspirational education for lifelong personal and professional success. The university's degree programs are designed to equip students with both the technical knowledge and practical skills required to thrive in competitive markets and a rapidly changing world. SFBU offers business degrees including the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA), and a fully online Graduate Certificate in Management. Degree programs in computer science and engineering include the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS), Master of Science in Computer Science (MSCS), Master of Science in Data Science (MSDS), and the Master of Science in Electrical Engineering.

Each of these degree programs is designed with clear entry requirements, curriculum content, and expected learning outcomes that align with the institution's educational objectives. [CFR 2.1] The MSCS program, for example, focuses on data science, software engineering, and machine learning, while the MSEE program provides students with advanced knowledge in embedded systems and the Internet of

Things (IoT). These programs not only fulfill the university's mission but are also directly aligned with the core competencies as outlined in the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), which include written and oral communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and specialized knowledge in the field of study.

By mapping Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) to institutional goals and ensuring that students progress from introductory to mastery levels through the curriculum, SFBU ensures that its degree programs remain relevant to both the needs of students and industry standards. [CFR 2.2] This structure promotes academic rigor while simultaneously providing students with real-world applications to the skills they are developing, ensuring that they are well-prepared to meet future career challenges.

Faculty Development & Delegated Leadership

The institutional and leadership changes at SFBU in the past two years have also brought about a significant reshaping of the SFBU Faculty. In June 2024, a new Provost was appointed with the charge of redefining academic operations, flattening the extant "School/Dean" structure, and creating new faculty expectations to align with emerging teaching frameworks from SFBU's Center for Empowerment and Pedagogical Innovation (CEPI). Prior to Fall 2024, SFBU had four long-serving full-time faculty with an average compensation of about \$75,000. The Faculty was overseen by the Dean of the School of Engineering and the Dean of the School of Business. SFBU also had a pool of adjunct faculty to meet the demands of each semester.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the School of Engineering and School of Business were reformed into a department structure. The Dean of the School of Business retired and the Dean of Engineering competed for and won a national search to serve SFBU in the newly created role of Associate Provost. National searches were launched for teaching Faculty to serve in the role of founding chair for the Department of Business and the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Upon completion of those searches, additional national searches were completed for Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows in each department. Additionally, searches for founding a chair and Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow in Psychology

were also completed. Faculty compensation is approximately \$90,000 for the Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow and \$115,000 for Faculty. Commensurately, adjunct compensation was also increased and regional searches were conducted to broaden the talent pool. SFBU currently has a student-faculty ratio of 10 to 1 for undergraduate students and 26 to 1 for graduate students. All in-person classes are capped at 20 students per section.

As a long-standing practice, SFBU does not use the traditional faculty rank and tenure system. All faculty are evaluated through the performance evaluation process conducted by HR, with adjunct faculty completing a less-rigorous process aimed at tracking accomplishments and connecting with professional development opportunities. Course evaluation data is reviewed by the Provost each semester, classroom observations of adjuncts are conducted by the Chair and Chief Learning Officer, and observations of full-time faculty are also conducted by peers, the Chief Learning Officer, and the Provost. Additionally, student-led feedback focus groups are conducted to gain additional insights into curricular relevancy, instructor efficacy, and the general student experience. This data is shared with the Provost and Chair as appropriate and considered when making course assignments and personnel decisions.

Once the Provost had assembled the core team of faculty, an offsite retreat was held on October 22, 2024 specifically to address the mechanics of shared governance. The Faculty Handbook, By-Laws, and Faculty Assembly structure were all examined and redrafted by the newly hired team. Following the faculty retreat, a new draft of the Faculty Handbook was distributed to the Faculty Assembly, voted upon and unanimously approved on January 17, 2025. This meeting of the Faculty assembly also saw the election of new officers of the Faculty Assembly.

Overarchingly, the Faculty at SFBU favor lean, nimble, and informal governance structures over the typically burdensome, slow-moving, and highly bureaucratic committee structures. With the core team of faculty in place and the newly refined shared governance structure functioning, the faculty and staff in Academic Affairs met at another offsite retreat on May 2, 2025 to craft the Academic Plan for the next four years. In the Preface to the Academic Plan, the following emblematic statement was made with respect to shared governance:

SFBU has intentionally lean governance structures in the Faculty Assembly, as outlined in the Faculty Handbook. We believe that many institutions in higher education are failing because of an overly cumbersome system of faculty governance, leading to institutional inertia and resistance to change. In academic affairs, we believe in transparency and distributed leadership. Ideas about curriculum, policy, and procedure freely and regularly flow between faculty and administration, and once decisions are made, we can quickly execute them; e.g. Free textbooks. SFBU is a speedboat in a sea full of large cargo ships that are unable to change course.

Faculty involvement in decision-making was cited as an area to address in SFBU's 2020 SAV2, with the recommendation of the addition of standing committee structures. SFBU carefully considered and rejected this recommendation as antithetical to the ethos of our institution. Our lean governance structures positioned SFBU to be one of the first institutions in the United States to offer a class in Blockchain. SFBU was one of the first institutions to submit Substantive Change requests to WSCUC for 90-credit baccalaureate programs. SFBU is a national leader with respect to the thoughtful integration of generative AI and has a full-time AI Strategist on staff. SFBU continues to move fast and shape the higher education landscape as a challenger brand, aiming to deliver best-in-class learning experiences to students. As higher education institutions continue to sputter, consolidate, or fail, there is growing evidence pointing to the traditional change resistance inherent in faculty committee structures, and shared governance in general.

SFBU's faculty members are integral to the institution's commitment to educational excellence. Faculty lead the development of curriculum, assess student performance through signature assignments and capstone projects, and maintain connections with leading industry experts to ensure degree relevance. Faculty members are responsible for course delivery and for the development and continuous refinement of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). They are actively involved in the creation of learning assessments, ensuring that student outcomes align with the university's mission and the evolving demands of the job market.

