

ISAS



UWC-USA Self Study Spring 2019 Focus Groups Report

Mission

UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations, and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

UWC Values:

- International and intercultural understanding
- Celebration of difference
- Personal responsibility and integrity
- Mutual responsibility and respect
- Compassion and service
- Respect for the environment
- A sense of idealism
- Personal challenge
- Action and personal example

Independent Schools Association of the Southwest
UWC-USA Self Study Spring 2019 Focus Groups Report

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I. Welcome from the President

On behalf of the entire UWC-USA community, let me extend my warmest welcome to the ISAS Site Visit Committee. UWC-USA has been accredited by ISAS since 2000. Through our prior accreditations, we have grown and improved. One particular area for improvement identified in our last accreditation, confusion around our identity as a secondary institution rather than a college in the U.S. context, continues to shape our strategy to this day. We are grateful for the continued relationship we have with ISAS as our accrediting body.

In Spring 2018, UWC-USA was approved to be part of the Self-Study II pilot project. Given our clear mission and strategic planning work that was already underway, we chose to undertake our IB self-study in the same year. UWC-USA appreciated the opportunity to utilize the accreditation self-study as part of our overall efforts to assess, reflect, and align our priorities for the coming years. As our site visit approaches, we are grateful to draw on the expertise and resources of ISAS while continuing to integrate and plan for improvements in the three strategic areas of interest identified by the faculty for self study: cultural competency, mission alignment in programming, and safety and sustainability.

These three self-study areas of interest grow out of our movement-wide mission to make education a force for peace and a sustainable future. They also grow out of our campus vision to become mission aligned in all we do, financially sustainable, and distinguished by signature, place-based programming in which students and employees alike can develop their citizenship and leadership while at UWC-USA. This vision has guided not only our self-study, but also our strategic planning process, of which the self study was one part. This document is arranged to include both the self-study carried out by faculty and the strategic plan, which has been developed based on input from all stakeholders within the UWC-USA community and which is in direct response to the self-study in some of its goals and initiatives. This will orient the Site Visit Committee, and indeed provide the best understanding to our campus community of where we are, where we want to be, how we get there, and how we might measure our success. We hope this will serve as a guiding document in the execution of our strategic plan over the next years.

While UWC-USA is privileged to be part of an international body of schools dedicated to a common mission and set of values, we are deeply grateful to have ISAS provide a specifically U.S. lens on our opportunities and challenges as a school. In working through our self-study while developing our strategic plan, it is clear to us that we have several opportunities to strengthen our foundation, not only in the areas of cultural competency, mission-aligned programming, and safety and sustainability, but in how we collaborate on, communicate about, and celebrate our mission, capacity, and accomplishments within these areas. We look forward especially to the Site-Visit Committee's recommendations on how we can better collaborate, communicate, and celebrate our shared commitments at UWC-USA.

Dr. Victoria J. Mora, President

II. Brief History

a. Origin of the UWC Movement

The United World College (UWC) movement was founded in 1962 when Atlantic College in Wales admitted its first students. At a time when the Cold War was at its height, the aim was to bring together young people from different nations to act as champions of peace through an education based on shared learning, collaboration, and understanding.

UWC's educational concept was based on the ideas of German educationalist Kurt Hahn, one of the founding fathers of the UWC movement. Hahn believed that school should be a preparation for life, not just for university, and that education should help students to develop resilience and the ability to experience failure as well as success. In 1955 he visited the NATO Defense College in Paris where he was inspired by the cooperation and loyalty to a common cause that he witnessed among military men who had been adversaries in World War II. This led directly to the concept of Atlantic College, the world's first international, two-year "Sixth Form" College for teenagers aged 16-19.

Witnessing the success of Atlantic College, Lord Louis Mountbatten, UWC's International President from 1968-1977, pressed for the expansion of UWC. An international office and Council were created, and the growing movement was renamed the United World Colleges.

b. Origin of UWC-USA

The legal name of the New Mexico campus of United World College is the Armand Hammer United World College of the American West in honor of Dr. Armand Hammer, who founded the institution in 1982, making it the sixth United World College campus.

Hammer, who had lived through two world wars, truly believed in the UWC mission. "If 17-year-olds all around the world could share that dream [of a world without war] and act upon it in their adult lives, they might become ushers to an age of peace on Earth," he said.

III. Our Current Context: People, Programming, and Place

a. People

UWC-USA is part of an international 18-school coalition that shares a common mission to make education a force to unite people for peace and a sustainable future. All UWCs have their own board of trustees and are legally independent of one another. No two schools are identical in the ways in which they live out the mission. Their similarities include the IB curriculum and focus on a values-based approach to student life. All campuses have programming related to the mission of peace and sustainability, deliberate diversity, and generous needs-based scholarships to provide access regardless of ability to pay. An international Board of Directors works through a UWC international office headquartered in London to coordinate efforts to further the mission and the movement. Heads of School meet twice a year to collaborate and in some instances to coordinate. A movement-wide Council meets annually.

The UWC movement and UWC-USA are committed to creating a deliberately diverse student body focused on the drivers of peace and a sustainable future from multiple perspectives. More than 85% of our students receive full or partial scholarships. The school's ability to provide continued financial assistance is crucial to maintaining a deliberately diverse student body, including social and economic diversity. Our scholarships are some combination of merit- and need-based. Our students represent not only the most academically talented from their countries, but also the most passionate in their desire to become agents of positive change. Many if not most of these students come from their state school systems, providing diverse approaches and perspectives to all areas of school programming. Some come from conflict areas and may have experienced educational disruption. All represent social, economic, racial, cultural, ideological, and religious diversity.

The admissions process at UWC is distinct. Students are not selected directly by the school; they are selected by 160 volunteer National Committees (NCs) in country or through a Global Selection Programme (GSP) managed through the international office. They are chosen based on promise and potential. While requirements for selection vary to some degree by country, all students commit to the UWC mission and values as part of their selection and matriculation. They are allowed to state preferences for individual campuses but are ultimately matched with campuses through a nominations and offers process between the campuses and the NCs and GSP. Because of the range of languages our students speak (125 on our campus), NCs are an important component in our communication with families about student well-being while at our school. Interaction with families is usually informative or about specific support. Students are encouraged as much as possible to exercise independence while at UWC-USA.

UWC-USA employs just over 100 staff, full and part-time, who serve all areas of programming. Most programming support staff come from Las Vegas, New Mexico and the surrounding areas of San Miguel and Mora Counties. The faculty (defined as those who

work in Academics, Experiential Education, and Residential Life) represent a large number of countries and regions of the U.S. and a number have dual citizenship. All academic faculty and some experiential faculty (depending on responsibilities) are offered the opportunity to live in campus housing and, at present, 35 are on campus. Residential staff housing is adjacent to student residences. The school is in the middle of a transition to 5 full-time residential coordinators, with academic faculty who live on campus serving as assistant residential coordinators.

b. Programming

UWC-USA is a two-year, residential secondary school with a student body of 235 representing 94 nations. Just over 20% of our student body are U.S. citizens. All students, ranging in age from 16-19, undertake a rigorous two-year academic program centered on the International Baccalaureate curriculum. However, UWC-USA is about much more than books and exams. Intense shared experiences that include signature programming in constructive engagement of conflict, wilderness, arts and culture, and sustainability, as well as the challenges of a deliberately diverse residential community, foster a sense of empathy for one another, our local community, and diverse cultures, races, religions, and lifestyles. Ours is a community that values human interactions as much as on academic rigor.

Programming at the school falls under three categories, all crucial to execution on our mission. Our academic programming is determined by the IB. Our experiential education program meets IB requirements but goes well beyond. It is structured under four signature areas--constructive engagement of conflict, wilderness, arts and culture, and sustainability--and affords students the opportunity to develop citizenship and leadership in projects meant to make a positive difference in their campus and local communities. In addition, our students have the opportunity for two extended experiential learning excursions, Southwest Studies in the fall and Project Week in the spring. These excursions provide students an opportunity to discover the power of place and increase their appreciation for the people and cultures of the American Southwest. They also provide students with opportunities to connect their academic learning with the communities we interact with. Our residential programming rounds out the total UWC-USA experience, with a focus on personal and communal sustainability and constructive engagement to make a diverse living environment possible. Students exercise as much agency as possible and collaborate with staff to create the community they wish to live in.

c. Place

The campus of UWC-USA occupies over 200 acres along the Gallinas River, situated in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo mountains in Northern New Mexico. In the ten years since our last accreditation, the school acquired property including the Agroecology Research Center ("the Farm") and property adjacent to the school that has provided us with additional housing for faculty. The campus, while inspiring and unique, presents challenges with a layout better suited to university age students and spaces long in need of updating. While the school has functioned under these circumstances due to communal

good will, an engineering study completed within the last 5 years determined significant deferred maintenance that has led school leadership to question alternatives for such significant expenditure. The school in the last year undertook a master planning process to determine how campus configuration and space might be approached for greater mission-alignment and how this might compare in cost and opportunity to other options.

UWC-USA is located in the community of Montezuma (non-UWC-USA population approximately 250). The school is located five miles from Las Vegas, New Mexico (population 13,200). The region is beautiful, affords many outdoor activities for students and staff, and is ethnically diverse with a rich cultural history. It also has a high rate of poverty, underemployment, and unemployment, which creates challenges for recruitment and retention of staff and faculty. School and housing options are uneven for families who wish to live off campus. UWC-USA also owns the Montezuma Hot Springs adjacent to the campus, which we see as part of the cultural heritage of the community. The hot springs are open to students, faculty, and community members, though they present a liability that the board and administration is working to manage. Students visit Las Vegas regularly for shopping trips, community service, and through our Get-Away host family program.

