

Equestrian Science

Program Review, June 2026



WILLIAM WOODS
UNIVERSITY

2024 PROGRAM REVIEW (2019-2023)	2
MISSION AND INTRODUCTION	2
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT AND CURRICULUM	4
FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS, ACTIVITIES AND SCHOLARSHIP	18
PROGRAM DATA: STUDENT EXPERIENCE	21
PROGRAM ANALYSIS	34
INDUSTRY AND PROGRAM TRENDS	40
EXTERNAL REVIEW	46
PROGRAM RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW	48
ACADEMIC COUNCIL REVIEW	50

2024 Program Review (2019-2023)

Equestrian Science (BS)

Mission and Introduction

Introduction

1. Provide an overview of the program and the context of where it's housed within the institution (what department, etc.).
2. Discuss any changes in the focus of the program over the cycle of this review.

Narrative:

The Equestrian Science major has been the backbone of the Equestrian Program at William Woods. All equestrian majors/minors are housed within the College of Equestrian Studies.

The Equestrian Science major prepares students for a career in the industry as a professional teacher, trainer and rider. While the purpose and focus of the major haven't changed during the review cycle, the incoming students continue to have a somewhat limited understanding of the skills and knowledge required to be a practicing professional trainer/rider/instructor.

Program Mission Statement

1. What changes has the program made to the mission statement over the course of this cycle?
2. Why were these changes made?
3. Are any revisions planned?

Narrative:

The Equestrian Studies mission statement has not changed in the 5-year reporting cycle. While the statement is broad, our students often start their undergraduate experience with a narrow view of the industry. Developing and enhancing hard skills, techniques, and abilities is important, but expanding their view and exposing them to all of the diverse areas of the industry is paramount. There are few places where students can gain exposure to as many aspects of the equine industry as they can as equestrian students at William Woods University. Our commitment to equine welfare remains unchanged and is the foundation for all equestrian educational programming.

Alignment to Institution Mission

1. How does the mission of the program align with the mission of the institution?

Narrative:

The mission of the Equestrian Studies program and the WWU mission share common themes. The equestrian students experience a student-centered environment in their courses, applied riding classes, practicum experiences, and co-curricular activities. Students come to the program from a wide variety of backgrounds and personal

experiences with horses. Students at all levels of proficiency learn and develop together. An academic discipline that is as much an art form as a hard set of skills, requires a high level of creativity, flexibility, and curiosity. The faculty and staff model this for students and encourage this growth mindset in and out of the classroom. The equestrian program is focused squarely on providing students with knowledge and experience that will prepare them for a career in the equine industry.

Service to the University (Contribution to Campus Climate)

1. What programming and organizational support are offered by the program that benefits the greater student population?
2. Does the program support on-ground/OLC General Education Courses?
3. Highlight any cross listed courses with other programs
4. Highlight any interdisciplinary programming or activities
5. Identify student enrichment programming that could include volunteer opportunities, field trips, workshops... (does not have to be specific to the program, but is beneficial to students on campus)

Narrative:

1. A stable complex that houses over 100 horses on campus provides a unique experience for all students. The stables are open to the students, faculty, and staff on campus, and are a regular stop for students to experience the benefits of being around the horses. They are welcome to come and visit their favorite horse, sit and watch the horses in turnout, or walk through the stables. This allows our equestrian students to be ambassadors for the horses and their sport.
2. The equestrian program does not teach general education courses.
3. The equestrian majors use several courses from other areas but no equestrian courses are cross-listed with EQS.
4. The equestrian faculty actively pursue opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary activities. EQU 403 Equestrian Senior Seminar has regularly taught an introductory riding lesson to students in the PED Dual Sports course as their final exam. The interpreting students will use an applied riding course to develop their language skills and mechanics.
5. The stables offer both work-study employment and campus break work positions that allow students to stay on campus and gain employment experience. This opportunity is not only for equestrian students but is particularly popular with athletes and international students. Through the campus-wide LEAD program, students, faculty, and staff as well as community members, receive educational opportunities at the stables. The faculty and students host multiple LEAD events each month that encourage engagement with the program.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment and Curriculum

Program Student Learning Outcomes and Results

1. Describe how these Outcomes (Objectives) pertain to the program's mission. Have any changes been made to these outcomes over the course of this cycle? Why or why not?
2. Describe the extent to which students in the program have met these outcomes. Include a 5-year picture of the student outcomes with corresponding data that reflect the success or struggles in assessment.

Narrative:

The annual assessment measures are strong indicators of successful student achievement but also highlight areas where the benchmarks or selected assessment artifacts may not be rigorous enough. The data has gaps or discrepancies where the artifact information was not submitted, the course didn't run or the selected artifact wasn't assigned to the students by a new instructor. The summary data charts show added assessments or assessments that were not completed.

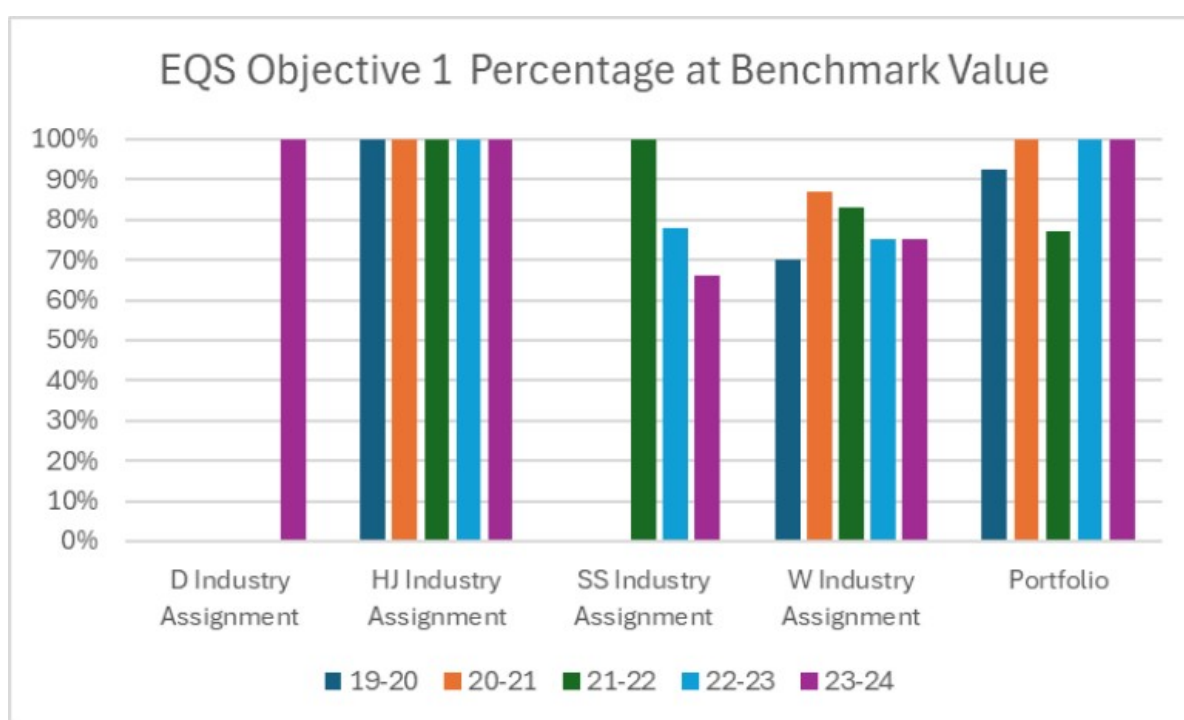
Objective 1--Analyze ethical issues and industry characteristics of the equine industry