Faculty-led assessment of student learning at the institution includes regular assessments of student work, which are aligned with the institution's assessment rubrics. For example, MSCS faculty assess students' written and oral communication skills, as well as their technical problem-solving and analytical abilities through a variety of signature assignments and capstone projects. These assignments are assessed using modified [AAC&U VALUE rubrics](#), ensuring that the faculty's evaluations are aligned with established academic standards and institutional expectations.

Faculty involvement in curriculum development is another area where their impact is evident. Faculty members are actively involved in curriculum mapping, which ensures that courses progressively build upon foundational knowledge and lead students to achieve mastery-level outcomes. Additionally, faculty regularly update course content to incorporate new industry trends and technological advancements, keeping the curriculum current and relevant.

Support Services and Co-Curricular Programs

San Francisco Bay University achieves its educational and student success objectives through the core functions of teaching and learning, and through support for students' learning, scholarship, and creative activity. By explicitly highlighting its dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the institution ensures that initiatives cater to the needs of all students. Furthermore, the use of valid and reliable evidence to evaluate learning outcomes reflects the institution's commitment to continuous improvement and accountability, ensuring that core functions are performed effectively and contribute to meaningful student success.

Student Success is one of the six pillars of San Francisco Bay University's strategic plan. The main goal is to support students during their academic and overall enrollment journey. This is accomplished through our Student Success Hub both as a physical space and an offering of services to support students' physical, spiritual, emotional, financial, and nutritional needs, to radically welcome their whole selves. By offering a collective of student success professionals and topical areas of support in academic advising,

accessibility and disability services, career services, financial aid, health and wellness, residential life, student life, and student success, we provide a wraparound approach (CFR 2.9, 2.10).

Student Success and Cohort Services

Student Success and Cohort Services are dedicated to fostering an environment where students can thrive academically, personally, and professionally. These services are designed to provide comprehensive support tailored to the unique needs of each student, ensuring that they have the resources and guidance necessary to achieve their educational and career goals. Together, Student Success and Cohort Services create a holistic support system that addresses the diverse needs of students, fostering an inclusive and empowering educational environment.

Academic Advising

At SFBU, we want students to foster and be guided by multiple meaningful relationships. Faculty provide a cornerstone of support for students as they navigate their academic journey and work collaboratively with staff Student Success Counselors to ensure students understand the requirements of their degree programs and have access to the invaluable support resources articulated in this section. Students are expected to formally meet with a full-time faculty member or their assigned Student Success Counselor at least once per semester to discuss current and planned academic work, student wellbeing, and more. Student Success Counselors offer academic and personal counseling to support all students' success and assist in accessing University resources. Students are encouraged to meet with faculty more frequently throughout the academic year to engage in ancillary academic and career-planning discussions.

Academic Support Specialists

In addition to Academic Advisors, SFBU also employs two Academic Support Specialists in Mathematics and English. SFBU is also seeking a third specialist with expertise in Computer Science. Academic Support Specialists serve as resources for students and for faculty with students who may be struggling with aspects of their coursework. These specialists provide 1:1 support to students on campus and virtually. They attend classes, host events, and dialogue with faculty on the needs of students.

Accessibility and Disability Services

At SFBU, we are committed to providing an inclusive and accessible learning environment for all students. Our Accessibility and Disability Office is dedicated to championing the needs of students with disabilities by ensuring equal access to academic programs, services, and facilities. Services offered are:

- Accommodations Coordination: We work with eligible students to determine and implement appropriate accommodations based on individual needs. This may include extended time for exams, note-taking assistance, accessible formats for course materials, and more.
- Accessibility Resources: We provide accessible campus transportation, priority registration, and assistive technology to enhance academic participation and student life.
- Advocacy and Support: We advocate for students with disabilities, collaborating with faculty and staff to promote awareness and facilitate reasonable accommodations by federal and state laws.
- Educational Workshops: We offer workshops and training sessions on disability-related topics to promote understanding and support within the University community.

Career Services

SFBU Career Services offers San Francisco Bay University students career-related resources through seminars, speaker series, and one-on-one counseling. The following major services are offered by Career Services:

- **Job Skills Seminars**: These seminars are conducted every semester to help students prepare for the workplace.
- **Job Fairs**: These fairs are held every semester for students to interact and network with potential employers.
- **Resume Preparation**: Career Center computers have information and numerous templates on resume preparation and cover letters. Students can research career-related articles.
- **Personalized Career Counseling**: Students can contact designated counselor/s for one-on-one career counseling. Students are highly encouraged to use this service.

- Job Postings/Events: Students can access the latest job postings on SFBU's Handshake page.

Information on external job fairs and other career-related events is posted on Handshake.

Health and Wellness

SFBU prioritizes wellness holistically, paying equal attention to students' physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health. As one of the six pillars of the student experience, wellness is central to our ultimate goal of graduating mature, responsible and well-adjusted leaders. The mission of Health and Wellness is to empower students to take charge of their health and well-being by providing a supportive environment and the necessary tools to thrive academically, socially, and personally. We are committed to fostering a culture of wellness that promotes resilience, self-care, and lifelong healthy habits.

Our University's Health and Wellness Program is dedicated to promoting our students' physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Our comprehensive approach ensures that students can access resources and support to maintain a healthy lifestyle throughout their academic journey.

Services Offered:

- Counseling Services: Licensed therapists provide unlimited individual and group counseling to support mental health, manage stress, and address personal challenges.
- Wellness Workshops: Regular workshops and seminars covering topics such as stress management, mindfulness, sleep hygiene, and substance abuse prevention.
- Crisis Intervention: Immediate support and resources are available for students experiencing emergencies or crises.

Residential Life

San Francisco Bay University offers non-traditional University campus housing for both undergraduate and graduate students, providing a unique housing experience where living on campus is an important part of the student's developmental journey. Residential Life is at the heart of the SFBU community, offering more than just a place to stay—it serves as the core foundation where residents can thrive academically and personally.

Our distinctive campus housing at SFBU is designed not only to offer a real-life condo-style living experience, but also to foster a sense of community where residents can find opportunities to create meaningful connections with peers, participate in programming activities, and be engaged in a living and learning environment.