IV. Self-study

a. Process

The ISAS self-study process was one of six elements in our strategic planning process. While the strategic planning process was broadly focused, engaging trustees, alumni and all members of our campus community to identify goals meant to strengthen our foundation, the faculty chose to focus the self-study on topics specific to programming. In the fall of 2018, UWC-USA faculty identified six initial themes as potential focus group topics to guide the self-study process. The six themes were:

1. Communication and Information Sharing
2. Diversity and Cultural Competency
3. Tension between IB and UWC Objectives and Assessments
4. Quality Assurance and Mission Alignment in Programming (defined as Academics, Experiential Education and Residential Life)
5. Personal Growth
6. Safety and Sustainability

Through a follow-up survey, three focus group topics and subtopics were identified as most important to consider:

1. Cultural Competency
 - a. Multi-cultural integration and understanding
 - b. Faculty training on intercultural understanding and integration of cultural competencies into the classroom
2. Mission Alignment in Programming

- a. Community engagement
 - b. Discipline
 - c. Employee/student relations
 - d. Professional development
 - e. Restorative justice
3. Safety and Sustainability
 - a. Environment
 - b. Facilities
 - c. Financial sustainability
 - d. Fire
 - e. Forest
 - f. Living sustainably/personal sustainability
 - g. Risk management

The self-study provided an opportunity for faculty to drill down into these 3 areas of importance for strengthening our foundation, the strategy adopted by the board in consultation with leadership at the school. Faculty members each joined one focus group, which met regularly over the course of the spring. They produced short written reports that form the central work and findings of this report. In approaching the self study questions, participants considered four fundamental questions. These questions have been at the heart not only of the self study, but of the development of the strategic plan as a whole, which has included input from all members of the UWC-USA community.

1. Where are we?
2. Where do we want to be?
3. How do we get there?
4. How will we measure the success of our efforts?

The following section of this report presents the work of the faculty focus groups, as produced by the same. In the conclusion section of this report, we present direct and indirect takeaways, as well as final reflections.

b. Focus Areas

Focus 1: Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is crucial to leverage the deliberate diversity of the UWC-USA campus for mission fulfillment. As a part of the global United World College movement, the faculty, staff, and administration of UWC-USA value diversity in all spheres of the community. The school is committed to the development of cultural competency among faculty, staff, administration, and students.

For the purposes of this report, cultural competency is defined as:

- Awareness of and sensitivity to different cultural norms
- Ability to respectfully integrate into and function as part of a multicultural group
- Ability to comfortably facilitate group interactions between those with different cultural backgrounds

The members of the focus group also recognized that they bring different levels and experiences of cultural competency to their roles in the school, and that a shared expectation is that all employees commit to ongoing work to develop greater cultural competency during their tenure at the school. Our employees for the most part understand that the work of increasing cultural competency is work that is never fully done. Particular aspects of cultural competency important to the school include geography, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and physical abilities. UWC-USA employs approximately 100 people, reflecting local and global diversity. Each year, UWC-USA students represent more than 90 countries. A large proportion of students are non-white, and the campus enjoys a healthy focus on diversity and inclusion in our design and programming. With national committees all over the world and a curriculum that promotes global understanding, we feel privileged that our school is among the most diverse private schools in the nation.

Where are we?

- The student body is more diverse than the faculty, staff, and administration. While increased diversity does not necessarily lead to greater levels of cultural competency, it is certainly a contributing factor for increasing the cultural awareness and understanding on campus.
- Beyond National Committees, UWC-USA does not have explicit, visible, recognized recruitment channels in place for specific identity groups for either students or employees. However, active promotion of the school to and recruitment of underrepresented groups does take place.
- UWC-USA established a relationship with the Cordell Hull Foundation in 2016 and since then have hired nine international faculty members on J-1 visas. Even so, the school is limited to hiring STEM and foreign language faculty. A recent attempt to hire an administrator through the H1-B visa process was frustrating and, in the end, unfruitful.
- While efforts at cultural competency through conversations and training have been initiated and deployed over the years, a regular cycle of trainings, resources, and

feedback mechanisms are needed for all employees to achieve sustained diversity, equity, and inclusion and addressing systemic issues in the larger community.

- UWC-USA still tends to define diversity in the narrow area of national/cultural background, and could do more to consider ideological/philosophical, socio-economic, gender, and religious backgrounds both with students and staff.

Where do we want to be?

In order to fully embody a commitment to cultural competency, UWC-USA should:

- Practice active reception of alternative points of view, and openness to the exchange of ideas.
- Model practices of constant reflection and personal growth in areas of cultural competency.
- Demonstrate an ongoing commitment to cultural competency through administering and responding to annual surveys.
- Ensure staff, faculty, and administration are supportive and inclusive of difference, including during those instances when we are unfamiliar with the cultural assumptions and values of those with whom we interact.
- Practice sensitivity to students and to the faculty, staff, and administration at the school, creating an environment in which growth in the area of cultural competence is encouraged (in contrast with an environment where failures are aggressively punished).
- Our current recruitment and retention systems should be strengthened to adequately further diversity and inclusion among the faculty, staff, administration, and board members at UWC-USA at this time.

How do we get there?

In order to continue our growth from our current state of affairs to our ideal state, we recommend the following steps:

- Continue to seek out and implement a broad variety of options for the recruitment of candidates who would further diversify our faculty, staff, administration, and board.
- Add questions to the student evaluation tools for courses, residential life, and experiential education that measure the level of cultural competency/sensitivity of the campus environment. This should include both scaled and free response options to afford both quantitative and qualitative analysis.
- Publicize the availability of a 'student incident report' that includes matters of cultural competency and track the data that is generated by this report to identify campus trends.
- Dedicate funds for ongoing professional development in response to the trends identified by the above surveys and any other data gathering tools we may have to hand.
- Provide core texts that faculty commit themselves to read and discuss in order to encourage ongoing growth in the realm of cultural competency.
- Pursue a range of models for leading our work in cultural competency, which may include:

- Creating a group to identify a set of frames and models for diversity, equity, and inclusion and determining the best structure for addressing those, given our needs.
- Identifying a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Specialist to lead and monitor these efforts.
- Include evaluation of applicants' cultural sensitivity and development of cultural competency as a part of hiring standards and interview questions for all faculty, staff, and administrative positions.
- Include training and transmission of expectations for cultural competency as part of the on-boarding process for new hires.
- Schedule regular and ongoing conversations throughout the year to support reflection and growth around cultural competency, brainstorm and role play if needed in order to facilitate learning and exchange.
- Task Resident Life Coordinators with developing and implementing a cultural competency curriculum to be delivered within their dorms.
- Endorse and actively support student-centered programming and best practices to create an inclusive community.

How will we measure the success of our efforts?

While the above statements demonstrate UWC-USA's dedication to developing cultural competence throughout the community, the school cannot ensure such efforts are impactful without meaningful and ongoing evaluation. Measurement efforts will include:

- Annual surveys to check status and progress on matters of cultural competency and track efforts to address issues which have been raised.
- Analysis of data generated by the student evaluation tools for trends in cultural competency and track our efforts to address issues which have been raised.
- Continued tracking of the diversity of students, staff, faculty, administration and board.

Improving cultural competency at UWC-USA will require continuous efforts from all members of the community, led by a thorough commitment from the board and administrative team.

Committee members: Gianvi Figari, Brett Gilland, Ben Gillock, Shirleen Lanham, Leslie Miller, Ravi Parashar, Elise Pereen, Eyad Shabaneh, Naomi Swinton, and Ellen Thompson

Focus 2: Mission Alignment in Programming

The focus group addressed each of the subtopics identified in the initial faculty survey: Community Engagement, Discipline, Employee/Student Relations, Professional Development and Restorative Justice.

1. Community Engagement

Where are we?

- Community Engagement (CE) is part of a signature program within Experiential Education. The scope of work is primarily focused on weekly volunteer opportunities with local Las Vegas, NM schools, NM Behavioral Health Institute (NMBHI), Samaritan House homeless shelter, soup kitchen, animal shelter, the El Valle Women's Cooperative, San Miguel Detention Center (Las Vegas) and Juvenile detention centers in ABQ.
- First-year students are required to rotate through various CE activities in the Wednesday morning ExEd rotation during first semester. After rotation they commit to two semesters of off-campus CE.
- UWC-USA also hosts community events, for example UWC Day, the Crop Walk, and an annual appreciation event, and help support and staff The SPOT, a local community center where UWC/Las Vegas youth can collaborate.
- The school holds events on campus that are open to the larger community. These include campus tours, cultural days, the Annual Conference, MLK Day, and a TedX conference. All arts and culture events on campus are open to the public.
- Students have the opportunity to get to know local community members through the Get-Away Family program.
- Although there are a number of opportunities presented to students to engage in the community in more social, participatory ways, few students take advantage of those opportunities
- Many faculty (especially among those who live on campus) do not engage with the wider Northern New Mexico community beyond Montezuma except in professional endeavors

Where do we want to be?

- Individuals within the UWC-USA community need to be more actively engaged in the community in which it resides. The school needs to encourage increased interaction with the community

How will we get there?