1. Objective 1 (core objective for Equestrian Science, Equine Administration and Equine General Studies) has not changed during the 5 year review period. New students begin the program with a limited view of the equine industry and development of their knowledge in this area is what makes them marketable across a variety of industry fields. Conflicts and issues in the riding disciplines and the industry as a whole continue to be a source of struggle for those in careers who are dependent on a robust equestrian community. This objective is firmly aligned with helping students find their voice in the industry.
2. EQS students are required to take an "issues" course and the course design is unique to the instructor. Dressage and Saddle Seat Issues courses have not met class count minimums and have been cancelled often. EQS 335 Western Issues uses an industry assignment that is very challenging for students. While achievement is lower than other issues courses, the students are being measured at a very high standard for this artifact.

The portfolio artifact is completed during the capstone course EQU 415 Equestrian Senior Portfolio and is an academic written defense of the student's mastery of the objective with supporting evidence. The 5-year data shows a significant drop in achievement for 21-22 for our seniors. In reviewing the characteristics of that cohort, many would have been sophomores when COVID-19 closed campus for most of the spring semester; and then had reduced opportunities during their junior year. Many co-curricular and extra-curricular activities were frozen and hands-on learning opportunities were reduced. Their return to a more active campus life would have been their senior year. Gaps indicate omissions in assessment data or no EQA majors submitting the assignment.

Analyze ethical issues and industry characteristics of the equine industry

EQS Objective 1	EQS 330 Dressage Issues	EQS 331 Hunter Jumper Issues	EQS 332 Saddle Seat Issues	EQS 335 Western Issues	EQU 415 Portfolio
	D Industry Assignment	HJ Industry Assignment	SS Industry Assignment	W Industry Assignment	Portfolio
19-20	NA	100%	NA	70%	92.50%
20-21	NA	100%	NA	87%	100%
21-22	NA	100%	100%	83%	77%
22-23	NA	100%	78%	75%	100%
23-24	100%	100%	66%	75%	100%



Objective 2--Understand the theories and processes of equine management

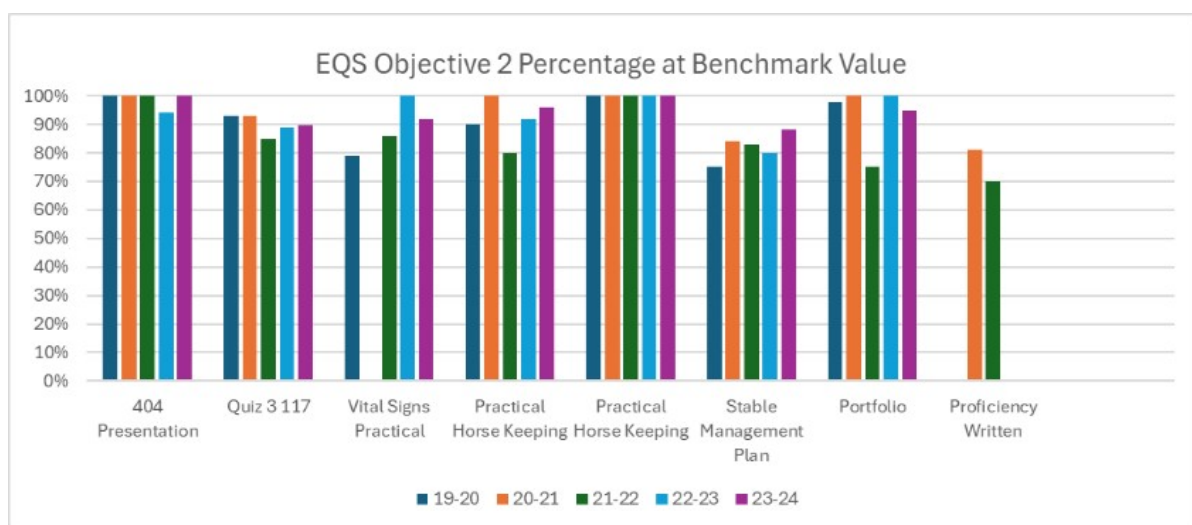
1. Our program mission states our commitment to equine welfare. Our students ability to maintain, manage, and care for horses at any level is what sets them apart in the marketplace. The objective has remained unchanged for the duration of the 5-year reporting cycle.

2. With practical horse care as a faculty-identified strength of our program, the five-year data for Objective 2 Understand Theories and Processes of Equine Management shows that students have moved from mostly meeting benchmarks standards in practical horse keeping during EQU 201 Horse Management Practicum I, to 100% proficient as EQU 391 Practical Horse Management students. Alternatively, allowing horse care to slip below benchmark standards for long before a swift intervention occurs isn't reasonable. Unlike a lecture course, there is no option to let a student fail and accept the consequences when a live animal and the safety of humans is part of the equation. This can result in assessment results reflecting resiliency and perseverance with extensive support from faculty and staff rather than stand-alone student achievement.

The proficiency written exam was included inconsistently as an EQS artifact.