Start Up Scholars

Inaugurated in 2024 as an outgrowth of the new Strategic Plan, the Startup Scholars program is a University-led initiative housed in Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Each Start Up Scholar is supported with free tuition, free housing, ample food allowance, a laptop computer, and free summer bridge program. Each Start Up Scholar receives \$10,000 to support their passion project which must lead to a positive social impact.

The Startup Scholars program focuses on supporting domestic, undergraduate, first-year, and first-generation students to carry out a passion project while pursuing their University degree.

The intent of the Startup Scholars program is to ensure adequate resources and support are provided so that first-generation scholars may completely focus on their education with no additional barriers to success. We engage our scholars in all SFBU has to offer, and we achieve this goal by taking a multifaceted approach to providing students with the necessary resources to graduate.

Beyond scholarship funding, the program resources include advising, tutoring services, career services, counseling, and mentorship led by staff, faculty, and President Ladany that take an active role in activities and student development. Startup Scholars aims to create a community of learners, bringing their cultural and community wealth (Yosso, 2005¹) to higher education. The program also empowers scholars to bring together community-led change to advance economic and social mobility in the Bay Area.

Student Life

Student Life at SFBU is vibrant. We offer student government, student clubs, events, and activities to support life outside of the classroom. The student government was revamped by SFBU's Dean of Students, an election was held, and the new student leaders were announced in Spring 2025. These leaders

¹ Yosso*, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race ethnicity and education*, 8(1), 69-91.

have already been active in creating opportunities for students, providing feedback on initiatives to faculty and staff, and participating in the creation of the institutional report for WSCUC.

In addition to the student government, SFBU's small student body is extremely excited to offer 24 student-led clubs in research, wellness, public speaking, crafting, and more. Our students are active, driven, and social, and the student clubs are one avenue for them to bring their interests and ideas to life at SFBU. All student clubs have a faculty or staff advisor and clubs are open to all SFBU community members. These groups are an excellent way for students to meet new people and for SFBU employees to connect with the students we serve every day.

Standard 3 – Assuring Resources and Organizational Structures

In this essay, institutions document their ability to provide sufficient resources and effective decision-making processes to assure that degree programs and other institutional operations are appropriately resourced. The essay focuses on resources and management in three subsections:

(1) Faculty, Staff and Administrators -- *The institution hires, employs, and supports sufficient, qualified personnel.*

(2) Fiscal, Physical, Technology, and Information Resources –

a) *The institution plans, budgets, and allocates resources to support the work of faculty, staff, administrators, and students.*

b) *In alignment with its mission, the institution ensures its facilities are suitable and adequate to meet the needs of its community.*

(3) Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes -- *An independent and qualified board is responsible for oversight of the institution. Decision-making is clearly defined and based on data.*

Strategic Plan: A Roadmap for Reinvention

This report identifies all the ways that SFBU is affecting an institutional reboot—a transformational institutional pivot leaving no part of the institution unchanged. Although SFBU is 40 years old, in this moment of reinvention it is best understood as a startup. The SFBU 3-year strategic plan *Inclusive, Innovative, and Inspirational* reflects our focus on executing this pivot. The strategic plan emphasizes creation and implementation of foundational plans for enrollment, brand, student success, external partnerships, and operational effectiveness—all enabled by a relentless commitment to serve students, by core values anchored by holistic care for students, and by a wholehearted embrace of innovation to improve on the traditional practices, and remove common barriers found in higher education.

Inclusive, Innovative, and Inspirational articulates a roadmap for SFBU to build the operational capabilities and institutional culture required to deliver on its ambitious vision of setting “the standard as a national and international model of engaged and transformative higher education in service of the common good.” The roadmap leads to a future where SFBU is a challenger brand that has built every part

of its operations around centering students, doing what is *proven to work*, unhindered by the inertia of habit and the “the way we’ve always done things” in higher ed.

This context has some meaningful implications for SFBU’s self-study, especially with respect to resources and resource allocation. Our approach to self-study is necessarily framed as an inquiry into whether SFBU is *on track* to operationalize our strategic plan and establish a sustainable business model for our reimagined program of high-quality instruction and student services. SFBU is building (or re-building) significant portions of its academic and administrative operations from the ground up, and preparing for a future enrollment of 1,400 – 1,700 students. We are working quickly and methodically to operationalize the plan, but at this stage of transformation some areas, understandably, remain in states of transition and not yet fully mature. Current deficits in operating revenues versus operating expenses, an extremely low student-staff ratio, and substantial expenditures on contracted professional services for planning and capacity building, all reflect SFBU’s commitment to using its investment portfolio to establish program capacity for the enrollment we are growing toward—so that the program, policy, and personnel are in place to deliver on our educational mission as our enrollment grows. [CFR 3.1, 3.4] In the context of a startup, we evaluate financial success by our ability to expand our capacity for future revenue generation. We measure progress against a multi-year plan for a sustainable business model, one that aligns our investments with our core mission of providing affordable tuition through substantial institutional financial support. [CFR 3.4]

Operationalizing and integrating the strategic plan

SFBU has a strong framework in place to operationalize *Inclusive, Innovative, and Inspirational* and integrate it with other institutional planning and resource allocation. [CFR 3.4] Each area of strategic focus includes several specific initiatives, each of which has one or more completion metrics (i.e., what does success look like, within the 3-year plan scope) and an executive champion who is responsible for driving progress on that initiative. The VP of Strategy & Innovation is charged with monitoring progress; she meets quarterly with the executive champions to review the status of each initiative and metrics, and

provides regular updates to the president's cabinet and the Board of Directors. [CFR 3.9, 3.10] This structure promotes transparency and accountability for demonstrable progress and measurable results. [CFR 3.9, 3.10, 3.11]

