



**California State University, San Bernardino  
Santos Manuel Student Union Board of Directors  
Strategic Planning Committee  
Tuesday, January 13, 2026  
12:00 p.m. – SMSU North Chambers  
Agenda**

Call to Order  
Roll Call  
Approval of Minutes from December 17, 2025  
Open Forum  
Adoption of Agenda

Old Business:

- SP 08/26    Discuss NASPA Review Executive Summary (Informational, Bustillos)
- SP 09/26    Review Milestones and Action Plan (Informational, Del Rossi)

Announcements

Adjournment



**California State University, San Bernardino  
Santos Manuel Student Union Board of Directors  
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, December 17, 2025**

**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Anjali, Jasmine Bustillos, Benjamin Fejzic, Edgar Lopez, Jocelyn Paz, Michael Rister

**Members Absent:** Sophia Garcia, Robinpreet Waraich

**Staff Present:** Monica Baeza, Vilayat Del Rossi, Elizabeth Junker

**Guests Present:** None

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 4:08p.m.

**Roll Call:** A verbal roll call of attendees was conducted. Quorum was confirmed.

**Approval of Minutes:**

M/S Lopez/Anjali; motion to approve October 28, 2025 meeting minutes.  
*Motion passed*

**Open Forum:** No comments.

**Adoption of Agenda:**

M/S Anjali/Lopez; motion to approve agenda as presented. The agenda was approved by consensus.

**Old Business**

SP 04/26      Review Model-Strategic Plans from Industry Leaders (Informational, Bustillos)

M/S Lopez/Anjali; motion to open SP 04/26 Review Model-Strategic Plans from Industry Leaders.

During discussion of model strategic plans, committee members shared input on formatting and content preferences for the SMSU strategic plan and accompanying mission, vision, and values. Jocelyn Paz emphasized the importance of clearly defined and distinct sections, citing Cal Poly's use of "objective" and "measure of success" statements as effective and easy to follow. She particularly appreciated the structure built around three pillars—purpose, people, and performance—describing them as "short and sweet" and helpful in providing clarity. Jocelyn also highlighted Cal State Fullerton's plan, expressing appreciation for its time-bound goals and a layout that included mission, vision, culture, and values. She remarked that having only a mission and vision is not encompassing enough to reflect the breadth of work SMSU performs—especially for employees and students engaging with its centers. Edgar Lopez agreed and noted the strength of Cal Poly's formatting, specifically how it pairs highly specific goals such as "implement a talent management program" and "update HR systems" with measurable outcomes. He suggested that SMSU might consider similarly focused, implementation-driven language in its plan. Adding to this, Vilayat commented that as the committee moves forward in the planning process, it will be important to identify which items require explicit definition for execution, while allowing other goals to remain general enough to provide flexibility for staff development and evolving priorities.

4:25pm Jocelyn Paz passed the gavel to Anjali.

## **New Business**

SP 06/26      Mission/Vision rework (Discussion, Paz)

M/S Lopez/Paz; motion to open SP 06/26 Mission/Vision rework.

Jocelyn Paz introduced a discussion on the need to rework the SMSU mission and vision statement as part of the organization's 10-year strategic plan. She explained that student representatives have been focusing on foundational elements of the organization and, based on feedback from the NASPA review, identified a lack of a clear "North Star." She noted that the current mission statement is visually buried on the website and lacks references to student-centeredness, collaborative culture, or inclusion of the Rancho Mirage Student Center at Palm Desert. Jocelyn suggested more descriptive language, such as "student-centered," "student-driven," and "collaboratively providing safe and inclusive spaces," and proposed replacing "enriching" with "impactful." She emphasized the importance of highlighting SMSU's empowering role in providing employment opportunities and autonomy for students.

Mike added that the mission should reflect not only a student-centered approach but also the student-initiated and student-driven origins of SMSU and RecWell facilities. Jocelyn agreed and further emphasized SMSU's unique niche on campus as an empowering, student-operated space that builds belonging and leadership through student employment.