Understand the theories and processes of equine management

	EQU 404	EQU 117	EQU 118	EQU 201	EQU 391	EQU 221	EQU 415	
EQS Objective 2	404 Presentation	Quiz 3 117	Vital Signs Practical	Practical Horse Keeping	Practical Horse Keeping	Stable Management Plan	Portfolio	Proficiency Written
19-20	100%	93%	79%	90%	100%	75%	98%	NA
20-21	100%	93%		100%	100%	84%	100%	81%
21-22	100%	85%	86%	80%	100%	83%	75%	70%
22-23	94%	89%	100%	92%	100%	80%	100%	NA
23-24	100%	89.50%	92%	96%	100%	88%	95%	NA



Objective 3: Develop communication and managerial strategies for the equine industry

1. Objectives prior to this reporting cycle had very specific industry language. While the communication objective has not changed during the 5 year reporting cycle, the development of three core objectives and a focus on written, oral and visual communication, became a priority. Communication is key, but for an equestrian student these are often skills that are tied to confidence and proficiency. A supervisor training employees, a riding instructor dealing with a rider emergency, a competition judge articulating their decisions at a horse show, are all examples of equestrian professionals exhibiting exceptional communication skills. They can't be effective communicators without feeling confident and proficient in their areas of expertise. The marketplace has evolved and expectations for industry professionals have as a result. The proliferation of customer and potential customer interactions with industry professionals and organizations through social media outlets means a higher demand for savvy graduates who can navigate a complicated communications network.

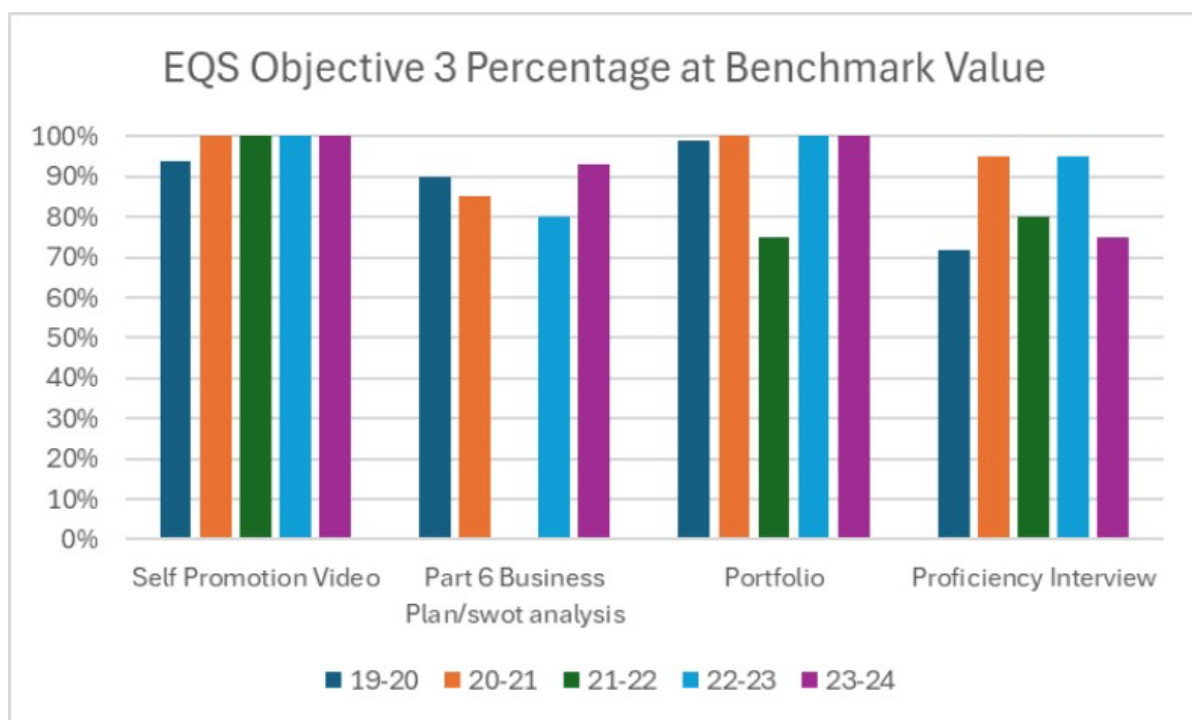
2. Communicating effectively in multiple situations is critical to success in the equestrian world. While senior students show high achievement on assignments demonstrating communication (EQU 403 Senior Seminar Self-Promotion Video), they are not as successful as underclassmen in a live interview setting (Proficiency Interview). While they can practice and receive feedback from an assessor before completing the interview during the proficiency test sequence, hardly any students do. Many students self-assess as excellent communicators and then underperform in this area as underclassmen. The 5-year data does

show growth from their performance on a communication-based assessment from underclassmen (primarily) to upperclassmen.

3. The selected assignment from Event Management (EQA 320) has changed with multiple instructors teaching this course during the review period. The rigor of this course is particularly challenging for students, with many hours of event leadership required. Student achievement in this course on the selected assignment is lower than both the proficiency interview and the senior assignments, but reflects a jump in rigor and practical application between the lower-level classes and upper-level courses.

4. Part 6 of the traditional business plan was changed to a SWOT analysis with a change in instructor for 2023.

Develop communication and managerial strategies for the equine industry				
	EQU 403	EQU 405	EQU 415	
EQS Objective 3	Self Promotion Video	Part 6 Business Plan/swot analysis	Portfolio	Proficiency Interview
19-20	94%	90%	99%	72%
20-21	100%	85%	100%	95%
21-22	100%	NA	75%	80%
22-23	100%	80%	100%	95%
23-24	100%	93%	100%	75%