Two major milestones achieved in the first six months of *Inclusive, Innovative, and Inspirational*—and critical enablers for operationalizing the rest of the strategic plan—were the creation of a strategic financial model and development of a strategic enrollment plan. SFBU recognized that it did not have effective financial planning tools in place for scenario modeling to support informed decision-making. In order to meet its ambitious commitments to accessible, affordable, and quality education for all, SFBU identified the need for an advanced planning model to ensure a responsible pathway to success. SFBU engaged Huron Consulting to assist with building an interdependent strategic financial model and enrollment plan to support a financially sustainable and realistic plan for growing SFBU's enrollment in a way that would provide the academic and student service program needed for overall success. [3.4, 3.5, 3.11]

The strategic financial model is a comprehensive financial decision support tool that provides both balance sheet and income statement considerations, including operating revenues and expenses, investment earnings and payouts, reserve ratios, and capital asset acquisitions and disposals. The primary engine of the model is detailed enrollment and net tuition revenue projections (reflecting both the recruitment funnel, persistence/graduation rates, and assumptions regarding institutional aid and potential future Title IV financial aid). The enrollment projections drive not only net student revenues, but also faculty and staff FTE needs, related program expenses, and requirements for space utilization. It allows fine-tuning of most variables for each year of the projection (over 300 inputs in total), enabling the model to reflect a realistic mix of gradual, compounding, and stair-step type rates of change across various drivers of revenue and expense as SFBU makes its transformational pivot. The Huron financial modeling team worked closely with key SFBU leadership—including the President, VP of Enrollment & Student Affairs (EMSA), Chief Operating Officer (COO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), VP for Strategy &

Innovation, and Provost—as well as the Huron enrollment planning team, to develop, validate, and iterate the model design and variable inputs.

The result is a financial model that has real utility in strategic SFBU decision-making [CFR 3.10, 3.11]. The model was used in Spring 2024 to test a variety of scenarios around graduate and undergraduate enrollment, pricing and tuition discounts; average course section size; staff and program expense growth; and fundraising capabilities. The scenario testing revealed key parameters for SFBU’s best pathways to mission-aligned financial sustainability within five years: total enrollment of 1400 – 1700 FTE, weighted about 55-60% graduate to 40-45% undergrad, with differential graduate program pricing helping to subsidize an exceptional commitment to undergraduate affordability. [CFR 3.4] These key findings, and a summary of the modeling work that informed them, were shared with the Board of Directors in a joint meeting of the Finance Committee and Academic Affairs Committee [CFR 3.7].

Unlike a traditional budget limited to department-level plans, our consolidated, high-level strategic financial model operates at the institution-level, incorporating interdependent key variables that can be adjusted to optimize outcomes aligned with SFBU’s mission. It is a critical tool that provides management with an objective framework for evaluating mission-driven decisions focused on achieving a financially sustainable model. [CFR 3.10] Scenario modeling can be performed considering key items such as enrollment, tuition, financial aid, etc. that would then drive and influence facility needs, faculty/staff growth, fundraising efforts, etc. Results of analysis can guide planning for the pacing of expenditures and timing of cash outlays to invest responsibly in faculty and staff growth, facilities, student housing, and other key areas needed to successfully support the projected enrollment. [CFR 3.4] The framework provides ongoing assessment metrics—a financial yardstick—for evaluating whether the institution is on track to achieve the goal of reaching an operating surplus by 2029, and facilitating course-correction as needed. [CFR 3.10, 3.11] The model is “owned” by the CFO, who is charged with a semi-annual model refresh, or more frequent updates depending on the magnitude of organizational changes that could impact the model. The model is evaluated regularly with actuals and near-term forecasts in collaboration

with the VP EMSA and other senior colleagues, and providing monitoring reports to the president's cabinet and Board of Directors. [CFR 3.10, 3.11]

The strategic financial model and enrollment plan together form an essential planning foundation that informs other planning work required to operationalize *Inclusive, Innovative, and Inspirational*. [CFR 3.4, 3.11] Key constituents provided essential inputs—projected enrollment, timeline, and financial capacity—to SFBU's conceptual campus master planning in Spring 2024. SFBU engaged higher ed design firm AC Martin to develop options for expanding the academic, student service, and administrative physical plant through renovation of university-owned buildings. The strategic enrollment plan has already resulted in assisting leadership in making operational decisions - such as directly leading to SFBU's decision in Spring 2024 to initiate planning for a three-year, 90-credit bachelor's degree offering, as a key differentiator and a mission-aligned approach to enable students to complete their degree and get into the workforce faster and at lower cost. An academic growth strategy is also in development, as the Provost leads institutional evaluation of what combination of academic offerings to add and in what order. The financial model and the conceptual campus master plan also offered critical guidance about the range of ongoing and capital project fundraising that are likely to be needed, providing important parameters for planning now underway to establish a university advancement function. [CFR 3.4, 3.10, 3.11]

The use of the model to assist in the optimal integration and sequencing of these planning efforts demonstrates clearly that SFBU's leadership is committed to using a thoughtful, methodical, data-informed approach to executing a transformational institutional pivot. [CFR 3.4, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11]

Building Capacity with Financial Sustainability

San Francisco Bay University has an ambitious but realistic five-year plan to achieve financial sustainability. SFBU's leadership is well aware that its current *operating* deficits (operating revenues less operating expenses) are not sustainable, nor are they meant to be a long-term strategy. Operating deficits were (\$9.8M) in 2023, (\$11.3M) in 2024, and (\$14.9M) projected for 2025 — the short-term *operating* deficits reflect heavy investment in building SFBU's capacity to recruit and serve a growing student body,

ranging from one-time expenses for consulting and interim staffing (about \$4.5M of the \$6.5M professional fees budget), to expanding staff headcount from 44 to 76 in calendar 2024 as we staff up in areas such as enrollment management, full-time faculty, student affairs, academic support, campus operations, institutional effectiveness, compliance and risk management, and advancement. [CFR 3.4]

We think it's important to note that the deficits above are based only on operating revenues and operating expenses. They exclude any gains/losses generated from SFBU's overall unrestricted investment portfolio (which at 12/31/2024 totaled \$275M.) Total investment gains are substantial and are not included in those numbers above- providing additional income of \$48M for 2023 and \$38M in 2024. When those gains are included in the financial analysis, the overall "bottom line" (which is the overall change in net assets taking into consideration operating income, operating expenses, and all investment gains and losses) reflects a more positive picture - instead of the operating deficits noted above, the overall results were actually income of \$41.8M in 2023 and income of \$17.2M in 2024. For 2025, a very conservative estimate of investment returns was projected (SFBU used 6% for 2025 investment gains as compared to actual returns in 2023 of 11% and 2024 of 15%). With this conservative estimate, the bottom line is projected to be a loss of \$9.5M.