Edgar Lopez supported the initiative, agreeing that the mission and vision should better articulate SMSU's scope and partnerships, especially its role with Palm Desert and other university functions. He noted this conversation aligns with the committee's broader strategic planning

work. Jasmine and Vilayat acknowledged the significance of the feedback and affirmed it would help guide the drafting process, with all feedback being synthesized into future drafts of mission, vision, and values for committee review.

SP 07/26      Creating a solution-based culture (Discussion, Paz)

M/S Paz/Bustillos; motion to open SP 07/26 Creating a solution-based culture.

The committee engaged in a discussion led by Jocelyn Paz on the importance of developing a solution-based organizational culture that does not rely solely on the leadership style of any one individual. She emphasized the need for clear systems to identify, prioritize, and resolve issues, especially during times of leadership transition. Citing recent examples of unresolved concerns. She asked how the organization can ensure accountability and long-term follow-through beyond individual roles. Jocelyn and other members agreed that values like “accountability” should be reflected not only in operations but also in the strategic planning framework.

In response, Vilayat outlined current efforts to build internal controls, clarify decision-making roles, and reduce the need for reactive “firefighting” by addressing root causes. He provided examples of process improvements, including the use of cover sheets for board action items and efforts to make budget reports more accessible. Edgar Lopez added that fostering a more thorough and less rushed decision-making environment would help prevent recurring issues and promote stronger governance. The committee agreed that this conversation will inform future strategic plan development, especially around building a sustainable culture and structure of accountability.

4:45pm Anjali passed the gavel back to Jocelyn Paz.

SP 08/26      Discuss NASPA Review Executive Summary (Informational, Bustillos)

M/S Bustillos/Anjali; motion to open SP 08/26 Discuss NASPA Review Executive Summary.

Jasmine Bustillos presented a condensed overview of the NASPA external review findings, highlighting key themes to support strategic planning. The review found that SMSU and Recreation & Wellness (RecWell) currently lack a unified mission or "North Star" to guide strategic alignment, with outdated mission statements and limited integration between departments. While student employment programs are a major strength—with 96% of student staff reporting skill development—there is a need to more clearly connect students’ work to the organization’s broader purpose. Additionally, few assessments currently exist for non-employee student participants.

Programming efforts were found to be strong but siloed, with limited coordination across units and challenges adapting to emerging student needs. The review also noted untapped opportunities to expand evening and weekend programming in collaboration with other campus partners, and a need for greater professionalization in conference and event services. Due to time

constraints, the committee agreed to defer discussion of the remaining themes—particularly on equity, inclusion, and access—until the next meeting, allowing members more time to review the summarized materials and engage in a more meaningful conversation.

M/S Lopez/Anjali; motion to table SP 08/26 & SP 09/26 to the next meeting.  
Motion passed unanimously.

**Announcements:**

No announcements from committee members.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:03p.m.

**Minutes approved by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jocelyn Paz, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Executive Summary:

# NASPA External Review Findings and Strategic Response

## Introduction

The NASPA External Review Team conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the Santos Manuel Student Union and Recreation & Wellness Dept. (collectively “SMSU”) at California State University, San Bernardino, focusing on organizational effectiveness, culture, governance, and alignment with best practices in Student Affairs administration.

The review recognized SMSU as a vital, student-centered organization with a demonstrated commitment to inclusion, holistic wellbeing, and service to the CSUSB community. It also identified opportunities to strengthen structural clarity, internal communication, assessment integration, and long-term sustainability.

This executive summary synthesizes the review’s core findings and outlines SMSU’s immediate, short-term, and strategic responses now in motion or being incorporated into the upcoming 2026–2030 Strategic Plan.

## Summary of Key Findings

### 1. Organizational Clarity and Leadership Alignment

The review identified a need for greater clarity around roles, responsibilities, and communication across all levels of the organization. While the Board of Directors and leadership demonstrate commitment to SMSU’s mission, staff expressed uncertainty around decision-making processes and strategic priorities. The review identified a need to establish a single, portfolio-wide “north star” that unites SMSU and RecWell, clarifying shared values and how each unit contributes to CSUSB’s strategic goals, noting that the current mission is not consistently experienced across units and should be refreshed for a post-COVID context.