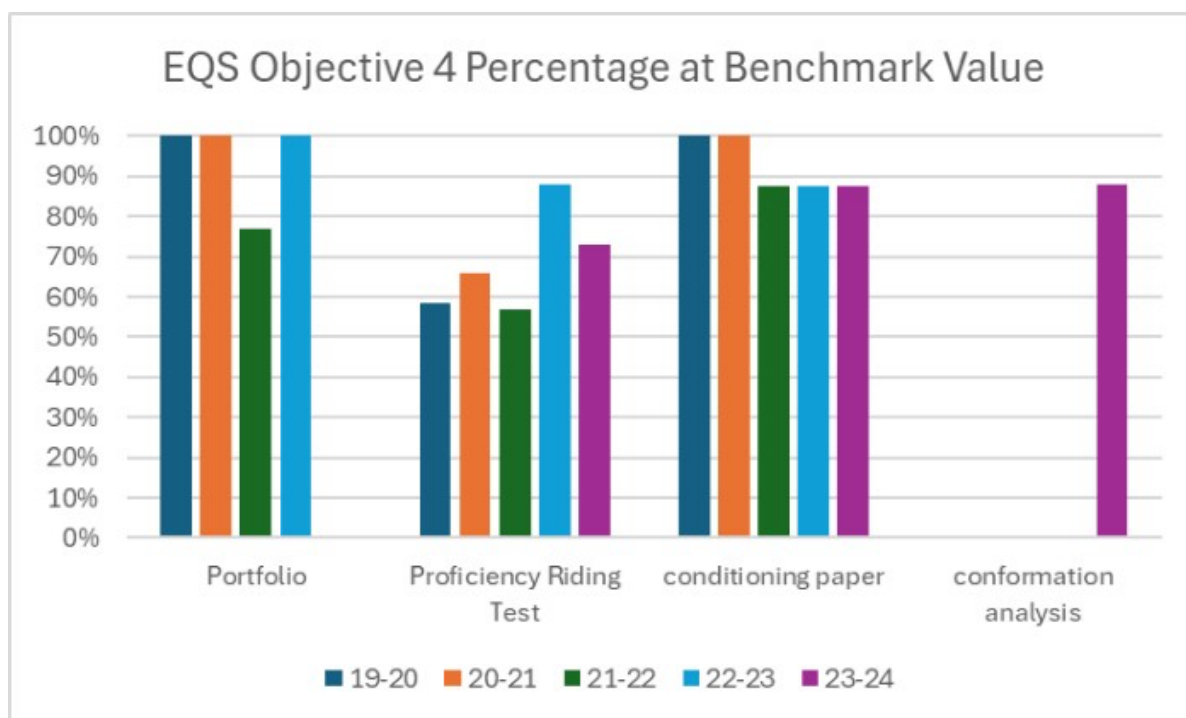
Objective 4: Demonstrate proficiency in selecting, conditioning and training the competition horse

1. The conformation analysis was not included as an assessment measure until 2023.

2. Proficiency applied riding testing reflects student persistence in pursuing an EQS major until the proficiency applied riding test indicates that they are not riding at a level that shows that they will be successful as a professional trainer/rider. The test is assessing fundamental and low intermediate riding skills and is adjudicated by their applied riding instructor and an

outside assessor. There are compulsory skills which must all be passed (each element is pass/fail). Students are given the rubrics and prepared for how the test will be administered.

Demonstrate proficiency in selecting, conditioning and training the competition horse				
	EQU 415		EQS 306	EQS 328
EQS Objective 4	Portfolio	Proficiency Riding Test	conditioning paper	conformation analysis
19-20	100%	58.50%	100%	NA
20-21	100%	66%	100%	NA
21-22	77%	57%	87.50%	NA
22-23	100%	88%	87.50%	NA
23-24	NA	73%	87.50%	88%

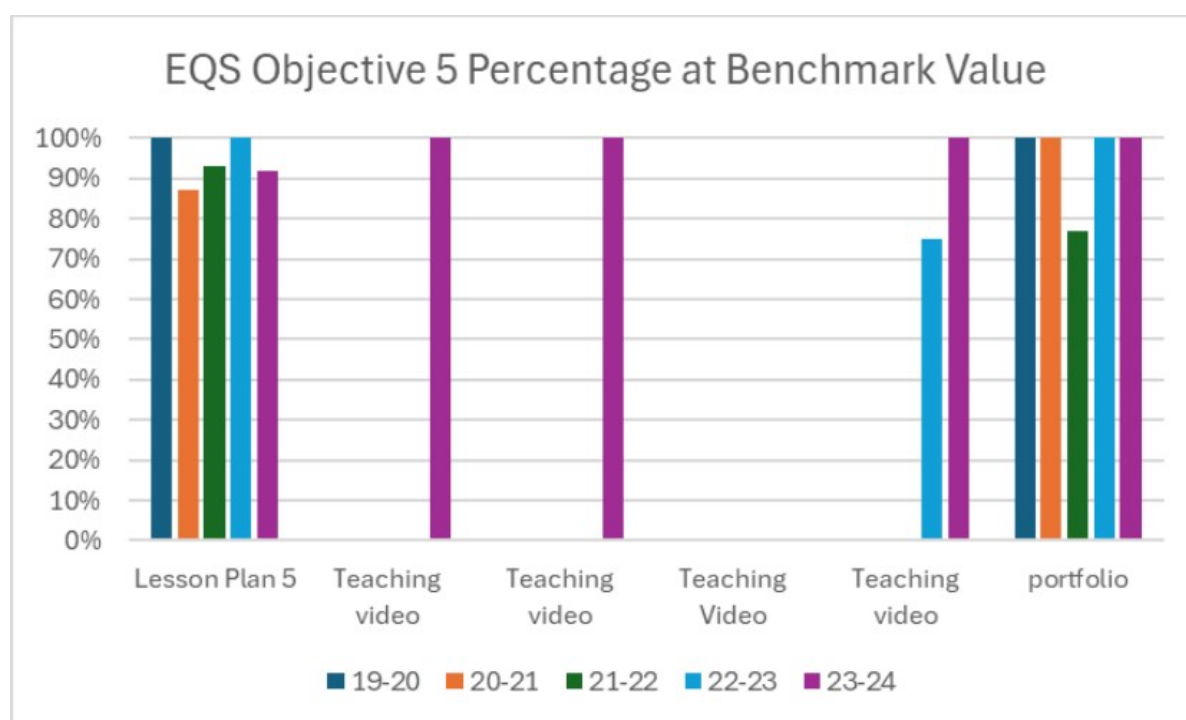


Objective 5: Demonstrate effective teaching practice and methodology as a riding instructor

1. Strong student achievement at a sophomore level on the teaching plan in EQS 212 show solid preparation for applied teaching.
2. Instructors have been working to fully integrate the teaching video for each discipline back into the curriculum.
3. Seniors are presenting exemplary artifacts in their senior portfolios reflecting proficient applied teaching. We experience a drop in student performance for graduation year 21-22, with those students impacted most significantly by COVID. They had their spring sophomore semester interrupted and finished remote, and then functioned as juniors with many restrictions to regular operations. As seniors, most of this had returned to some normality, but some students still struggled.