- More context and training during onboarding for new faculty/staff
- Transition planning for UWC USA staffing turnover
- Appoint formal UWC USA campus and complementary community member liaisons to

- Serve as community point person
- Manage community contacts for special events/outreach
- Host social events to help NMHU, NMBHI, LCC, Alta Vista, City and County employees and others meet UWC employees
- Align Community Engagement with academics and residential life activities wherever possible
- Have stronger two-way community relationships (i.e. address reputation as school on the hill)
- Feature monthly opportunities for local connection and engagement
- Strengthen 'staff' and 'faculty' social and professional exchanges
- Create designated time in the schedule and for formal and informal methods of collaboration, learning and connection.
- Identify and implement opportunities to formalize ExEd relationships beyond the individual faculty sponsor
- Document history of various CE programs, individuals and businesses
 - Who are the points of contact?
 - How long have we had a relationship?
 - What challenges have been met and how were they addressed?
 - Photo and reflection archive
- Assess and endorse at an institutional level multi-year planning and commitments co-developed with community partners in coordination with the ExEd department
- Utilize ExEds to collate stories and photographs
- Get-Away Family Program: Continue annual review of program, including input from past and present participants, and continue to create new recruitment channels and retention processes based on review outcomes
- Provide more opportunities for students to participate in community events
- Resident Coordinators plan weekend local community-focused events
- Better map of key institutional partners for community engagement, and opportunities for synergy with other anchor institutions in the area
- Develop course catalogue of ExEds and make available to local youth
- Strengthen ExEd development with community partners, including setting leader responsibilities, semester planning (goals, activities, metrics etc.), needs assessment and evaluation
- Better use of calendars to publicize and share community events on UWC-USA campus; improve engagement/advertising (including Pine Forest community)
 - Include community events in Friday Flash
- Annual evaluation that includes community partners; seek input from community members (including Pine Forest and community partners)
- Expand and better publicize events cosponsored by UWC-USA and the community (e.g. events at the SPOT)
- Continue to invite community members to campus for special events

How will we measure the success of our efforts?

- Annual evaluation feedback
- Track performance against program goals (ExEds, Get-Aways, individual events, etc.)

- Track participation
- Successful multi-year program continuity with measurable results

2. Restorative Justice

Where are we?

Through the Constructive Engagement of Conflict (CEC) signature program, UWC-USA trains students in methodologies to address and mediate conflict on multiple levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intercultural, and communal. These methodologies have been utilized in “CEC Circles” intermittently to address conflicts as they emerge on campus and beyond. These students who are engaged in the program also have chances to practice these methodologies in multiple retreat settings.

Where do we want to be?

This is a program with immense potential, given the diversity of the student body and the mission statement of the school. In order to live the mission of using education as a means of pursuing peace, this work of addressing conflict should be central to the everyday operations at the school. The student body is diverse, engaged, and intelligent; UWC-USA should be a pioneer in this area.

How do we get there?

Make CEC the apex program of UWC-USA so that all community members understand and use CEC as the “common language” and practice. Requires dedicated training for students and faculty/staff as well as time in the schedule for regular practice/implementation.

How will we measure the success of our efforts?

- Concrete learning outcomes: Define what the techniques are for achieving constructive engagement of conflict and have students evaluate the extent to which they feel comfortable utilizing them
- Alumni surveys geared specifically towards measuring this aspect of UWC with questions relating to how the UWC experience helped them to understand intercultural challenges/benefits, how to address them.

3. Professional Development

Where are we?

Current practices:

- IB workshops are required by all teachers new to the IB and within the 5-year re-accreditation period
- Staff can request specific professional development (PD) training and work directly with their supervisors; approval is based on funding available and prior usage of professional development monies
- Orientation Workshops at the start of the year for all staff
- All employees required to complete safeguarding training and provided with resources to complete implicit bias training

- Teacher evaluations are completed by students twice a year; the evaluation was recently reviewed by a faculty group to provide recommendations for improvement and the faculty in experiential education and residential life have requested that parallel evaluations take place in their areas
- Annual Faculty Self-Evaluation + Meeting with Dean of Academics; (NB: beginning 2019-2020, Department Chairs will provide more frequent, formative feedback)
- Faculty are encouraged to participate in peer-to-peer observations and receive peer-to-peer feedback, but it is not a requirement
- Monthly department meetings are scheduled to support and encourage those with whom there are similar requirements
- Post-grad Workshops at the end of the school year

Where do we want to be?

- Clarify UWC-USA's institutional professional development goals to address employee performance, improvement and retention.
- Aggregate/prioritize PD training based on feedback/evaluation/results and institutional goals
- Address PD needs for all employees
- Improved participation and quality of academic, ExEd and Residential Life student evaluations
- Implement clearer systems and processes to understand the growth needs and aspirations of individual employees and provide the appropriate support
- Provide dedicated resources for internal (including peer to peer) and external PD
- Develop clearer guidelines for PD expectations, opportunities (pathways, offerings, methodologies) and process for requesting support to meet individual PD goals
- Integrate PD into PIPs to support employee improvement
- Encourage and foster collaboration within and across departments to support skills sharing and development

How do we get there?

- Use faculty meeting time for professional development workshops and sharing best teaching practices
- Continue to designate and publicize funding available to attend conferences and other workshops in relevant PD content (e.g. pedagogy, subject-specific content, wilderness first aid, sports coaching, etc.)
- Bring experts on campus to host professional development (e.g., pedagogy, cultural awareness and diversity training, social and emotional learning, etc.) workshops and events
- Share resources, plans, activities from subject-specific teachers from across the UWC movement
- Assess potential benefit of shared office spaces and other shared spaces (e.g. employee lounge) to foster collaboration
- Map out the year for PD sessions following faculty meetings (taking into account other requirements- i.e. SWS/PW meetings, residential staff meetings, track leader meetings)
- Resume the practice of sabbaticals

- Resumption of offering subjects with school-based syllabi within the IB framework, or offering evening seminars in lieu of sponsoring ExEds or doing Residential Duties.

How will we measure the success of our efforts?

- Evaluation feedback for UWC-USA hosted events and shared resources to determine if individual and institutional PD goals were met
- Share summary reports for externally attended events
- Evaluation of annual performance against employee professional development plans. Developed in consultation with, and reviewed annually by, supervisor. For faculty to include IB scores, student feedback (academics, ExEd and Residential Life), adherence to school policies and procedures as stated in the employee handbook, faculty handbook and job descriptions.
- Align individual employee annual plans with annual strategic plan implementation
- Conduct study to determine the correlation between employee retention, employee satisfaction / happiness and professional development

4. Employee/student relations

Where are we?

There are currently a range of relationship types between students and adults. Formal relationships occur as teachers, ExEd sponsors, advisors, resident tutors. Informal relationships are also encouraged by participation in community and employee-hosted events. Participation by employees varies due to personality, age, work load, family obligations, and/or number of years working at UWC. A lot also depends on the students and their interests (academic, Ex Ed, residential). Generally, there is a culture of mutual respect; there are different perspectives, definitions, and experiences of whether we meet this goal consistently.

Where do we want to be?

- Clarity regarding expectations for employees to participate in informal relationship building and student support (e.g., how many cultural day shows must employees attend?).
- Clearer expectations on adult/student relationship models, while being mindful of the range of employee experience and interests.

How do we get there?

- This topic could be covered in the end of year conversation with one's supervisor (or maybe even mid-year).
- Administer a campus culture survey annually; create a student/employee team to research and develop questions, activities to foster healthy informal relationships, share life stories, and help address group requests/needs as they arise (eg, Employee Forum in which students shared videos of employees talking about their work experiences at UWC-USA).

How will we measure the success of our efforts?

Occasional focus groups, evaluation of survey results

5. Discipline

Where are we?

- The Community Standards/Code of Conduct was revised during the 2018/19 academic year, under the leadership of the Dean of Residential and Experiential Education with input from students
- Clarified Safe Harboring
- Incident report developed and available to all community members to report disciplinary infractions, accidents, and positive actions
- Initiated a student committee, comprised of students and faculty
- Student Council works directly with the Program Leadership Team on input, policy, and student concerns
- The health team reviews and works to support students of concern

Where do we want to be?

There needs to be greater transparency in the decision-making processes and the nature of progressive discipline. Better follow-through in notifying the community is needed when decisions made affect the UWC USA community.

How do we get there?

- Clarify roles and responsibilities in terms of chain of command for reporting and taking action on disciplinary matters
- Clarify criteria for consequences vs. restorative justice actions
- Continue to review student, faculty and employee handbooks for clarity, with community input
- Improve notification process for community members (e.g. teachers and residential staff) when disciplinary infraction occurs.
- Ensure transparency (as appropriate) and consistency in the disciplinary process
- Improve early intervention actions to support student well-being and continued matriculation (as appropriate)
- Improve awareness of situations that may be affecting student body performance and well-being
- Balance reactive actions with preventative initiatives
- Continue to strengthen community culture and awareness of code of conduct; uphold as part of commitment to UWC values and community

How will we measure the success of our efforts?

- Measured decrease in disciplinary infractions
- Measured buy-in and trust from community members (employees and students) on transparency and fairness of discipline policies and processes.

Committee members: Douglas Arnwine, Santos Contreras, Alex Curtiss, Rebecca Daum, Rachel Fristedt, Anders Fristedt, Erin Gilland, Andy Gorvetzian, Judi Ruprecht, Subarna Sampat, Hritik Sampat, Denika Vigil, Raechel Waters

Focus 3: Safety and Sustainability

The focus group addressed the subtopics of Financial Sustainability, Personal Sustainability, and Risk Management.