The capacity building phase of the five-year plan is being subsidized by SFBU's robust balance sheet. Net assets grew from \$239.5M at 12/31/2019 to \$304.9M at 12/31/2023; within that, unrestricted cash and investments grew from \$186.7M at 12/31/2019 to \$263M at 12/31/2023. [CFR 3.5] SFBU's investment pool is entirely unrestricted; it is neither endowed nor quasi-endowed, and the board retains complete flexibility in how these assets are deployed for current and long-term purposes. In 2024, The board adopted an investment policy and spending rule that established an annual investment pool payout for operations (4.3% of a 12 trailing quarter average of its investment portfolio), and the board is prepared to withdraw additional amounts over the next few years to assure sufficient cash flow for operations and capital expenses. [CFR 3.4, 3.5, 3.7]

SFBU took a number of major steps in 2023 and 2024 to establish critical infrastructure for the planned growth in enrollment and programs:

Title IV and Cal Grant Eligibility. SFBU is not (yet) eligible for federal Title IV financial aid, and is therefore also ineligible to participate in the Cal Grant state program (for which Title IV eligibility is prerequisite). This constrains SFBU's ability to recruit and enroll domestic students, and puts the full burden on SFBU to help students afford their cost of education through institutional aid. In Fall 2023, SFBU engaged Huron Consulting] to assist in preparing the institution's application to the Title IV program; this was submitted in April 2024. Based on Department of Education guidance that application backlogs are up to three years, the SFBU financial plan assumes Title IV and Cal Grant eligibility will begin Fall 2027. [CFR 3.4, 3.5]

Administrative information management platforms. In 2023, SFBU initiated a cascading two-year plan for implementing major new platforms, replacing antiquated systems with an integrated set of powerful, modern information systems. [CFR 3.6]

- In 2024, SFBU replaced QuickBooks with Sage Intacct to be the university's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software. Sage Intacct is a powerful, cloud-based financial management and accounting software that is designed to streamline and enhance financial operations. Sage Intacct's robust software and dimensional chart of accounts has enabled SFBU to adopt fund accounting (the standard in higher ed) and provide additional management reporting for regular budget to actual analysis. In addition, SFBU implemented Sage Intact Planning (SIP), a cloud-based planning tool, designed to simplify financial planning, by seamlessly integrating with Sage Intacct. SIP helps businesses and finance teams make better, faster, and strategic decisions. Both Sage Intacct and SIP will support the more complex accounting, budgeting, and multi-level management financial reporting SFBU will require to manage a larger and more financially complex organization with accountability and transparency. SFBU had a successful go-live April

1, 2024, and utilized a year of hypercare support to develop and roll out automated financial dashboards, self-service financial reports for managers, and maintain the 2025 budget.

- Salesforce is the new student information system (SIS) and customer relationship management (CRM) platform. Salesforce gives SFBU the ability to manage the entire student lifecycle from admissions to alumni engagement. The Recruitment & Admissions and Marketing Cloud modules launched first, in August 2024, reflecting the urgency of replacing a cumbersome and limited legacy system for enrollment funnel management. This was followed in Spring 2025 by the Student Success module, SIS module, and finally the Alumni & Advancement module. Salesforce will be our end-to-end student lifecycle enterprise system, from inquiry-to-alumni, all student data will be housed under one integrated umbrella.
- Regent Education will provide SFBU's first-ever financial aid management system, an essential tool as SFBU prepares to add Title IV and Cal Grant aid sources, to use financial aid in a more targeted way to meet our enrollment and affordability goals, and to efficiently manage a more complex financial aid operation for a growing student body. Regent integrates natively with Salesforce, ensuring a seamless flow of student aid and payment information among the Regent FA system, Salesforce student accounts, and Sage Intacct general ledger and financial reporting. Implementation is scheduled to begin as soon as the Salesforce SIS is live.

These new systems join earlier major implementations: Canvas was adopted in 2023 as the learning management system, and Trinet was adopted in 2024 as the university's Professional Employer Organization (PEO) and HR/benefits information system. Smaller upgrades have also been made, for example, through the integration of the Qwikly attendance platform with Canvas in January 2025. This systematic modernization of information platforms reflects the understanding by SFBU's board and leadership that information—timely, accurate, reliable, accessible—is absolutely essential to successful execution of SFBU's strategic plan. [CFR 3.6]

Faculty, Staff, Leadership Capacity

The strategic financial plan includes projections for our faculty, staff, and administration to grow as our enrollment does. Over the past two years, SFBU has substantially restructured our administration and key staff offices, rebuilding around our values of innovation and relentless commitment to students. Key leadership hires include the President (June 2023), a new cabinet position VP for Strategy & Innovation (September 2023), Provost and VP of Academic Affairs (June 2024), VP of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (March 2024), VP and Chief Operating Officer (January 2024), General Counsel and Chief of Staff (April 2024), Chief Financial Officer (February 2025), and VP for Advancement (March 2025). [CFR 3.1, 3.4, 3.9]. This leadership team is exceptionally well qualified to lead an institution committed to educational attainment for communities not historically well-served by higher education.