Demonstrate effective teaching practice and methodology as a riding instructor

	EQS 212	EQS 351	EQS 352	EQS 353	EQS 355	EQU 415
EQS Objective 5	Lesson Plan 5	Teaching video	Teaching video	Teaching Video	Teaching video	portfolio
19-20	100%	NA	NA	NA	NA	100%
20-21	87%	NA	NA	NA	NA	100%
21-22	93%	NA	NA	NA	NA	77%
22-23	100%	NA	NA	NA	75%	100%
23-24	92%	100%	100%	NA	100%	100%



Evidence:

- [5 year objectives outcomes](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2019-2020](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2020-2021](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2021-2022](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2022-2023](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2023-2024](#)
- [Equestrian Science \(BS\) 2024-2025 Curriculum and Assessment Findings 2024-2025](#)
- [Objective 1 EQS 5YR 19 24](#)
- [Objective 2 EQS 5YR 19 24](#)
- [Objective 3 EQS 5 YR 19 24](#)
- [Objective 4 EQS 5 YR 19 24](#)
- [Objective 5 EQS 5 YR 19 24](#)

Assessment Measures

1. Discuss the measures (rubric evaluation - tool used to gather information) you've selected or developed to measure for each Outcome (Objective).
2. Why were these measures chosen?
3. Were any measures or assessment instruments changed over the course of this cycle?

Why or why not?

4. Note any action items related to assessment measures that will be changed moving forward due to the review of assessment data.

Narrative:

Objective 1 EQS

The portfolio course requires students to develop an academic defense that explains their mastery of the objective supported by three artifacts. After completing a written defense of all program objectives, they create a digital portfolio with a visual summary of the academic defense. Two assessors evaluate this. The rubric for the "showcase" or digital portfolio is centered on the student's ability to identify and explain their strongest work related to the objective. While the rubric for the portfolio objectives has remained unchanged throughout the 5-year reporting cycle, it required many minor adjustments before the academic year 2019-2020. It moved from a letter grade and then a percentage-based rubric to proficiency-based language. This helped assessors move from "assignment" grading to a more holistic, benchmark approach. This has provided consistency for our primary upper-classman method of annual assessment in our equestrian majors and for each objective. This has allowed the faculty to have a clear view of student achievement at the end of the program.

The issues set of courses have similar course descriptions but use a variety of assignments for the annual assessment. The identified assignment has sometimes changed or evolved during the reporting cycle (the research style paper in EQS 335 moved to an industry "white paper" with more built-in checkpoints to increase successful completion). Some issues courses have struggled to "make" with low enrollment and are regularly canceled. This impacts the consistency of the selected annual assessment measures. The issues courses are the required classes most directly linked to objective 1. However, moving forward an additional measure from a required course with more consistent enrollment is worthy of exploration.

Analyze ethical issues and industry characteristics of the equine industry					
EQS Objective 1	EQS 330 Dressage Issues	EQS 331 Hunter Jumper Issues	EQS 332 Saddle Seat Issues	EQS 335 Western Issues	EQU 415 Portfolio
	D Industry Assignment	HJ Industry Assignment	SS Industry Assignment	W Industry Assignment	Portfolio
19-20	NA	100%	NA	70%	92.50%
20-21	NA	100%	NA	87%	100%
21-22	NA	100%	100%	83%	77%
22-23	NA	100%	78%	75%	100%
23-24	100%	100%	66%	75%	100%

Objective 2 EQS

Student proficiency in theoretical and applied horse management has been a high priority in the EQS and EQA majors for decades. The result is a systematic and comprehensive framework of annual assessment for this objective. While no one objective is more important than another, the faculty historically emphasized completing the programs with an exemplary ability to care for horses at the highest level. Measures selected come from introductory through capstone coursework and represent both theoretical knowledge (EQU 117, EQU 221, Proficiency Written Test, EQU 404) as well as practical skills (EQU 118, EQU 201, EQU 391,

EQU 415).

The Stable Management Barn Plan, EQU Portfolio, and EQU 404 Veterinary Medicine and Reproduction measures have remained consistent and under the same instructor or identical assignment instructions and rubrics for the reporting cycle. Rubrics for EQU 201 and 391 have been modified in keeping with instructor management of the courses. Both classes are team-taught (all four discipline instructors) and changes in faculty have sometimes required more specific language in the weekly score rubric for Practical Horse Keeping. Although it has been modified, it has not been changed in a way that negates the informative value of the assessment data. EQU 117 and 118 have changed instructors during the cycle but faculty believe adjusted measures correctly assess student learning. Changes are not anticipated moving forward for the identified measures.

The written proficiency exam has been used periodically in the report, but with so many other measures, it has not always been recorded. The written is used as an assessment measure for the EQGS major where EQU 201, 391, and EQU 404 is not required.

Understand the theories and processes of equine management								
	EQU 404	EQU 117	EQU 118	EQU 201	EQU 391	EQU 221	EQU 415	
EQS Objective 2	404 Presentation	Quiz 3 117	Vital Signs Practical	Practical Horse Keeping	Practical Horse Keeping	Stable Management Plan	Portfolio	Proficiency Written
19-20	100%	93%	79%	90%	100%	75%	98%	NA
20-21	100%	93%		100%	100%	84%	100%	81%
21-22	100%	85%	86%	80%	100%	83%	75%	70%
22-23	94%	89%	100%	92%	100%	80%	100%	NA

Objective 3

The self-promotion video is created by EQS, EQA, and EQGS seniors. They create a video assignment that is used to evaluate their ability to communicate their strengths and skills as they relate to their specific program objectives. This measure along with the portfolio (EQU 415) had consistent instructions and scoring rubrics for the duration of the review period.

The proficiency interview is conducted outside of a class and is a part of the assessments students who have completed around 45 credit hours take during our student performance day in the spring semester. The EQS interview rubrics and structure have remained unchanged over the reported 5 years. Students are evaluated by two assessors who are experts in the riding discipline in which the students are testing. The proficiency interview for EQS majors has been used as an assessment for decades. It was used to guide benchmarks for achievement even well before any internal reporting was required by the institution. As a result, it provides a consistent and valuable assessment tool. Many students attempt the EQS proficiency test sequence and do not meet benchmark standards before ultimately choosing to change their major to EQA or EQGS. Inconsistent student achievement in this measure most always reflects students' performance from those who were essentially "in the wrong major." Their performance against the EQA or EQGS interview when repeating the test tends to be high.