1. Financial Sustainability

Where are we?

The school is fortunate to have an endowment of more than \$100 million dollars. This money is restricted and ensures ongoing operations. Since the school was established, it has primarily operated at an annual deficit which was first subsidized by the Armand Hammer Trust, more recently by annual donations from Shelby Davis, and for the past two years by a \$2 million matching donation from the Davis family. The school has worked hard to reduce its annual operating costs and to increase revenues – mainly through donations – but it would still be running a yearly deficit were it not for the matching Davis family donation. UWC-USA also runs a significant facilities deficit in repair and maintenance needs. The advancement team works very hard to make up this shortfall every year.

UWC-USA received a significant grant at the end of the school year to advance resource conservation efforts and sustainability education. The grant cemented an important partnership to continue land stewardship in and around our campus.

Where do we want to be?

The school needs to operate on a balanced budget, including both operating and capital expenditures.

How do we get there?

One way to achieve a balanced budget is to increase annual giving and to increase the endowment. The endowment would need to grow by at least \$40 million to make up for the \$2 million Davis family grant that will conclude in three years. UWC-USA is reviewing the possibility of moving the campus to another location for reasons spelled out in our strategic plan. A firm decision needs to be made in the near future so that decisions about improvements to the current campus can be implemented.

Address our maintenance and repair needs.

How will we measure success?

This will be measured by being able to prepare a balanced annual budget which meets all operational and capital needs. However, UWC-USA must also grow its endowment funds to contribute to operational cost.

2. Personal Sustainability

Where are we?

The school is fortunate to have a beautiful campus, a farm, and a strong commitment to living sustainability. The school supports a recycling program—glass, plastic, metal, and

paper. Compliance with the recycling protocols could be stronger and the school could improve the organization and the general appeal of the recycling center. Dormitories have implemented thoughtful and reasonably successful systems. Utilities consumption will continue to be a challenge for the school. Most of the buildings are old and frequent “band-aid” repairs are required. As the school establishes a long-term plan for updating and replacing much of its infrastructure, utilities consumption will be a primary consideration.

In terms of environment, the focus is the school’s agroecology center, commonly known as the Farm. The Farm produces more than 15,000 lbs of produce annually which students, faculty, and staff consume in the dining hall, and boasts a healthy and successful composting program reducing dining hall food waste. The school is situated in the high desert of New Mexico, so water usage is a serious concern. The plumbing in many buildings is old and in need of constant maintenance. However, the strategic plan addresses the water usage issue.

Personal sustainability remains a challenge in a very busy international school environment. Students participate in a wellness program which addresses issues of stress, cross-cultural conflict, and personal well-being. Two certified counselors on campus provide a range of services to students who experience emotional, academic, or social difficulties. The students avail themselves of these services on a regular basis, and the general consensus is that our counselors provide pastoral care of a high caliber. For on-campus faculty and staff, a number of opportunities are provided for meditation, exercise, and social interaction. But as noted earlier, this school is a very busy place. Some parts of the academic school year are much, much more stressful than others. Administration shows some sensitivity to those high-pressure intervals.

Where do we want to be?

In the last year, students and employees have made significant efforts to integrate program components and collaborate across departments and constituencies relating to sustainability on a personal and campus level. Examples include increased production and utilization of compost, a campus plan for planting/grounds stewardship, the resurgence of a student led environmental group advocating for recycling and resource conservation, a review of our weekly and annual calendar to reduce conflicts and make the best use of available meeting times, a recommitment to expanded campus service on a weekly basis by the whole school community, reduction in meat purchasing, and more.

How do we get there?

This year UWC-USA is the recipient of an E. E. Ford grant which will help drive sustainability improvements in line with our strategic plan.

UWC-USA will continue to make progress in these areas through strong team work, listening sessions, shared planning and evaluation, and in some cases, with external partners who are able to provide expertise and resources.

In terms of the ‘busyness’ of the school and self-care related to stress, sleep, and wellness, UWC-USA continues to embrace personal choice, education, and availability of support resources for students and employees in regard to individual habits.

The school is also working to strengthen communications to reduce confusion and increase the overall synergy of mission delivery among academic, residential, and experiential programs. Strengthening the wellness program and fostering more discussion about the balance needed between campus, personal and virtual lives remains a priority.

UWC-USA seeks to build a more resilient community in part by cultivating thoughtful connection, reflection, and engagement with values through regularly scheduled events and coherent language and approaches to student and employee support.

How will we measure success?

- Conduct a green audit that will identify and prioritize some of the key changes needed
- Establish cross-functional teams in some areas of sustainability to create working group recommendations that guide updated policies and practices in various program and department areas.
- Administer a regular survey which will help assess school climate and individual and campus sustainability.
- We can also look at actual resource consumption in key areas and establish related measures of success.

3. Risk management

Where are we?

Below are significant categories of risk management procedures that the school currently maintains. Some of which (as noted in parentheses) need further action.

In many cases risks are being managed but the practices are not widely understood by the campus community. In some cases risks are being identified but a clear plan of mitigation is not in place.

Emergency preparedness

- SMS Emergency Alert System
- UWC-USA emergency procedures folders are posted in classrooms
- Evacuation maps displayed in buildings
- Crisis communication protocols
- Lockdown and evacuation policies
- Emergency operations manual (specific procedures need to be further articulated, except for the Wilderness emergency procedures document which is complete)
- Drills (need to be conducted more frequently)
- Master utilities control-electric, gas, water-needs to be identified

Vehicles

- Defensive driving required for faculty and staff
- Vehicles have first aid kits and accident forms
- GPS tracking and speed monitoring

- Drivers must be licensed and covered by school insurance

Student wellbeing

- Safeguarding training for faculty and staff
- Required First Aid training for off-campus trip leaders
- 24-hour on-call nurse available
- 24-hour on-call adult presence, in the form of dedicated Resident Tutors/Residential Life Coordinators and Weekend Team members on the weekend
- 24-hour staffed campus security
- Mental health counseling available on an appointment basis

Campus

- Maintenance and grounds staff to maintain the safety of campus spaces and uphold building safety standards
- Fire risk mitigation program initiated with New Mexico State Forestry Department and New Mexico Highlands University to reduce the fuel load on a 50-acre section of forest on the west side of campus.
- Increase access to water in needed areas, two additional fire hydrants installed in upper campus faculty housing area
- Negotiations are in progress to cede the hot springs area to a non-profit entity separate from UWC-USA that will manage this area

Fire & Forest

- Continue and expand regular emergency drills as needed. Share detailed procedures for lock-downs, evacuations, accounting for all students.
- Recommend a fire drill each year for each code and regular unannounced fire drills in the dorms (at night, in the morning). Clarify escape routes, gathering areas and communication during and after fire alarms.
- Continue implementing the forest management project in consultation with the state Forestry Department and New Mexico Highlands University.

Facilities

- Four years ago, the school hired a consulting firm conduct an analysis of the life expectancy of all aspects of facilities – from boilers to door hinges.
- The maintenance and facilities staff have tackled minor projects (hot water heater replacement, main water pumps to the reservoir, etc.) but do not have the capital, time, or workforce to do more than crisis repair management.
- The campus is used frequently throughout the summer for programs and outside groups which provides limited time to schedule more complex projects. For example, this past summer, there was only a 2-week open window, used to paint dorm rooms and repair faculty housing.

Where do we want to be?

Decisions need to be made, and a concrete plan needs to be implemented as soon as possible.

How do we get there?

- UWC-USA should consider appointing a campus safety officer to oversee and coordinate all elements of risk management detailed below.
- UWC-USA's Risk Management committee needs to meet on a monthly basis to review incidents, address action items, and plan implementation and evaluation of risk management practices.
- A regular calendar of risk management activities should be established and made known to facilities staff and SLT.
- Perform preventative maintenance on a more widespread and regular basis
- Buildings need to be brought up to code and made ADA compliant
- Increase the size of the workforce dedicated to maintenance and groundskeeping
- More time in the summer should be dedicated to deferred maintenance, even if it means turning down money-generating events
- Participation in regular trainings and utilization of checklists related to specific areas of risk will indicate strengthened knowledge and better communication of best practices related to our school

How will we measure the success of our efforts?

- Increase in employees in both maintenance and groundskeeping
- Assessing the number of buildings that are up to code and are having routine maintenance done
- Completion of deferred maintenance projects
- Increased documentation, information gathering and sharing, training and utilization of policies and procedures related to risk management
- Increased transparency

Overall success will be demonstrated in a reduction of risk, injury, cost, facility damage and equipment breakdown, and incidents that expose the school to outside risk.

Committee members: Parris Bushong, Travis Day, Luis Gamboa, Mike Hatlee, Yaka Ndour, Graham Rasmussen, Melinda Russial, Peter Samaranayake

V. Conclusion

a. Takeaways

Cultural Competency

Takeaway 1: The value placed on cultural competency at UWC-USA is a distinguishing feature. We are rightly proud of our awareness about, and commitment to, cultural competency. The choice of cultural competency as a focus area also speaks well of our understanding of its crucial importance to our ability to live up to our mission. The focus group's work showed that we understand that cultural competency isn't just about our work on behalf of students, but about the learning, living, and work environment we wish to cultivate and inhabit.