SFBU has prioritized reorganizing and expanding staff offices that are critical to growing enrollment and establishing the foundations of our new core curriculum and holistic student services. We have restructured the enrollment team and modernized our recruitment capabilities to support a healthy mix of domestic, international, undergraduate, and graduate students. [CFR 3.1, 3.4] Student life and success services have been transformed, with new leadership roles building out new and expanded programming in student success, wellness, career services, and residence life. [CFR 3.1] Our commitment to innovation and continuous improvement in teaching and learning is visible in the new Center for Empowerment and Pedagogical Innovation, focused on ensuring every SFBU faculty members is well versed in effective and inclusive pedagogy; a new Assessment and Accreditation office dedicated to evaluating the effectiveness of our academic program; and professionalization of our Institutional Research office. [CFR 3.1, 3.3, 3.4] A new team of Salesforce developers are part of the Strategy & Innovation division (along with Institutional Research), ensuring that our new CRM/SIS platform is administered with a strategic and mission orientation: optimized not only to manage information flow and business processes, but to generate performance analytics enabling real-time monitoring and data-rich evaluation of our programs and practices to foster continuous improvement. [CFR 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.10]

In Fall 2024 we undertook a comprehensive revitalization of our faculty. The *number* of faculty FTE is driven by enrollment, based on our target (established in 2023) of keeping course sections at or below 20 students. [CFR 3.1, 3.2] Our new core curriculum and commitment to leading practices in teaching excellence called for a fresh approach to hiring, training, and evaluating a highly qualified corps of instructors committed to ongoing development of their pedagogical skills. [CFR 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4] Accordingly, in 2024, the Provost took a fresh-start approach to reimagining the work of faculty and the organizational structure within Academic Affairs. The two legacy Dean positions were eliminated, as was the School of Business and School of Engineering structures. The Decanal duties were divided between a New Associate Provost position, and new Faculty Chair positions. The Provost also created full-time Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow positions to attract early-career faculty who were passionate about teaching.

With no incumbency permitted, national searches were launched for Professors and Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows, seeking highly-qualified and credentialed empathetic teachers holding doctorates in their discipline. The Provost and Chief Learning Officer sought faculty who were willing to embrace SFBU's newly-adopted PERS model of instruction, with initial training and ongoing professional development provided through CEPI. All extant full-time and part-time faculty were invited to participate in the application process.

This period of growth has been taken due to our need to 'staff up' at the beginning of our enrollment growth so that programs and services are student-ready. For example, SFBU has hired both a full-time Professor of Psychology (to start August 2025) and a Postdoctoral Fellow in Psychology (started August 2024) to develop a new psychology department for both undergraduate and graduate students, with desired launch dates of Fall 2027 (pending WSCUC approval). Having established faculty in place to develop the curriculum, syllabi, and student experience is a purposeful investment made by the institution. Our strategic financial plan calls for the pace of staffing growth to slow as we reach the minimum critical

mass of staff to deliver core services to a high standard, even as enrollment growth accelerates. Over time, our student-staff ratio will moderate to a more sustainable level. [CFR 3.1, 3.4]

Managing for Sustainable Success

As SFBU grows, we leverage our decision-making structures and integrated planning to make data-informed decisions, to manage risk, and to steward the mission and resources of the institution.

Decision-making structures. The Board of Directors exercises governance oversight both as a body and through its committees. [CFR 3.7] The Board meets four times per year—twice in person, and twice virtually. For decisions that can’t wait until the next regular meeting, the board employs a variety of tools, including limited delegation of authority to a committee to make a specific decision, as well as resolutions adopted by unanimous written consent. Board committees (Finance and Investment, Audit, Executive Compensation and Housing, Academic Affairs, and Governance) meet virtually, as frequently as their current slate of issues requires. [CFR 3.7, 3.9, 3.11]

The Board shares SFBU’s institutional commitment to ongoing learning and adoption of leading practices. The Board has engaged in self-evaluation facilitated by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), had AGB-facilitated reflection and education, and engaged Huron to strengthen the quality of financial reporting to the Board and support the Board’s development in financial oversight and stewardship. [CFR 3.7, 3.9] SFBU has worked to diversify its Board and recruit new members with relevant expertise and industry connections; today the Board includes nine members with a range of industry, education, and technological experience. [CFR 3.8, 3.9]

The Board delegates authority—through its bylaws, committee charters, resolutions, and policies—to conduct the business of the university. Primary responsibility and authority for acting on behalf of the University is delegated to the President, with certain authorities also delegated to the CFO and/or COO. The President acts with the counsel of the President’s Cabinet—the Vice Presidents and “Chief” officers, in whom the President vests certain authorities for the day-to-day management of the university within their spheres of responsibility. The President’s Cabinet meets weekly to coordinate without the President

and biweekly with the President to engage in strategic planning, information sharing, and consultation. Each member meets individually with the President weekly. The President additionally receives counsel from the Leadership Council, a broader group of cabinet and department leaders who provide input and perspective from roles at the front line. The Faculty Assembly meets at least once per semester, or more frequently if needed. The Faculty Assembly can also move matters of curriculum or other academic matters within their purview forward through asynchronous email polls. In collaboration with Provost's Office, CEPI also regularly engages the Faculty, hosting workshops, seminars, and discussions, providing broad and frequent feedback channels.] [CFR 3.9, 3.11]

Enterprise Risk Management. As the institution grows, SFBU has prioritized understanding, and effective management of risk and compliance. In 2024, SFBU engaged Huron Consulting to complete an enterprise risk assessment that engaged the president, cabinet, key staff, and select board members. This exercise addressed financial, governance, legal/regulatory compliance, data security and privacy, operational effectiveness, reputational, safety, mental health, and other areas of potential risk. The findings were shared with the cabinet and with the Board. Each cabinet member has established risk mitigation plans for risks in their areas of responsibility. [CFR 3.11] The university also employs a General Counsel and established in the staffing plan, new leadership roles with specific responsibility for student grievance issues; Compliance and Risk Management; and Safety, Emergency Management, and Clery. An Associate Director of Title IX and Equity was hired in 2024. Inclusion of these leadership roles in SFBU's new organizational structure and staffing reflects our institutional commitment to proactively identifying and mitigating risk for our students, employees, and the institution. [CFR 3.1, 3.9, 3.11]