EQU 405 Equine Business Practices has been taught by three different instructors during the reporting cycle. The structure of the course was changed significantly in 23-24 resulting in a change of assessment measure. The 5-year data accurately informs student achievement for the academic year it was reported, but not necessarily to the measure itself with the change

in measure.

Develop communication and managerial strategies for the equine industry				
	EQU 403	EQU 405	EQU 415	
EQS Objective 3	Self Promotion Video	Part 6 Business Plan/swot analysis	Portfolio	Proficiency Interview
19-20	94%	90%	99%	72%
20-21	100%	85%	100%	95%
21-22	100%	NA	75%	80%
22-23	100%	80%	100%	95%
23-24	100%	93%	100%	75%

Objective 4

With the portfolio artifact and the proficiency riding test as the backbone of the assessment measures for objective 4, student performance on a 200-level riding test and a capstone, senior level of mastery assessed in the portfolio provide a steady snapshot of achievement. The measures have remained consistent in both structure and scoring rubric across the 5 years. The conditioning paper in EQS 306 has also stayed consistent and because of prerequisite courses it primarily assesses junior-level EQS students. This has supplied a consistent mid-point measure. The conformation analysis was not included until 23-24 but speaks directly to the evaluating and selection component of the objective complimenting the conditioning language assessed by the conditioning paper.

Demonstrate proficiency in selecting, conditioning, and training the competition horse				
	EQU 415		EQS 306	EQS 328
EQS Objective 4	Portfolio	Proficiency Riding Test	conditioning paper	conformation analysis
19-20	100%	58.50%	100%	NA
20-21	100%	66%	100%	NA
21-22	77%	57%	87.50%	NA
22-23	100%	88%	87.50%	NA
23-24	NA	73%	87.50%	88%

Objective 5

The lesson plan from EQS 212 had remained consistent throughout the reporting cycle although the course has had three different instructors over the 5 years. The portfolio artifact continues to be a source of stability in the annual assessment plan. The measure was added to all teaching tech courses in 22-23. While the teaching video is a rigorous measure that assesses junior or senior riding instruction skills, it is divided by discipline. This means that enrollment fluctuates as a result of both the number of EQS majors and their riding discipline. The data table shows NA for semesters before the measure was added and those when there were no Tech IV students to complete the teaching video in a discipline. These measures have no revision plans, but the faculty hopes that additional years of data will establish a valuable mid-program assessment in the teaching video.

Demonstrate effective teaching practice and methodology as a riding instructor						
	EQS 212	EQS 351	EQS 352	EQS 353	EQS 355	EQU 415

EQS Objective	Lesson Plan	Teaching video	Teaching video	Teaching Video	Teaching video	portfolio
5	5					
19-20	100%	NA	NA	NA	NA	100%
20-21	87%	NA	NA	NA	NA	100%
21-22	93%	NA	NA	NA	NA	77%
22-23	100%	NA	NA	NA	75%	100%
23-24	92%	100%	100%	NA	100%	100%

Evidence:

- [EQS HJ D score sheet S22](#)
- [EQS W score sheet S22](#)
- [Equestrian Portfolio Showcase Rubric Rubric Detail 01-26-2025 110317](#)
- [Equestrian Science \(BS\) 2024-2025 Curriculum and Assessment Findings 2024-2025](#)
- [Equestrian Self Promotion Video Rubric Detail 01-26-2025 110436](#)
- [Equestrian Self Promotion Video Rubric Detail 02-12-2024 093331](#)
- [Portfolio Rubric](#)
- [SS EQGS EQA Interview Score Sheet S22](#)

Curriculum Map

1. Highlighting any key or core courses, have any changes been made to this pathway or degree requirements over the course of this cycle? (Upload Program Checklist)
2. Why or why not?
3. Explain how the program sequence of courses is designed and why it is laid out in that way? (scaffolding)

Narrative:

Equestrian science students begin the program sharing core classes with Equine Administration and Equine General Studies majors. The equestrian majors are designed to allow students to move easily between majors during the first two years. After core classes are completed, the EQS majors move into the applied teaching sequence as well as horse management intensive practicum courses. Senior student courses include EQU 405 Equine Business Practices, EQS 404 Veterinary Medicine and Reproduction, EQU 403 Equestrian Senior Seminar and EQU 415 Equestrian Portfolio. No changes were made to to the curriculum during the reporting cycle.

[23 24 EQS Checklist](#)

Evidence:

- [23 24 EQS Checklist](#)

Concentrations

1. If the program has concentrations, please upload the concentration data.
2. Speak to the enrollment distribution of students within the concentrations and any impact on course rotation.
3. Include strategies or processes for retention and recruitment within the concentration.

4. Explain the value of each concentration and how they enhance the skills students need to be successful in the field.

Narrative:

No concentrations in this major.

Course Descriptions

1. Highlight any changes to course descriptions that have occurred over the identified timeframe. (upload a pdf of the course descriptions)

Narrative:

Course descriptions in the major have not changed significantly during the reporting cycle. While minor adjustments in scaffolding and intentional repetition of concepts have been instituted in a handful of classes, they did not result in changes in the course descriptions.

[Equestrian Course Descriptions 23 24 catalog](#)

Evidence:

- [Equestrian Course Descriptions 23 24 catalog](#)

Curriculum Delivery

1. Does online enrollment impact enrollment in the campus enrollment?
2. If the program has an online component, explain how the program coordinates schedules and curriculum between the two modalities.

Narrative:

Online enrollment does not impact the on-ground equestrian program. However, recruiting centered on growing programs with online versions leaves the equestrian programs without an appropriate number of new students.

The courses offered during the program review cycle, include just a handful online and almost all are electives. No online courses are required for the EQS major.

Participation in Assessment

1. Discuss faculty participation in program assessment
2. How involved are faculty and what is their responsibility for the assessment of the program.

Narrative:

Faculty identify coursework that directly assesses program objectives and submit results and artifacts for annual assessment reporting purposes. Actively engaged in curriculum review, development, and redesign, the group identifies changes, adjustments, and strengths outside

of just their own courses. This approach has fostered deep and purposeful connections in the curriculum and assessments that build from one course to the next.