Takeaway 2: While the "Where are we?" section focused on the state of UWC-USA as an institution (e.g., demographics, policies, practices, partnerships), the "Where do we want to be?" section focused more on human behavior. UWC-USA has work to do on the intersection between institutional responses to the importance of cultural competency and our own institutional culture, including especially expectations of ourselves and one another around cultural competency. The "How do we get there?" section reflects the need for this balance in approach, indicating that we can elevate the importance of the human/institutional intersection of our work and its importance to living our mission together.

Takeaway 3: Recommendations from the focus group identify a variety of tactics to strengthen our success at cultural competency, as an institution and human community. In many respects, the recommendations reflect that the work of cultural competency is infinite; we are never done. While this may seem obvious, it is especially important to consider in light of the particulars of our institutional setting. Our students come from over 90 countries, and the countries vary from year to year. They speak more than 100 languages among them. They bring diversity that goes beyond the usual racial, ethnic, and identity differences typical in U.S. schools. In addition, they are only with us for two years. Our work starts over again with fully half of our population annually. Faculty, too, especially those here with J-1 visas, can rotate with frequency. Tactics will help, but a strategy will be important if we are to have a strong foundation for cultural competency.

Mission Alignment in Programming

Takeaway 1: Mission alignment in programming is one of the three pillars of the vision established for UWC-USA in spring 2017. As such, it is not surprising that the focus group had much to say as it drilled down into each of the five areas: community engagement, restorative justice, professional development, employee student relations, and discipline. The fact that each of these areas was understood to have mission implications speaks well of the level of awareness around mission. One noticeable thread, however, was that for

some of the areas considered, we lapsed into a somewhat “siloed” approach, e.g., professional development was considered from a mission perspective, but largely in terms of faculty and staff, without connecting impact for students; employee-student relations were considered from a mission standpoint, but not employee-employee relations, or student-student; discipline for students was considered from a mission standpoint, but not evaluation and performance of employees who might struggle with community standards infractions. This offers an interesting lens on our current mode of thinking. In contrast, community engagement took as its starting point the interconnectivity of our campus and local community and restorative justice was seen for its potential connectivity across all aspects of communal life. While our mission awareness is strong, then, we have opportunities to think more “globally” about how we might be better aligned in our capacity not only as an institution and as professionals, but as community members in relationship with one another as well.

Takeaway 2: There are many things we are doing under each of the identified areas that are mission aligned. So, too, there are many recommendations for improvements, usually by adding to our already formidable set of commitments. The next step for us in our thinking will be to look at impact. Recommendations in each of the areas are rich and important. How might we challenge ourselves to move beyond *doing more* to *looking at what we do from an impact lens*? The insight offered with respect to restorative justice and its potential for impact provides an example of how we might deepen our thinking about how we can be more mission aligned in our work together and on behalf of our students.

Takeaway 3: In all of our human interactions, whether on campus or in the larger community, the residential experience makes for many opportunities for both formal and informal interactions that express our commitment to the mission and values that ground us. As professionals, we can find ourselves wanting guidelines for “how much” and “how often” we should be interacting. The focus group asked as much. But the areas of study for mission alignment in programming brought up another implicit and crucial question: “How?” How should we be engaging one another? How should we be engaging one another in the larger community, within the parameters of restorative justice, in our various formal and informal relationships within a boarding environment, and in the moments when we fail to live up to the mission and values we hold dear, whether in our professional or personal capacities? As is the case with cultural competency, the intersection of institutional commitments and human behavior is a great opportunity and challenge for us at UWC-USA.

Safety and Sustainability

Takeaway 1: We are making progress in putting sustainability front and center as we look to our school’s future. Financial sustainability is one of the three vision pillars for UWC-USA. Sustainability conceived more broadly is one of the four signature experiential learning programs offered at UWC-USA, with a new focus on personal and communal sustainability in addition to environmental. The focus group’s work reflects both that we have been successful at raising levels of awareness about these different dimensions of sustainability and that faculty are attuned to their importance for our school. Financial

sustainability and personal sustainability have only recently been articulated as integral in our understanding of the UWC mission and in particular of what it means to provide a 2-year experience of sustainable living to our students. Our work is now to make sure that we develop a shared understanding of what sustainability is and how we want to express it in our work and lives together.

Takeaway 2: We still have a great deal of work to do with sustainability. Our approach has largely been tactical and we are only just developing the three pillars of sustainability we have identified as important to the place-based experience we want for our students and employees at UWC-USA: personal, communal, environmental. That said, we have made progress. The EE Ford Grant we received this year should help us to institutionalize some of what is already in play but not clearly coordinated. It will also help us to add new dimensions to our sustainability work for greater impact. In addition to the strategic focus on sustainability, we are also taking an iterative approach to some of the issues raised in the report, including especially energy use. Students have been active in holding us to account!

Takeaway 3: While risk management is an area we have been focusing on over the last three years, we still have a ways to go. The report is right to indicate a number of fronts on which we have been improving. However, we have yet to successfully complete a comprehensive plan or to communicate in a way that allows risk management to become part of our school DNA. Several issues challenge us. Our location makes for challenges around fire danger and frequent transport of students. Our situation at the edge of the forest poses fire danger exacerbated by drought. The sprawling nature of the campus makes emergency preparedness planning a challenge. For these and other challenges, we have worked to come up with policies and plans. The next phase will be completion and training.

b. Strategic Plan: Taking the Self-Study Forward

Our ISAS self-study was conducted as part of a larger strategic planning process, as indicated in Section IV of this report. The strategic planning process included input from all members of the UWC-USA community including trustees, alumni, school leadership, faculty and staff, and students. The ISAS self-study presented here constituted the concerted faculty contribution to the strategy (see Appendix A). The board, school leadership, and strategic planning committee, working over the course of a year and a half, determined a two-phase strategy appropriate at this time in our history. In anticipation of our 40th anniversary marking our founding, 2022, our strategy is to strengthen the foundation of the school. In anticipation of our 50th anniversary, 2032, we will transition to a strategy to innovate for impact. Both strategies share the same goals. Initiatives under the goals will differ according to the strategy.

As part of the strategic planning process laying out a course to strengthen our foundation, then, it is no surprise that many of the recommendations coming out of the self-study focused on areas that need improvement and that we take to be fundamental to our work as a school. Some of the recommendations, too, tend more toward innovation. We will

incorporate them as we work on the second phase of our strategic plan. Important to note for purposes of this report is the extent to which the self-study addresses areas for attention across the five goals of the strategic plan we have just generated:

- I. **Mission-driven people:** Attract, develop and retain mission-driven people.
- II. **Mission-aligned, signature, place-based programming:** Strengthen and develop programming that focuses students on their power as change-agents for peace and sustainability, starting with the UWC community.
- III. **Integrated systems:** Implement integrated systems and structures to support the mission and enhance the experience of all stakeholders.
- IV. **Safe, and sustainable campus:** Improve the sustainability and safety of our campus to support a global values-based community.
- V. **Advancement and Funding:** Develop a sustainable financial model for UWC-USA to address the projected structural deficit beginning in FYE 2023.

Taking the self-study recommendations forward will be part of the execution of initiatives to meet our goals. The strategic plan is available as Appendix B for reference and includes these initiatives as well as a high-level execution plan. The crux of the execution plan relies on cross-functional teams that will be formed to develop coherent actions for the initiatives we have identified. Part of their charge will be to incorporate the findings of our self-study, which will inform initiatives under each one of the five goals.

c. Final Reflection and Thanks

In addition to some of the more specific takeaways from the work of the focus groups, we also found some “indirect” takeaways worthy of mention. Four key indirect takeaways were particularly noted by the SLT, with hope to engage the expertise of our ISAS Site Visit Committee: 1) While we are doing a great deal under each of the three areas of focus for our self-study, we are somehow not succeeding at making visible what we are doing and therefore do not have the level of shared understanding of our work together that we would wish. 2) The work we are doing has been carried disproportionately by individual interest rather than clear, intentional, and shared institutional commitment. We are wrestling with how to “institutionalize” our work while not losing the important opportunity for members of our community to lead from their passion. 3) Many of the groups recommended more evaluation and feedback loops in various areas; as a community, we are working to practice and yield excellent results from both direct, in-person constructive criticism and from anonymous data gathering through surveys. We need pragmatic ideas about how to increase systems and our capacity in this area, inviting feedback, distilling recommendations, and ensuring continuity. 4) We have yet to develop a strong practice of regular, repeated communication to support our collective understanding of our work together.

Despite these four challenges, or maybe because of them, the work of the self-study, and indeed the entire strategic planning process, was very encouraging. Campus community and working group conversations were robust and demonstrated a talented and committed

community determined to live our mission well across all aspects of the institution. Recommendations largely converged on the same issues and direction for improvement, showing that our board, administration, faculty and staff, students and alumni are aligned in our vision for what would make us an even stronger school. A sense of shared agency is emerging as a function of the planning and self-study processes--something crucial if we are to live up to making UWC-USA a shared proving ground for constructive, place-based agency embraced not only by UWC-USA as an institution, but by all of us as individuals in service of peace and a sustainable future.

Please accept our deepest gratitude to the ISAS Site Visit Committee for taking time out of your busy schedules to read through our self-study, an expression of our taking time out of our busy schedules to reflect on where we are, where we want to be, how we will get there, and how we might measure the success of our efforts. We look forward to the conversations that will surely follow during your site visit. We also look forward to showing the extent to which our community takes seriously the importance of cultural competency, mission aligned programming, and safety and sustainability in our daily living and working together.