#### Key insights:

- Governance and management roles sometimes overlap, leading to role confusion and inconsistent accountability.
- Leadership transitions have created both challenges and opportunities to reset expectations and strengthen culture.
- Staff seek clearer communication channels and consistent direction from senior leadership to align day-to-day work with organizational goals.
- A unified purpose and underlying values would clarify core functions and inform day-to-day decisions.

**Opportunity:** Establish transparent decision-making systems, consistent communication pathways, and shared leadership frameworks that foster accountability and trust with shared purpose.

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### 2. Organizational Culture and Staff Wellbeing

Staff consistently articulated a deep sense of care, commitment, and purpose in serving students. However, they also reported symptoms of burnout, limited professional growth opportunities, and role overload in certain functional areas.

**Key insights:**

- Workload imbalances and unclear role scopes contribute to fatigue and morale challenges.
- Recognition systems are inconsistent and often informal, limiting opportunities to celebrate contributions.
- Staff expressed a desire to rebuild a culture of trust, reflection, and mutual respect.
- Student employment and leadership development is a clear strength for the organization with 96% of student staff reported gaining tangible professional/leadership skills.
- Board training is robust and engagement is high.

**Opportunity:** Establish a healthy, sustainable work culture that balances performance expectations with personal wellbeing and development. Assist student employees connect their individual roles to the organization's broader mission, and assess what non-employee students are learning through programs.

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### 3. Assessment and Strategic Integration

The review recognized that while SMSU collects meaningful program and participation data, there is no consistent framework for assessment and continuous improvement across departments. Data-driven decision-making is fragmented, with limited integration between assessment, budget planning, and strategic priorities.

**Key insights:**

- Assessment practices vary by unit and are not consistently tied to outcomes or resource allocation.
- Institutional partnerships (e.g., with Institutional Research) are promising but underutilized.
- There is potential for improved integration between data visualization platforms (Power BI, Tableau) to enhance decision-making and transparency.

**Opportunity:** Develop a unified assessment framework that aligns data collection, evaluation, and reporting with strategic planning and fiscal decision-making.

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### 4. Governance, Policy, and Compliance

The NASPA team acknowledged SMSU's positive relationship with the Board of Directors and the CSU system but recommended strengthening governance literacy and documentation practices. While policy and compliance adherence are largely sound, visibility into these structures could be enhanced.

**Key Insights:**

- Board members would benefit from clearer onboarding, training, and engagement in strategic oversight.
- Policy frameworks and CSU auxiliary compliance processes need greater documentation and accessibility.
- Strengthened reporting and communication between the Board and staff would enhance transparency and shared accountability.

**Opportunity:** Clarify the distinction between governance and management roles, update policy frameworks, and institutionalize Board education and compliance reporting.

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## 5. Facilities, Finance, and Operational Sustainability

The SMSU facilities highly visible hubs of campus life, with student engagement and event demand increasing post-pandemic. However, long-term sustainability will depend on balancing space usage, staffing models, fiscal practices and priorities.

### Key Insights:

- Space utilization, maintenance, and modernization need to align with student expectations for flexibility, technology, and inclusivity.
- Staffing structures must be reviewed to ensure operational efficiency and equitable workload distribution.
- Budget processes could be better linked to strategic priorities, assessment outcomes, and sustainability planning.

**Opportunity:** Create a facilities and resource plan that integrates physical, financial, and human resources in support of long-term operational balance.