The assessment software used for the past 5 years was not designed for editing by all of the faculty in the program. Therefore it has traditionally been the responsibility of the Dean or Director to gather data and evidence from faculty and add it to the annual report. This is often cumbersome and occasionally data is simply not provided before the reports are due. The new system will allow individual faculty to add their data and evidence directly. This may decrease errors and omissions.

Major-specific assessments conducted outside of the classroom have been a cornerstone of the equestrian programs at William Woods. The proficiency test for equestrian students includes an industry interview, riding test, and a written exam. The interview is assessed by two equestrian faculty members with expertise in the field. The written test is created from a robust test bank of questions and answers provided to the students at least 30 days before the exam and pulled from courses they have taken before or concurrent with the proficiency exams. Faculty work to refine interview rubrics and benchmarks to ensure that the expectations for exam performance align with the foundation that students need to complete the major. Faculty work to prepare students for the proficiency test (taken when the student reaches 45 completed credit hours) in and out of the classroom. Proficiency results for students provide a valuable data set for recruiting, course design, and measurement of value-added education.

Action Items and Use of Results

1. Summarize or highlight action items taken as a result of program's assessment results.
2. How have the results driven improvement over the course of this cycle?

Narrative:

Most actions identified in annual assessment reports call for more support. Across the board, this generally reflects the need for more student academic support upon entering the program. The range of prior knowledge in the field varies wildly in each incoming class. Students without much experience as equestrians or lacking in general student study skills need more academic support and they learn to deal with the breadth of new information. This need for additional academic support is not unique to the equestrian program as the institution struggles to provide both academic and mental health support services to a changing student population.

The teaching video was added to all teaching tech IV courses (all disciplines) in order to better assess practical student teaching. Fluctuations of student enrollment in these courses will require more annual assessment report cycles before student achievement can be analyzed using the measures.

Evidence:

- [Equestrian Science \(BS\)_2024-2025 Curriculum and Assessment Findings_2024-2025](#)

General Education

1. • How does program coursework expand on the skills learned in General Education curriculum?

Narrative:

Start of Reporting Cycle:

Critical Analysis: (9 credit hours)

- Critical Thinking (3 credit hours) Students are challenged to consider multiple viewpoints, analyze courses, and synthesize information related to the field throughout their program of study.
- Ethical Reasoning (3 credit hours) Equestrian students regularly consider ethical problems both in class and in practical experiences both on and off campus. They examine the role of conflict and competing interests and use a variety of models or theories related to ethical reasoning in solving or approaching moral dilemmas related to the equine industry.
- Meaning (3 credit hours) Students are required to analyze texts, identify central themes, and interpret underlying meaning using discipline and industry topics in multiple courses. Students apply logical and analytical reasoning skills to diverse source materials in the interest of discerning and debating aesthetic, thematic, and ethical content.

Creative Expression: (12 credit hours)

- Communication (9 credit hours) Students develop and practice communicating through written and oral formats related to the field.
- Fine & Performing Arts (3 credit hours) Students examine products of human creativity through the observation and analysis of creative works related to the horse. Students develop the ability to express ideas and concepts, both logically and creatively, through written, oral, reflective, and aesthetic practices utilizing various media forms.

Quantitative Inquiry: (10 credit hours)

- Natural Sciences (7 credit hours) Equestrian students understand the natural world through observation of systems, formation and testing of hypotheses during both practical and theory-based equestrian coursework.
- Mathematics (3 credit hours) Equestrian students analyze data and statistics and identify quantitative relationships through the study of industry and discipline-specific topics at multiple levels of the program. Students will develop and practice quantitative problem-solving skills to analyze and critically evaluate information in a larger context.

Society & the Individual: (12 credit hours)

- Social Science (3 credit hours) Equestrian students study the behavior of people and employ principles of science to explain their observations through case study and course projects in a variety of equestrian courses.
- Diversity (3 credit hours) Equestrian students are challenged to explore and develop their understanding of traditions and cultures in which horses are used for work, sport and

recreation.

- **Historical Perspective (6 credit hours)** Equestrian students are challenged in many equestrian courses to think historically. This requires them reflect on how the past has shaped the equine industry and all related components. Students integrate knowledge to articulate an understanding of diverse cultures, historical contexts, and human behaviors.

End of Reporting Cycle (New General Education Tiers)

- **General Education Written Communication Objectives: Students transmit information effectively in written form**
 - Students develop and practice communicating through written and oral formats related to the field.
- **General Education Oral Communication Objectives: Students transmit information effectively in spoken form.**
 - Students develop and practice communicating through written and oral formats related to the field.
- **General Education Historical Perspective Objective: Students will think historically, meaning that they will understand both how the present is shaped by the past and how our interpretation of the past is shaped by the present.**
 - Equestrian students are challenged in many equestrian courses to think historically. This requires them reflect on how the past has shaped the equine industry and all related components. Students integrate knowledge to articulate an understanding of diverse cultures, historical contexts, and human behaviors.
- **General Education Natural Science Objective: Students will understand that scientific knowledge is developed through a continual process based on the interpretation and communication of quantifiable information**
 - Equestrian students understand the natural world through observation of systems, formation and testing of hypotheses during both practical and theory-based equestrian coursework.
- **General Education Mathematics Objective: Students will solve problems through an analysis of quantitative relationships.**
 - Equestrian students analyze data and statistics and identify quantitative relationships through the study of industry and discipline-specific topics at multiple levels of the program. Students will develop and practice quantitative problem-solving skills to analyze and critically evaluate information in a larger context.
- **Expression & Invention – 6cr (-EI) In these classes, students will combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways to demonstrate innovation, creativity, divergent thinking, and risk taking.**
 - Students examine products of human creativity through the observation and analysis of creative works related to the horse. Students develop the ability to express ideas and concepts, both logically and creatively, through written, oral, reflective, and aesthetic practices utilizing various media forms.
- **Inquiry & Analysis – 6cr (-IA) In these classes, students explore issues, objects, or works through the collection and analysis of evidence to make informed conclusions or judgments.**
 - Equestrian students regularly consider ethical problems both in class and in practical experiences both on and off campus. They examine the role of conflict and competing interests and use a variety of models or theories related to ethical reasoning in solving or approaching moral dilemmas related to the equine industry.