Appendices

- A. ISAS Self-Study Within the Context of UWC-USA's Strategic Plan
- B. Strategic Plan
- C. ISAS Self-Study Feedback
- D. Alumni survey/focus group results



Contributions:

ISAS Self-Study Within the Context of UWC-USA's Strategic Plan





Strategic Plan

June 08, 2019
Montezuma, New Mexico

UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future



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Executive Summary

This strategic plan represents the insights and hard work of many stakeholders at UWC-USA. It has included a thorough audit and wide consultation with stakeholders, diagnosis of our strengths and weaknesses, development of a guiding policy, consideration of various coherent actions for different possible strategies, and serious reflection on what it means to be a values-based community. All strategies considered, including the two adopted in this plan, proceed from a vision of a UWC-USA that is mission-aligned in all we do, sustainable well into the future, and focused on signature, place-based programming that distinguishes the UWC-USA experience within the UWC movement and within the larger educational market.

The plan puts forward two strategies. Our first strategy, to be our primary focus in the next 3-5 years, is to strengthen our foundation. Our second strategy is to innovate for impact. This latter strategy is meant to orient us toward the 50th Anniversary of UWC-USA in 2032.

The choice to pursue two strategies emerged in response to where we are at this moment in our history and where we want to be by our 50th Anniversary. Our audit, coupled with our conversations with stakeholders, made two things clear: First, we are at a moment in our history when we have much work to do to strengthen our foundation. Basic systems, processes, and protocols need to be developed in keeping with our mission and policies. Second, we cannot miss the opportunity that our upcoming 50th Anniversary provides to consider what it means for UWC-USA to innovate for impact as we approach the middle of the 21st century. These strategies will be pursued mostly consecutively, but also concurrently where appropriate.

The strategic plan begins with this executive summary, meant to offer the vision guiding our work and the five goals that we believe will take us forward on both the strategy to strengthen our foundation and the strategy to innovate for impact. Next is an outline of goals and initiatives under the strategy to strengthen the foundation. A brief execution plan outline is also included. Appendices, to be added in the coming months, will include some context for the plan, including previous strategic planning initiatives at UWC-USA, a recap of the process and insights leading to the current plan, consideration of the UWC international strategic plan, and the context of a changing world that confronts us going forward and that we will consider as we undertake planning for the strategy to innovate for impact.

We will pursue five goals under each of our two strategies. They are as follows:

1. **Mission-driven people:** Attract, develop and retain mission-driven people who recognize their power to be positive change agents in the world, starting with the values-based learning and living community that is UWC-USA.
2. **Mission-aligned, signature, place-based programming:** Strengthen and develop programming that focuses the students on their power as change agents for peace and sustainability in their own lives, in their face-to-face and virtual communities, and in the

unique places they find themselves in the world, starting with their two-year experience at UWC-USA.

3. Integrated systems: Identify, select, and implement integrated systems to support decision-making and the student experience, ensure a satisfying work environment, and maintain an excellent interface with internal and external members of the UWC-USA community.

4. Safe and inspiring campus: Develop a campus that is safe and conducive to leveraging the tremendous diversity our students bring to create a global, values-based community focused on developing student agency for good in their communities.

5. Advancement and Funding : Develop a sustainable financial model for UWC-USA to address the projected structural deficit in 2023.

Outline of the Strategic Plan Goals and Initiatives

- I. **Mission-driven people:** Attract, develop and retain mission-driven people.
 - A. **Community Narrative.** Create a concise and coherent document with our overarching cultural narrative (Ethos) and principles for action.
 - B. **Life Cycle Plan.** Develop plan that addresses recruitment, on-boarding, orientation, professional development, offboarding.
 - C. **Support Structures.** Build the structures needed to enable a successful implementation of the employee life-cycle plan.
 - D. **MZ Location Fatigue.** Create opportunities to get the faculty and staff away from campus to re-energize.

- II. **Mission-aligned, signature, place-based programming:** Strengthen and develop programming that focuses students on their power as change-agents for peace and sustainability, starting with the UWC community.
 - A. **Define mission-alignment.** Conduct an all community study of what it means to be mission-aligned in each pillar (academic, residential, experiential).
 - B. **Annual Plan.** Develop annual program for intentional culture building in our learning and living environment throughout the year.
 - C. **CEC as foundational and distinguishing.** Identify and implement models to establish Constructive Engagement of Conflict as the distinguishing feature of UWC-USA.

- III. **Integrated systems:** Implement integrated systems and structures to support the mission and enhance the experience of all stakeholders.
 - A. **Decision-making.** Develop systems for a collaborative, distributed and transparent decision-making process.
 - B. **Student experience systems.** Identify and develop systems to support and enhance student experiences in all areas of programming.
 - C. **Satisfactory work environment.** Adopt a design thinking approach to develop and implement key systems and protocols for operations.
 - D. **Internal and external interface.** Develop technological tools and protocols to build strong points of contact among all members of UWC-USA community.

- IV. **Safe, and sustainable campus:** Improve the sustainability and safety of our campus to support a global values-based community.
- A. **Sustainability and resilience.** Prioritize sustainability and resilience in all key decisions made by the school (e.g. purchasing policy, programming, etc.).
 - B. **Focused capital expenditures.** Prioritize deferred maintenance and capital projects focused on historic buildings, classroom experience, sustainability and accessibility.
 - C. **Zone management approach.** Develop a zone management approach to facilities and grounds that makes all members of the UWC-USA community responsible for a safe and sustainable campus.
 - D. **Communal access.** Provide communal access while creating a safe and healthy campus environment for our students.
- V. **Advancement and Funding:** Develop a sustainable financial model for UWC-USA to address the projected structural deficit beginning in FYE 2023.
- A. **Resource and allocation model.** Develop a resource and allocation model that is consistent with our mission, values, and local circumstances.
 - B. **Fundraising strategy.** Develop and execute a fundraising strategy to leverage our growing (and aging!) alumni base, friends, 40th and 50th anniversaries.
 - C. **Tuition Strategy.** Develop a mission-aligned tuition strategy to make tuition a significant revenue stream while enhancing economic diversity.
 - D. **Alternative revenue stream.** Develop an alternative revenue stream strategy that intentionally furthers mission, reputation, and / or visibility.
 - E. **Location as asset or liability.** Conduct a cost benefit analysis of staying in Montezuma campus vs another mission-aligned location.

Strategic Plan with Initiatives & Coherent Actions - [Strategic Plan Board Presentation](#)

Execution Plan

The Strategic Plan above clarifies the direction and focus for UWC-USA over the next three years, as it focuses on strengthening the foundation. In order to ensure a successful implementation of this plan, some key elements must be in place:

- **Priority Initiatives:** Identify 4-5 initiatives to focus over the next year to target the efforts of the school community and earn some quick wins
- **Timeline:** A high level timeline of how these priority initiatives will be sequenced between June 2019 and June 2020
- **Structure and Logistics of Cross Functional Teams:** Clear roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders that will take this plan forward and how they will effectively collaborate with each other
- **Additional resources needed:** staffing, technology and special allocations
- **Templates:** reporting templates, list of deliverables

Execution Plan - [Strategic Execution Plan](#)

Employee Meeting, May 2019 - ISAS Self Study Feedback
Approximately 100 people participated

Mission Alignment in Programming

How could we engage our staff more in the mission of UWC?

- Educate staff about the mission.
- Provide time to create community building.
- Support new faculty.

Cultural Competency

How could we promote more awareness of Northern NM culture?

- Get to know local people from Las Vegas NM.
- Send your children to local schools in Las Vegas NM.

Accomplishments

What are some other accomplishments from this year?

- Mentally Healthy
- Progress towards community building
- Working through transitions - Residential Life/Academics

How can we celebrate them better in the future?

- Increase community amongst adults.

Challenges

Where have we made progress on our challenges from this year?

- Student culture/accountability.
- Better honesty - student body.
- Substance use/Mental health issues.

How can we continue to move forward addressing challenges next year?

- Communication amongst all college offices/departments.
- Consistency.
- Retention (faculty/staff)

Isas Self Study

Mission Alignment in Programming

How could we engage our staff more in the mission of UWC?

- Active, regular discussions on the UWC mission in different groups that intersect the community in different ways.

Cultural Competency

How could we promote more awareness of Northern NM culture?

- Unsure at this point.

Accomplishments

What are some other accomplishments from this year?

- Model UN participation in CA
- First ever pride weekend
- Increased Highlands University collaboration
- Town council advocacy works
- Academic World Quest in Washington DC
- Farm Olympics
- New cafeteria flow and options
- Pop-up competitions
- New relationship with west las vegas high school
- Improved forum

How can we celebrate them better in the future?

- Regular forum celebrations
- Recurring agenda of student accomplishment by students for students

Challenges

Where have we made progress on our challenges from this year?

- Assembly/Forum innovations have increased student involvement
- Increased attention to safeguarding training but nature of follow through open to question

How can we continue to move forward addressing challenges next year?

- Regular, focused faculty meetings
- Days with everyone free at the same time so that there are no conflicts
- How we give/receive student feedback
- Wellness
- Teaching practices
- General awareness

Isas Self Study

Mission Alignment in Programming

How could we engage our staff more in the mission of UWC?

- Encouraging them to volunteer in exchange for time off. Opportunities to engage in what we are doing. Opportunities for non-exed staff.
- At the beginning of the year, reintroduce the mission.
- Create space and time in the schedule.