Hiring and training: SFBU understands that delivering excellence for our students requires hiring, training, developing, and retaining quality employees. Commitment to employee quality has been critical to our process of institutional transformation. Overhauling our Human Resources area was an early focus area in 2024 for our COO. We hired new HR leadership and staff; established a detailed staff classification and compensation framework to guide position leveling and salary ranges; and created a

standard process that engages HR as a key partner to hiring managers for creating position descriptions, setting compensation ranges, ensuring budget availability, recruiting candidates, and hiring new employees. [CFR 3.2] We have made strategic use of outsourced interim staff in key roles (e.g., finance, HR, marketing) to ensure business continuity, to lead periods of transition and evaluate future needs, and to ensure that we could afford to let searches take as long as necessary to fill key roles with exceptionally qualified people. [CFR 3.1] A new, standardized onboarding process helps ensure new employees get a strong start and consistently have access to information and resources they need, and new online portals for staff, faculty, and students created easy one-stop access to frequently used references, resources, and services. [CFR 3.2, 3.6] Staff and faculty handbooks were reviewed and combined to ensure consistent policies and processes. We established universal and role-specific training requirements—for new and continuing employees—and employee training completion is documented in an HR-managed system. [CFR 3.3]

Financial Oversight and Internal Controls. SFBU has established robust financial oversight policies and procedures along with strong internal controls, demonstrated by the auditor's issuance of unqualified audit opinions since (), meaning clean audit reports with no material misstatements or concerns identified. . [CFR 3.5] We continue to strengthen financial oversight and internal controls. In 2024, we began a comprehensive review and refresh of the accounting handbook with an aim of not only strengthening control and oversight, but also streamlining policies and procedures to improve compliance through greater transparency and ease of use. Updated policies and procedures for procurement, travel and business expense, accounts payable, internal controls and delegation of authority, and budget were drafted; reviewed by general counsel, President Ladany, and by an assurance team at Moss Adams (the firm that conducts SFBU's annual financial audit); and adopted by the Finance Committee of the Board. [CFR 3.5, 3.7, 3.11] Information about the new financial procedures was shared through cabinet, posted on the employee portal, and new staff training was piloted. [CFR 3.3, 3.6]

Financial oversight is also a focus in the new financial reporting process to increase transparency and accountability. In addition to the strategic financial model's facilitation of institution-level financial planning and oversight, SFBU instituted in late 2023 a monthly university financial report that is provided to the president and COO (and quarterly to the Board of Directors)—covering budget vs actual revenues and expenses, detailed balance sheets with additional information provided for key areas such as cash and investments and property and equipment. Monthly, the CFO meets with all budget managers to review budget to actual results to ensure compliance with budget and identify any areas of concern. All of this financial reporting empowers managers at every level—from department managers to the Board—to be more informed, more accountable, and better stewards of the institution's resources. [CFR 3.9, 3.10]

Budgeting and resource allocation. In the context of SFBU's ongoing pivot, departmental or divisional spending plans may vary significantly year-over-year—some ramping up rapidly as we scale operations, others dropping off sharply as one-time or limited up-front investments are completed. Thus each year's budgeting process is closer to a zero-base approach than an incremental budget, and requires substantial collaboration. [CFR 3.4] The CFO solicits budget proposals from cabinet members, using the strategic plan and the financial plan as yardsticks to evaluate whether budget requests are reasonable, prudent, and allocate appropriate resources to the strategic work planned for that year. Because SFBU's fiscal year aligns with the calendar year instead of the academic year, we made a mid-year adjustment in 2024, evidencing SFBU's active approach to budget management. SFBU's rapid planning tempo meant that by early 2024, substantially more was known about the specific timing and order of investments in building organizational capacity, and the budget developed in Fall 2023 no longer fairly represented the resource allocation needs for the year. The interim CFO worked with the president and cabinet members to review their financial plans for restructuring and expanding personnel; contracting for professional services, program planning support, and interim staffing; and technology, travel, professional development, and program delivery expenses. Budgets were revised to reflect the updated work plan for each area, and an

amended institutional budget was reviewed and approved by the Board in May 2024. In September 2024 a similarly collaborative process was initiated to develop the 2025 budget. [CFR 3.4]

Standard 4 – Creating an Institution Committed to Quality Assurance and Improvement

In this essay, institutions document and evaluate their processes for carrying out essential functions, and engaging in analysis and planning to ensure they can adapt to future challenges. The essay focuses on two principal areas:

(1) Quality Assurance Processes -- The institution collects and uses evidence to analyze the effectiveness of its operations to achieve established objectives, using institutional research functions and other activities.

(2) Institutional Improvement -- The institution uses the analysis of evidence to promote the ongoing improvement of the institution.

SFBU is committed to continuous institutional effectiveness through structured quality assurance processes and data-informed improvement efforts. These efforts are co-led by the Faculty, Provost, Office of Accreditation and Assessment, Office of Institutional Research, and CEPI. These constituents coordinate systematic collection, analysis, and dissemination of data to support evidence-based decision-making.

SFBU employs a cycle of assessment and evaluation across academic and administrative units. The institution regularly collects data on student learning outcomes, retention and graduation rates, student satisfaction, and operational efficiency. This evidence is integrated into institutional planning and is reviewed by leadership and governance bodies to ensure alignment with strategic goals. Program reviews, annual assessment reports, and surveys provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating academic quality and student success (CFR 4.1).

Insights from institutional research and assessment drive targeted improvements. For example, curriculum revisions, faculty development initiatives, and student support enhancements are informed by data trends and stakeholder feedback. Strategic planning processes incorporate findings from institutional analyses to

adapt to emerging challenges, such as evolving workforce needs and technological advancements. SFBU maintains a nimble approach to planning, ensuring responsiveness to change while upholding academic integrity and mission alignment.