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## Immediate and Ongoing Actions

SMSU leadership has already begun addressing several areas identified in the NASPA review. The following actions are currently underway:

- **Culture & Staff Development:** Continuing learning block sessions that focus on organizational values, vision, and mission, which will align with daily expectations. Process assists in finding our “north star”.
  - **Workforce Review:** A comprehensive workforce and staffing review is underway to address role balance, succession planning, and sustainability.
  - **Governance and Policy Revision:** Updates to the Reserve Fund Policy, budget process/guidelines, and HR practices are advancing to strengthen CSU auxiliary compliance and financial transparency.
  - **NASPA Review Debriefing:** Moderated discussions with staff, Board, and divisional leadership have been held to promote open dialogue and collective understanding of review findings.
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## Short-Term Actions (6–12 Months)

In the next year, SMSU will prioritize targeted initiatives that bridge review recommendations and strategic planning implementation:

- **Mission, Culture, and Governance:** Co-create a unified mission, vision, and values statement that clarifies SMSU’s purpose and Palm Desert’s role; strengthen leadership and Board onboarding, and advance professional development, wellness, and JEDI initiatives to deepen trust and accountability
- **Communication, Collaboration, and Planning:** Establish a streamlined communication and planning framework through monthly leadership forums, shared goal-alignment tools, and a collaborative platform; refresh websites and conduct campus engagement efforts to enhance visibility and shared understanding.
- **Assessment, Learning, and Student Experience:** Expand learning and engagement assessment to include student outcomes, implement service-level agreements and user feedback systems, and promote equitable performance review and professional development processes.



- **Facilities, Finance, and Transparency:** Launch a Facilities Master Plan, align event pricing and facility use with recruitment goals, strengthen financial transparency through “Budget Basics” visuals and annotated audits, and expand data integration and revenue generation initiatives.
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## Strategic Plan Integration (2026–2030 Cycle)

The findings from the NASPA review are shaping the structure and themes of the next SMSU Strategic Plan, ensuring that future goals directly address organizational needs and align with CSUSB priorities.

### Strategic Themes for Integration

1. **Facility Vision and Student Engagement**
    - Develop a long-term facilities and space plan that aligns student needs, sustainability, and fiscal health.
    - Promote inclusive, technology-enabled, and flexible environments that enhance belonging and engagement
  2. **Sustainable People and Culture**
    - Prioritize staff wellbeing, professional development, and equitable workload distribution.
    - Embed shared values into performance evaluation, recognition, and hiring practices.
  3. **Integrated Assessment and Decision-Making**
    - Establish data-informed planning processes that connect assessment to budgeting and staffing decisions.
    - Utilize dashboard integration (Power BI/Tableau) for transparency and strategic accountability.
  4. **Governance and Compliance Excellence**
    - Institutionalize robust policy management and documentation systems.
    - Strengthen Board engagement and training in governance best practices and CSU auxiliary requirements.
  5. **Values-Driven Leadership and Service**
    - Operationalize SMSU’s core values in leadership expectations, professional standards, and service delivery.
    - Reinforce purpose-driven work as central to student and staff success.
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## Conclusion

The NASPA External Review reaffirmed that SMSU’s most significant strength is its people, a community of professionals and student leaders deeply committed to service, integrity, and student success. The organization now stands at a pivotal juncture: one that demands renewed clarity, cultural alignment, and sustainable practices to support its long-term mission.

Through focused leadership transitions, workforce realignment, and strategic integration, SMSU is moving decisively to:

- Build a culture grounded in trust, balance, and shared purpose.
- Institutionalize data-driven decision-making and compliance excellence.
- Ensure that every operational and strategic decision reflects SMSU’s enduring commitment to student wellbeing and collective growth.

The forthcoming strategic plan will formalize these efforts, providing a roadmap for organizational sustainability, cultural renewal, and continued excellence in student engagement and leadership development.



## **Purpose**

To develop and launch a five-year strategic plan that reflects the organization's growth, integrates both the Santos Manuel Student Union and the Recreation and Wellness Center, and aligns with the university's priorities. The process will ensure broad stakeholder engagement, data-informed decision-making, and an implementation framework for sustainable impact.

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## **Phase 1: Discovery & Foundation (Summer 2025 – Fall 2025)**

**Goal:** Build a shared understanding of the organization's current landscape and future opportunities.

### **Key Activities:**

- Review Program Review Report findings, Culture, Development, and Strategic Planning Assessment, AAA Staff Retreat Outputs, and Staff Values.
- Review industry leader strategic plans
- Analyze Board of Directors objectives and Division of Student Affairs strategic directions.
- Conduct stakeholder listening sessions (students, staff, campus partners).
- Facilitate Strategic Planning Committee retreats to identify key themes.
- Draft revised mission, vision, and values.