Cultural Competency

How could we promote more awareness of Northern NM culture?

- Find cultural conditions that overlap with students' cultures, provide glimpses into culture and american traditions.

Safety & Sustainability

How can we become a more safe and sustainable campus?

- More lighting, more fencing, can't secure campus.
- Sustainable- all replacements done with sustainability in line, solar power.
- Personal accountability, less meat in cafe, staffing appropriated to how we use employees is sustainable.
- Increase more security with more training.

Accomplishments

What are some other accomplishments from this year?

- Dance program has grown by leaps and bounds with more than 60 students involved.
- Growth and quality of cultural days is tremendous.
- Acknowledging people count.
- Student initiated programs
- Faculty treated to dinner.

How can we celebrate them better in the future?

- Big thank you to Judi Ruprecht.
- Found out how people like to be acknowledged; maybe gift cards
- We've gotten better at acknowledgment.

Challenges

Where have we made progress on our challenges from this year?

- Establishing some repeatable habits, i.e. recognizing monthly birthdays, anniversaries of employment.
- Plans forthcoming to be solution based.

How can we continue to move forward addressing challenges next year?

- Completion and executing of strategic plan.
- Continue to find ways to celebrate and build a sense of community.

- Address challenges and concerns early - be more productive.

Isas Self Study

Mission Alignment in Programming

How could we engage our staff more in the mission of UWC?

- Buddy system and mentoring system (academics)
- Include all employees with campus service, custodial, and maintenance.
- Making dedicated times beyond employee meetings to engage.
- How is sodexo going to be mission-aligned in their products/practices.

Cultural Competency

How could we promote more awareness of Northern NM culture?

- Swap SWS and PW service to allow employees (faculty) to experience NM.
- Multi-year plan with community partners(written by them)
- More events for the community (music, band, arts etc.)
- Dedicated programming to get out into the community.
- UWC day as a platform to engage with community.

Safety & Sustainability

How can we become a more safe and sustainable campus?

- Exercise an emergency preparedness plan (drills with law enforcement officers)
- Risk assessment; we have to do it and exercise this often.
- Sustainability; in partnership with Sodexo make sure we set aggressive sustainable goals.

Accomplishments

What are some other accomplishments from this year?

- The way first years were welcomed (expectations).
- Less vandalism.
- Bringing the field back to life.
- The teamwork after and during the wind storm - emergency notification system.
- Reduce water use.

How can we celebrate them better in the future?

- Advance notice (better organization/instructions)
- Do it at every employee meeting and in individual departments/team meetings.
- Signage around water and fire prevention/current status, or consumption.

Challenges

Where have we made progress on our challenges from this year?

- Vandalism
- Improved security yet created issues with doors and screens.
- Attempted to create better branding with new website

How can we continue to move forward addressing challenges next year?

- Feedback forms and implementation of follow-up
- Clearer ownership of responsibilities, accomplishments.
- New information systems
- Challenges
- Employee retention
- Communication (internal)
- Addressing student expectation/mission misalignment
- Website information is incomplete, irrelevant content, difficult to navigate.
- Maintenance, room reservations, vehicle reservations

Isas Self Study

Mission Alignment in Programming

How could we engage our staff more in the mission of UWC?

- Timing - figure out good time for all of the community members to come together.
- Endemic morale issue needs to be addressed
- More cross departmental activities/events (include faculty and maintenance)
- Better systems for collaboration across groups/departments
- Loss of human contact because of emphasis on systems

Cultural Competency

How could we promote more awareness of Northern NM culture?

- Administration/Board not very international - this can impact decision making processes - beyond just hiring more international faculty
- Not being permissive of behaviors that would not be acceptable in the place we are.
- There is a marked inequality/disconnect between community and school

Safety & Sustainability

How can we become a more safe and sustainable campus?

-Dorm buildings - more efficient heating/electricity.

Accomplishments

What are some other accomplishments from this year?

- Selection of student info system - Power School
- Exed and creation of farm olympics

- Acceptances to universities

How can we celebrate them better in the future?

- More autonomy in decision making process.
- Recognition of individuals
- Grand gestures not as important as a high quality day-to-day experience.

Challenges

Where have we made progress on our challenges from this year?

- More PD - better advertising for PD options
- Involve community members in decision making processes
- Better timelines for decision making - more transparency when decisions are made and implemented.

How can we continue to move forward addressing challenges next year?

- Retention - 23 have left since August 1st
 - Is this being talked about at the SLT level?
- Dorm buildings - lots of waste/heating issues/hard to track electricity usage
- Infrastructure in general

Isas Self Study

Mission Alignment in Programming

How could we engage our staff more in the mission of UWC?

- Communicate program goals to staff and employees
- Hire with intentionality about mission, not just IB.

Cultural Competency

How could we promote more awareness of Northern NM culture?

- Partnerships and institutional support for the leg work.
- A lot of events are student driven, but there is not enough NM representation to count on that for this component.

Accomplishments

What are some other accomplishments from this year?

- Cleanliness of Kluge, learn how to celebrate Friday Eve, Annual conference (with the need for more support), southwest studies/project week (smooth, integrated) all organic waste being composted.

How can we celebrate them better in the future?

- Provide appropriate support to decrease stress.

Challenges

Where have we made progress on our challenges from this year?

- Structural injustice - allow for inequity in interactions
- Short handed in custodial, need acknowledgment.

How can we continue to move forward addressing challenges next year?

- Involve student group in custodial projects
- Linkages with RT/ART's about student issues
- Name Tags.

Initial Findings

From the Alumni Engagement Survey and Focus Groups

With a grant from the Steele Foundation, UWC-USA embarked on an extensive research project lasting over a full year with two primary objectives:

- 1** Learn more about how UWC-USA alumni perceive their UWC-USA experience in the years since they graduated. This involved a survey conducted by Performance Enhancement Group Ltd. (PEG), an organization with deep expertise and significant experience in alumni program research.
- 2** Provide alumni an opportunity to share their thoughts on both the data gathered in the survey as well as the basic tenets of the strategic plan as it is being developed.

Essentially, the goal was to ask alumni to reflect on their past experiences and use that data to determine the future priorities for the next generation of students.

The Alumni Engagement Survey

The survey was designed by Jose Pablo Rojas-Brewer, director of Alumni Relations and Giving, in collaboration with Rob Shoss from PEG and his team of statisticians and experts. The questions were tested and reviewed extensively before the survey was conducted over four weeks in September 2018. Corresponding closely with schools with high participation rates, 26 percent of UWC-USA alumni completed the survey. Highlights of the survey include responses about how often alumni promote the school and what they value most about their UWC-USA experiences.

Younger alumni feel a much greater affinity or loyalty to the school because of “a student organization or CAS/ExEd activity I was associated with” as opposed to older alumni whose affinity is tied more generally to the school.

UWC-USA’s diversity and inclusivity is the characteristic of the school that alumni value the most and that they feel the school needs to work hardest to maintain and continually improve.

98%

Ninety-eight percent of respondents indicate that their decision to attend UWC-USA was a “good” or “great” decision.

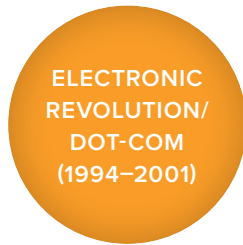
60%

Sixty percent of respondents say that they promote the school all the time or regularly.

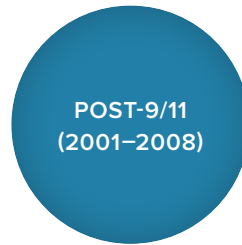
PEG, the company that conducts the surveys, compares data with other schools (high schools, colleges, and universities) that have answered similar questions to discern how UWC-USA's responses compare to other schools. They have designated the following "eras" of graduating classes in the interest of consistency.



This era of economic growth includes the Reagan years of economic prosperity characterized by a belief in the marketplace.



This era is defined by two things: the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the computer and the internet.

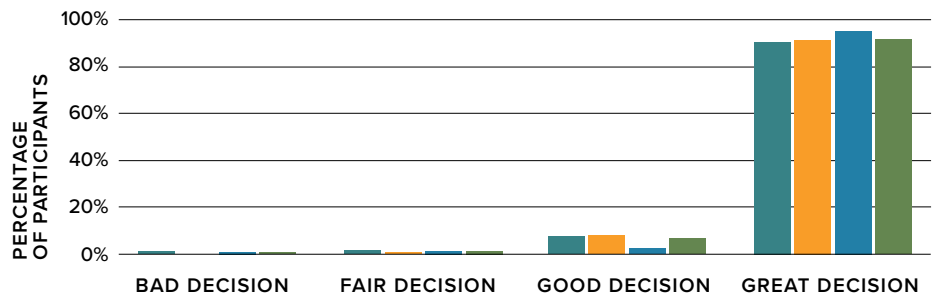


At almost the same time, the "new economy" and our belief in "peace forever" ended.