In support of quality assurance efforts, SFBU has implemented a robust, data-informed, and participatory quality assurance system that supports the university's mission to deliver inclusive, innovative, and inspirational education. Over the past three years, SFBU has undergone significant institutional transformation, establishing the foundation for a sustainable culture of continuous improvement across academic, operational, and governance functions.

Comprehensive Institutional Quality Assurance

SFBU's Institutional Effectiveness model integrates planning, assessment, and improvement across academic and co-curricular functions. Institutional quality assurance is overseen by the Office of Institutional Research (IR), which manages PowerBI dashboards that provide near real-time insights on enrollment, retention, graduation, and student performance. These dashboards are accessible to academic leadership and department chairs and inform curriculum reviews, course scheduling, and advising. SFBU's academic program review cycle, launched in 2024, incorporates five-year self-studies with embedded learning outcomes data, operational metrics, and financial analysis. Each self-study concludes with a strategic action plan approved by the Provost and revisited annually. The university has adopted a developmental model that balances program autonomy with institutional consistency.

The IR team provides disaggregated student performance data by program, gender, modality, and international/domestic status. Analysis of this data has led to targeted interventions, including expanded student support hours, orientation redesign, and new advising policies. For example, data from the withdrawal survey in Spring 2024 identified financial hardship as a key barrier to retention; this led to expanded institutional scholarships and a financial wellness program launched through the Student Success Hub (CFR 4.2).

SFBU has developed a "postmortem" review process following each academic term. Faculty and staff gather to assess onboarding, orientation, and early-term course feedback, and identify process gaps. In

2025, feedback from these sessions led to the revision of advising pathways and enhanced communication protocols for new student arrivals. Climate surveys are also conducted annually, with results used to shape student services and professional development priorities (CFR 4.3).

SFBU's IR function has matured into a core driver of strategic planning and evaluation. The IR team produces a university Fact Book and leads assessment workshops for academic leaders. In 2024–25, IR collaborated with the Provost's Office to design a teaching effectiveness dashboard, integrating student learning outcomes with classroom observation and course evaluation data (CFR 4.4).

A hallmark of SFBU's improvement model is its continuous loop between assessment, reflection, and resource allocation. Strategic planning processes are grounded in evidence and supported by IR-generated reports, accreditation readiness reviews, and stakeholder engagement. In Spring 2025, the university adopted an Academic Plan developed collaboratively by faculty, which prioritized innovation in general education, integration of AI tools in instruction, and expansion of reduced-credit degree programs (CFR 4.5).

Faculty play a central role in program assessment, curricular innovation, and teaching effectiveness. The Faculty Assembly revised its charter in 2024 to support lean, high-impact governance, and postdoctoral teaching fellows collaborate with department chairs on curriculum alignment and capstone assessment. All full-time faculty complete peer reviews and participate in instructional design workshops through the National Center for Teaching and Learning (CFR 4.6).

SFBU's Board of Directors has implemented annual self-evaluation practices in alignment with the Association of Governing Boards standards and utilizes an onboarding and mentoring process for new members. Five formal committees—governance, academic affairs, finance, audit, and executive compensation—monitor strategic progress, compliance, and fiduciary responsibility. Board agendas now include educational sessions on higher education policy and innovation trends to support informed oversight (CFR 4.7).

CFR 4.8 – Planning, Strategy, and Future Vision

As detailed in this report, SFBU's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan emerged from cross-campus collaboration and includes six institutional priorities – The Six Pillars - linked to measurable outcomes. Each unit develops annual goals aligned with this plan, which are reviewed for progress each summer. The 2024 Readiness Summit and resulting Accreditation Gap Analysis demonstrated how SFBU uses strategic foresight and data to drive decision-making. Scenario planning is now embedded into leadership retreats, and AI-readiness, international diversification, and fiscal sustainability are among the focal points for the next strategic cycle.

SFBU's commitment to Standard 4 is demonstrated through the development of agile systems for quality assurance, data-informed governance, and faculty-led educational effectiveness. The university is well-positioned to continue maturing its culture of continuous improvement through aligned planning, integrated assessment, and intentional leadership.

Section C – Reflections – Synthesis of Insights as a Result of the Reaffirmation Process

San Francisco Bay University is at a significant point of institutional transformation, grounded in a clear strategic direction that emphasizes innovation, inclusivity, and responsiveness to evolving student and industry needs. The extensive self-study process in which our entire community engaged demonstrates the university's commitment to redefining higher education through deliberate enhancements to academic programs, faculty governance, student services, and strategic resource allocation. Central to this reinvention is SFBU's adherence to its refreshed mission and vision, guiding its operational decisions and institutional culture toward providing a genuinely inclusive and impactful education.

A notable insight into the strategic vision for the institution and its future is SFBU's strategic alignment of resources and its disciplined approach to achieving financial sustainability amidst growth and change. The university has made substantial investments in infrastructure, technology, and personnel, demonstrating an understanding that short-term operational deficits are necessary for achieving long-term strategic goals. These investments include critical initiatives such as comprehensive system upgrades to enhance student lifecycle management, strategic financial modeling, and planning for Title IV eligibility to improve financial accessibility for domestic students.

SFBU's faculty model emphasizes lean governance structures aimed at rapid responsiveness and innovation. By intentionally selecting away from traditional governance models that would prove unwieldy and overly bureaucratic, SFBU has positioned itself uniquely in higher education to swiftly implement curricular innovations, exemplified by early adoption of emerging fields like blockchain and artificial intelligence. Faculty development and assessment practices are deeply embedded in this model, ensuring continual curricular relevance and high-quality teaching aligned with institutional objectives.

Lastly, SFBU's comprehensive quality assurance mechanisms underscore its commitment to continuous improvement, systematically utilizing institutional research and data analytics to inform strategic decisions and drive institutional effectiveness. This reflective, evidence-based culture positions SFBU not only to respond adeptly to immediate challenges but also to anticipate and navigate future educational

demands. Overall, this analysis indicates that SFBU is well-equipped to sustain and amplify its growth trajectory, driven by clearly articulated strategic priorities and a robust institutional capacity for innovation and adaptability.

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