### **Deliverables:**

- Discovery Summary Report
  - SWOT/PESTLE or SOAR Analysis
  - Draft Mission, Vision, and Values
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## **Phase 2: Drafting the Strategic Framework (Fall 2025 – Spring 2026)**

**Goal:** Translate discovery insights into strategic priorities, goals, and measurable objectives.

### **Key Activities:**

- Develop 3–5 strategic priority areas.
- Define objectives, outcomes, and indicators for success.
- Draft strategic framework and narrative.
- Solicit feedback from internal and external stakeholders.
- Align framework with campus and divisional goals.

**Deliverables:**

- Draft Strategic Framework
  - Stakeholder Feedback Summary
  - Revised Mission and Vision Statements
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**Phase 3: Validation & Approval (Spring – Fall 2026)**

**Goal:** Secure consensus and formal approval from all governing bodies.

**Key Activities:**

- Conduct open review period and integrate community feedback.
- Finalize goals, metrics, and implementation plan.
- Present final plan to Board of Directors for approval.

**Deliverables:**

- Final Approved Strategic Plan
  - Implementation Framework Outline
  - Executive Summary for Communication
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**Phase 4: Implementation Planning & Rollout (Summer – Fall 2026)**

**Goal:** Operationalize the plan and prepare for official launch.

**Key Activities:**

- Establish Implementation Teams by strategic priority area.
- Develop Year 1 Action Plans with measurable deliverables.
- Integrate strategic goals into departmental objectives.
- Launch internal communications and rollout campaign.

**Deliverables:**

- Year 1 Implementation Plan
  - Launch Campaign and Communications Toolkit
  - Baseline Performance Dashboard
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**Phase 5: Continuous Monitoring & Improvement (2026–2030)**

**Goal:** Sustain momentum and ensure accountability through ongoing evaluation.

**Key Activities:**

- Annual progress reviews and BOD reporting.

- Mid-cycle review (by 2029) to adjust for emerging priorities.
- Integrate results into annual budget and assessment cycles.

**Deliverables:**

- Annual Progress Reports
- Mid-Cycle Strategic Refresh (2029)
- Final Strategic Impact Report (2031)

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**High-Level Timeline Overview**

Phase	Focus	Timeframe	Key Deliverables
1	Discovery & Foundation	Summer – Fall 2025	Discovery Report, Draft Mission/Vision
2	Drafting Framework	Fall 2025 – Spring 2026	Draft Plan, Feedback Summary
3	Validation & Approval	Spring – Fall 2026	Final Plan, Implementation Framework
4	Implementation & Rollout	Summer – Fall 2026	Year 1 Plan, Launch Event
5	Monitoring & Improvement	2026–2031	Annual Reports, Mid-Cycle Review

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**Overview**

This roadmap outlines a deliberate and inclusive approach to developing the Santos Manuel Student Union, inclusive of the SMSU and Recreation and Wellness, five-year strategic plan. Beginning with data-informed discovery and stakeholder engagement, the process will move through structured drafting, validation, and implementation phases. The timeline accounts for governance processes, student leadership transitions, and alignment with university objectives. By Fall 2026, the organization will be positioned to launch a comprehensive, actionable, and measurable strategic plan that sets the foundation for growth and continuous improvement through 2031.