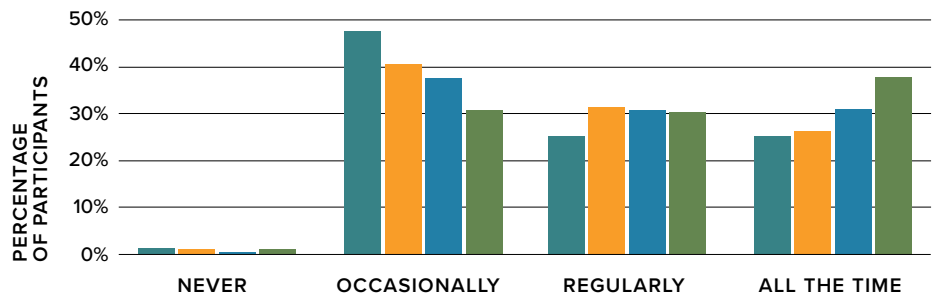


In late 2008, the U.S. stock market experienced the greatest collapse since the Great Depression, leading to significant financial stress around the world.

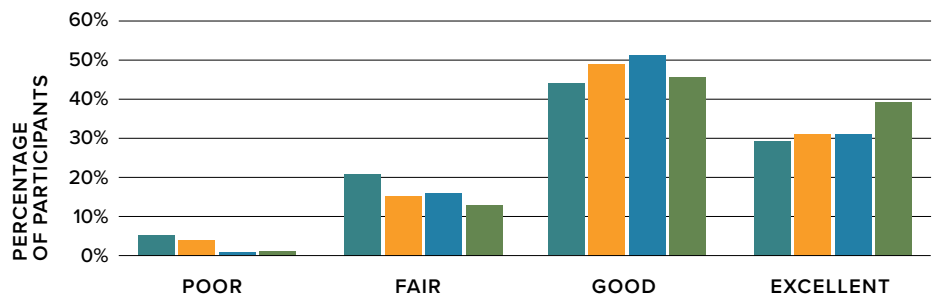
How would you rate your decision to attend UWC-USA?



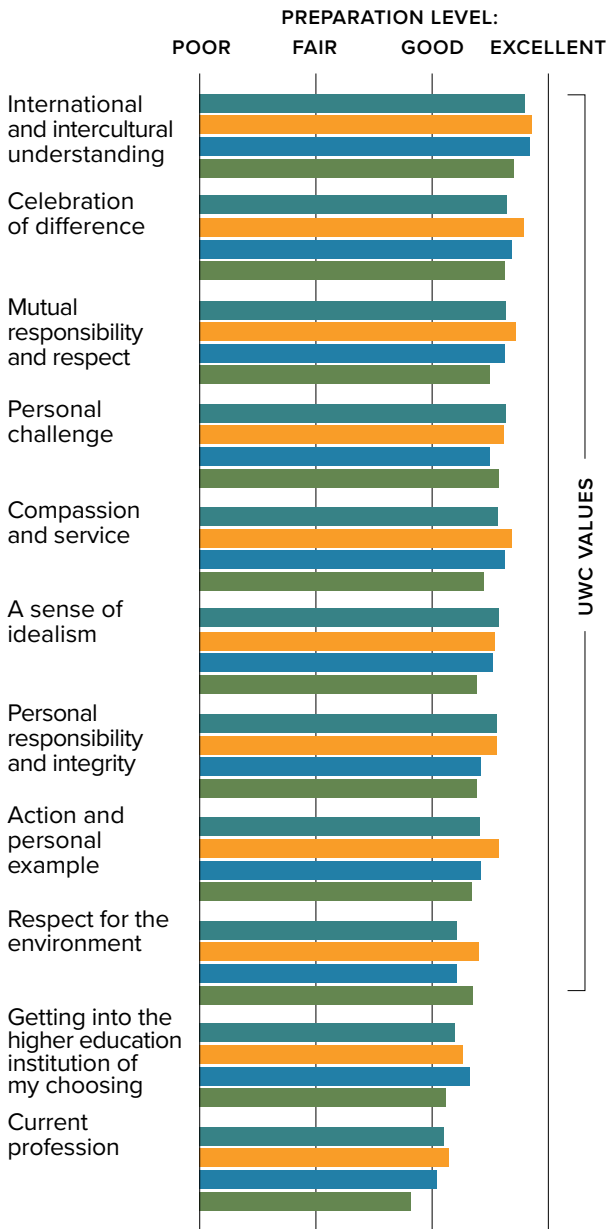
How often do you promote (or talk about) UWC-USA to others?



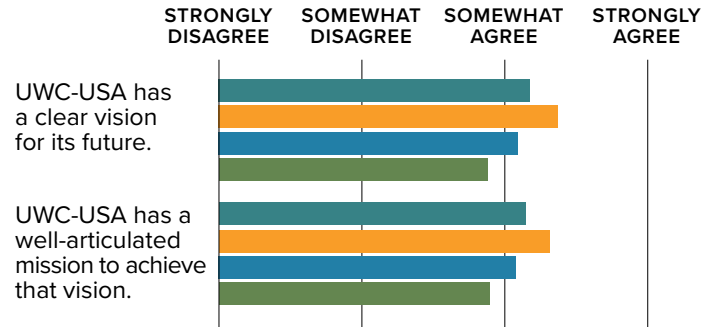
Which of the following best describes your experiences as a member of the UWC movement?



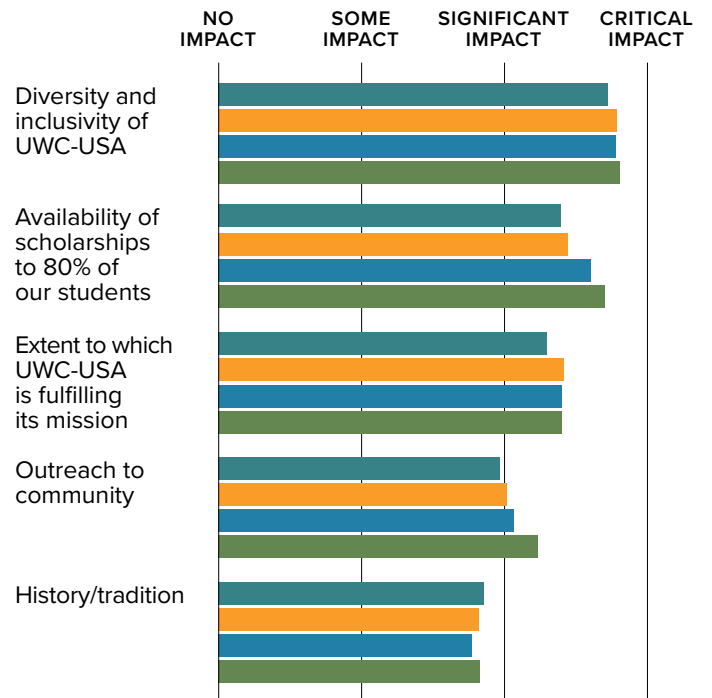
How well did the education you received from UWC-USA prepare you for each of the following?



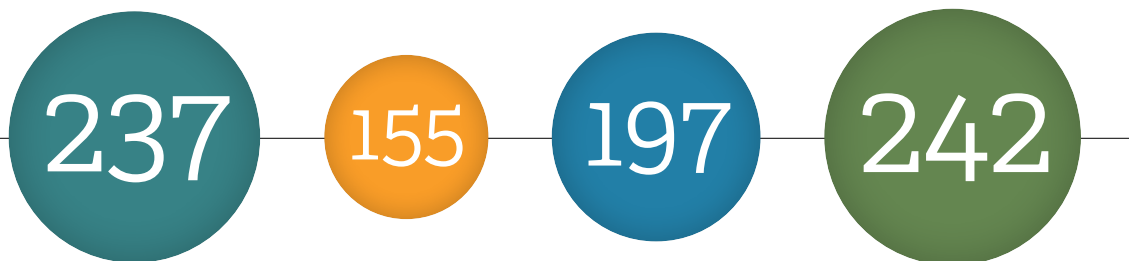
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding UWC-USA.



How much does each of the following impact your overall opinion of UWC-USA?



Number of participants, by era of graduating class



Which of these was the most impactful?

PAWs
CEC African Chorus
Peace & Justice Center Youth Detention Center
HIV/AIDS Peer Educator Rock Climbing
Habitat for Humanity Phenomenal Women Community Service
All of them Jewelry Making Cultural Days Rugby
Wilderness Program
Tutoring Search & Rescue Special Olympics SAR Soup Kitchen
Cultural Shows CARE Unit Project Week

The Focus Groups

One hundred and forty-three alumni attended focus groups facilitated by Jose Pablo Rojas-Brewer. The focus groups took place in 12 cities, ranging from New York to Denver to Mexico City. Alumni were asked a series of questions about the Alumni Engagement Survey data and also were asked for their input specifically on elements of the strategic plan.

“I learned that alumni are eager for face-to-face engagement opportunities,” Jose Pablo explains. “They kept talking about how ‘Montezuma is home’ and how their CAS/ ExEd activities were the most powerful growth experiences when

they were students.” Another recurring theme for alumni was a more complete realization (after they left Montezuma) that UWC-USA afforded them space to explore success and, more important, failure, with the guidance and support of faculty and staff.

UWC-USA President Victoria Mora participated in three focus groups and consistently found strong support for the strategic direction the school is heading. Specifically, she referred to the four signature program areas (Wilderness, Arts and Culture, Sustainability, and the Bartos Institute) that routinely resonated with alumni.

“As we continue to work on the strategic plan for UWC-USA, the Alumni Engagement Survey and focus groups have been instrumental in providing feedback and direction,” she says. “We’ll be sharing more details about the strategic plan and look forward to more alumni opportunities to both discuss and refine it in the future.” 🌍🌱

UWC-USA afforded many alumni space to explore success and, more important, failure, with the guidance and support of faculty and staff.