# Overarching Organizational Core Values

## 1. Integrity

**Key Ideas:** honesty, reliability, follow-through, responsibility, moral principles  
**Pulls From Posters:** trust, honesty, justice, respect, professionalism, accountability

## 2. Compassion

**Key Ideas:** empathy, care, kindness, emotional maturity, advocacy  
**Pulls From Posters:** empathy, kindness, compassion, faith, advocacy, “seek to understand”

## 3. Respect

**Key Ideas:** honoring others, boundaries, dignity, fairness, moral grounding  
**Pulls From Posters:** respect, freedom, honoring others, valuing differences, rights & morals

## 4. Service

**Key Ideas:** purpose, contribution, work ethic, helping others, mission-driven action  
**Pulls From Posters:** service, work, responsibility, leadership, achievement, wisdom

## 5. Growth

**Key Ideas:** learning, self-improvement, curiosity, knowledge, emotional maturity  
**Pulls From Posters:** self-growth, knowledge, emotional maturity, wisdom, independence

## 6. Balance

**Key Ideas:** wellbeing, sustainability, healthy rhythms, adventure, groundedness  
**Pulls From Posters:** wellbeing, adventure, maintaining balance, self-growth, holistic perspective

## 7. Connection

**Key Ideas:** relationships, community, belonging, gratitude, collaboration  
**Pulls From Posters:** family, community, connection, gratitude, humor, celebration, collaboration

## 8. Justice

**Key Ideas:** equity, fairness, advocacy, rights, moral responsibility  
**Pulls From Posters:** rights & morals, equity, advocacy, justice, DEI principles

# Thematic Summary & Categorized Analysis

Value	Core Concepts	Representative Values / Notes from Posters
Integrity	Honesty, accountability, moral grounding, reliability	Honesty, trust, justice, professionalism, responsibility, follow-through
Compassion	Empathy, kindness, emotional attunement, advocating for others	Kindness, compassion, advocacy, faith, “seek to understand,” empathy

Value	Core Concepts	Representative Values / Notes from Posters
Respect	Dignity, fairness, honoring differences, healthy boundaries	Respect, freedom, fairness, moral rights, honoring others
Service	Purposeful work, contribution, dedication to others	Service, work, responsibility, leadership, achievement, wisdom
Growth	Learning, personal development, curiosity, emotional maturity	Self-growth, knowledge, wisdom, independence, achievement
Balance	Wellbeing, stability, healthy work-life rhythms	Wellbeing, adventure, maintaining balance, holistic wellbeing
Connection	Community, belonging, relationship-building, gratitude	Family, community, collaboration, celebration, humor, connection
Justice	Equity, advocacy, doing what's right, empowering others	Rights and morals, DEI, justice, advocacy, fairness

## Core Values with Full Value Statements

### 1. Integrity

*We act with honesty and responsibility, ensuring our decisions and actions align with our moral principles. We follow through on commitments and build trust through consistency and accountability.*

### 2. Compassion

*We lead with empathy, kindness, and understanding. By caring for others and advocating when needed, we create a supportive environment where people feel valued and seen.*

### 3. Respect

*We honor the dignity, boundaries, and perspectives of every person. We approach one another with fairness and openness, recognizing the inherent worth of all individuals.*

### 4. Service

*We find purpose in contributing to the greater good. Through dedication, leadership, and a commitment to helping others, we bring our mission to life in meaningful ways.*

### 5. Growth

*We strive for ongoing personal and professional development. By embracing learning, curiosity, and reflection, we strengthen both ourselves and our community.*

### 6. Balance

*We prioritize wellbeing and sustainability in how we work and live. By cultivating healthy rhythms and nurturing holistic health, we support long-term success and wholeness.*

### 7. Connection

*We build community through authentic relationships, collaboration, and gratitude. We celebrate one another and foster a culture where all can belong and contribute.*

### 8. Justice

*We stand for fairness, equity, and what is right. Through advocacy and principled action, we work to ensure dignity and opportunity for all.*

# Shared Leadership Language — Core Themes

## 1. Trust

Leadership builds confidence and psychological safety through consistency, care, and reliability.

*Drawn from:* trust, transparency/trust, safety, centered/aligned, authentic

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## 2. Transparency

Leadership communicates openly and clearly, making decisions, processes, and direction visible.

*Drawn from:* transparency, transparency/trust, audit/naming roadblocks & flow, clear priorities with follow-through

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## 3. Holistic Wellness

Leadership honors the whole person and supports sustainable wellbeing, balance, and healthy boundaries.

*Drawn from:* holistic wellness, balance, centered/aligned, wellness, sustainability.

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## 4. Accountability

Leadership is reliable and action-oriented, pairing compassion with execution and collective responsibility.

*Drawn from:* follow-through, execution, accountability, integrity, initiative.

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## 5. Collaboration

Leadership fosters partnership, connection, and a strong sense of belonging through shared work and mutual respect.

*Drawn from:* collaboration, partnership, connection, community, belonging.

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## 6. Equitable Care

Leadership is human-centered and compassionate, meeting people with understanding and care while advancing fairness, equity, and safety, ensuring people feel protected, respected, and valued.

*Drawn from:* empathy, compassion (with grace), authentic/relatable, create a sense of belonging, justice, equity, equality, safety, integrity, representation.

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## 7. Growth

Leadership is future-focused and growth-oriented, encouraging innovation, learning, and collective progress.

*Drawn from:* envision the future, growth in all ways, innovation, continued education.

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## 8. Excellence

Leadership models confidence, skill, and service excellence—showing up prepared, capable, and committed.

*Drawn from:* competent, service excellence, leadership, professionalism, “badass.”



# Sustainability Themes — Cross-Group Synthesis

These themes reflect what staff identified as:

- Most energizing and sustainable
  - Most draining or unsustainable
  - Necessary to improve balance and longevity
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## Theme 1: Clarity of Priorities, Expectations, and Follow-Through

Sustainability increases when work expectations are clear, priorities are realistic, and commitments are consistently followed through.

**Pulled directly from group language:**

- Clear priorities with follow-through
- Defining work expectations
- Naming “this is how we’ve always done it”
- Continue discussion + follow-through lists
- Understanding limitations

**Why this matters:**

Unclear or shifting expectations drain energy. Staff experience sustainability when they know **what matters most, what can wait, and what will actually be completed.**

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## Theme 2: Balanced Workload and Capacity Awareness

Work feels sustainable when workload is intentionally divided and organizational limits are acknowledged.

**Pulled directly from group language:**

- Dividing workload / addressing burnout
- Understanding limitations
- Capacity awareness
- Flexible work schedules

**Why this matters:**

Burnout is not an individual failure — it is a systems issue. Sustainability requires honest conversations about **how much work exists** and **how it is distributed**.

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## Theme 3: Supportive Structures and Standardized Processes

Sustainability is strengthened through clear, consistent systems that reduce friction and inefficiency.

**Pulled directly from group language:**

- Standardized processes / assessments
- Auditing roadblocks and flow
- Defining “how we do things”
- Strategic planning committees / working groups

**Why this matters;**

When systems are unclear or constantly reinvented, staff energy is drained. Structure supports sustainability by creating predictability and efficiency.

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## Theme 4: Time for Reflection and Re-Evaluation

Sustainable work requires protected time to pause, reflect, and intentionally adjust practices.

**Pulled directly from group language:**

- Time for reflection
- Reflection to make actual & sustainable changes
- Dedicated time to revisit
- Continue discussion

**Why this matters:**

Without reflection, teams stay stuck in reactive cycles. Reflection is not a luxury — it is essential for meaningful, lasting change.

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## Theme 5: Collaboration, Role Clarity, and Shared Learning

Sustainability grows when people understand their roles, collaborate intentionally, and learn together.

**Pulled directly from group language:**

- Commitment to collaboration
- Understanding our roles to grow
- Understanding roles to better serve student success
- Trainings, workshops, co-work/collaboration
- Cross-training for coverage

**Why this matters;**

Sustainability is relational. Clear roles, shared learning, and collaboration reduce isolation and increase resilience across the team.

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## High-Level Synthesis

Across the group exercise, staff consistently named sustainability as:

- **Structural** (systems, processes, priorities)
- **Relational** (collaboration, shared responsibility)
- **Reflective** (time to pause, reassess, and adjust)
- **Realistic** (honest limits and capacity awareness)

Importantly, staff are not asking to *do less meaningful work* — they are asking for **conditions that allow meaningful work to be sustained over time**.