- **Cultures & Communities - 6cr (-CC)** In these classes, students will engage complex, diverse interdependent systems and legacies to foster effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural and ethical contexts.
 - Equestrian students are challenged to explore and develop their understanding of traditions and cultures in which horses are used for work, sport and recreation.

Faculty Qualifications, Activities and Scholarship

Faculty Specialization

1. Discuss the scholarship and research content of the faculty in the program, being sure what their specialization brings to the program.
2. Explain the core features of the program based on the current faculty.
3. How could the program be expanded (new courses, areas of specialization, etc.)?
4. How might additional instructional members allow the program to expand and/or change the focus of the program curriculum?

Narrative:

Faculty have changed in the course of this reporting cycle. The equestrian programs are flexible and able to pivot to meet the changing needs of the industry because the faculty are most all qualified in multiple areas. Many have diverse specialties and overlap with others. Adjustments in teaching assignments for core classes are straightforward and are a tremendous asset to this program's ability to flex and contract when necessary.

Liz Haben M.Ed: Western applied riding with specializations in colt starting, groundwork, western competition horses, judging, stable management, horse management, teaching riding, training and coaching at horse shows.

[Haben CV 2024_2025](#)

Bailey McCallum M.Ed.: Dressage applied riding and fundamentals of horsemanship, groundwork, with specialties in groundwork, industry communication, behavior and training and horse management.

[CV_McCallum_25](#)

Dr. Paul Schiltz DVM: Veterinary medicine, practical anatomy and conditioning, equine physiology, equine sports medicine.

[schiltz cv 25](#)

Kammera Brown M.S.: Hunter/Jumper applied riding with specializations in coaching riders at competitions, and intercollegiate competition.

[Brown vitae 23](#)

Sarah Track M.Ed.: Saddle Seat applied riding with specialization in foundational teaching, long-lining and driving, saddle seat industry issues, horse management and coaching at horse shows.

[Sarah Track 2022 2023 CV](#)

Dr. Erin Cardea EdD : Applied Hunter/Jumper instruction, teaching techniques, equine health and management and equine assisted services.

[Resume_Cardea_23](#)

Laura Ward M.S.: History of breeds, bloodlines and riding, industry evolution, equine nutrition and the Morgan horse breed.

[Ward_Vita_2023](#)

Jennifer Petterson M.Ed.: Western riding, industry issues, business management and entrepreneurship, teaching riding, equine conformation, competitive judging.

[Petterson CV 2025](#)

Evidence:

- [Brown vitae 23](#)
- [CV_McCallum_25](#)
- [Haben CV 2024_2025](#)
- [Petterson CV 2025](#)
- [Resume_Cardea_23](#)
- [Sarah Track 2022 2023 CV](#)
- [Ward_Vita_2023](#)
- [schiltz cv 25](#)

Faculty Awards and Honors

1. Discuss and highlight awards and honors received by faculty over the course of the cycle.

Narrative:

Dean of the College of Equestrian Studies (2023-2025)--Erin Cardea completed the application and evidence for Certified Horsemanship Association site accreditation. WWU's Equestrian Program met the criteria for successful accreditation.

Scholarship in the field includes competition, judging, an expert clinician and a presenter. The faculty curriculum vitae demonstrates continued best practices in applicable scholarship and professional expertise in the field.

Faculty awards and honors are listed on their individual CVs.

Faculty Workload

1. Summarize the workload and responsibilities of faculty.
2. What actions are you taking to avoid faculty overload?
3. % of course load is taught by program faculty vs adjunct
4. % of courses covered by full time faculty
5. % of courses covered through faculty overload

Narrative:

Faculty in this academic area have many unique obligations outside of traditional classroom teaching. The group is responsible for the solicitation of donations of in-kind horse-related

items and donated horses. The program relies heavily on a strong population of competitive donated horses that requires a consistent presence by the faculty in the competition world as either exhibitors themselves or coaches or trainers for current William Woods horses and students.

The applied riding faculty are responsible for generating new donations and finding suitable homes for current WWU horses when they are ready to retire or be replaced. The Dean is responsible for ensuring that all applicable paperwork and processes are maintained in coordination with the Senior Executive Assistant for all horse transactions (retirement, leases in, leases out, transfers, donations, euthanasia). This segment of the faculty load not connected to teaching is unpredictable--at times very heavy and sometimes very manageable.

Equestrian faculty are expected by the community to host multiple educational events each semester, which requires time outside of the regular faculty load. This ranges from 4H and FFA events to clinics and horse shows. While these events fulfill our educational mission to both our students and our community, they take a great deal of time to plan and facilitate. Most all involve weekend work.

Applied riding faculty are also expected to coach students at off-campus horse shows, which is in addition to teaching regular applied riding classes. This means many outside of class show practice sessions as well as time spent making travel, show and hotel arrangements. Often, instructors are hauling the horses out of state for major competitions.

Transfer students are an important part of the equestrian student body, and rotations were maintained to allow a four-semester student to complete an equestrian major. However, student enrollment during the past few years of the reporting cycle have required class cancellations and course substitutions to minimize faculty tutorials and overloads. Not acting quickly enough with rotation changes perpetuated this problem for 23-24 and 24-25. The rotation changes are in place now (25-26). This will slowly transition faculty to a more reasonable teaching load with larger courses that are offered less frequently.

The vast majority of courses in the equestrian majors are covered by full-time faculty or faculty with a university appointment that is split between staff and faculty duties (University Veterinarian).

19-20 and 20-21 135 of 136 courses taught by full-time faculty

Overload calculations are complicated in the equestrian program as a result of team-taught courses, tutorial courses combining to create overload hours etc. Consistent data has not been collected for program report purposes during this reporting cycle. Previous annual assessments did not ask for the percentage of courses covered through faculty overload.

Program Data: Student Experience

Enrollment and Recruitment

1. What are the trends with enrollment in this program over the course of the review cycle?
2. How does this compare to institutional trends or similar programs on campus?
3. Describe recruitment efforts or goals such as increased enrollment.
4. Have these initiatives been successful?

Narrative:

1. What are the trends with enrollment in this program over the course of the review cycle?
Enrollment in the EQS major and minor has trended down over the review cycle. We are working to remedy the issue with increased efforts to market the program under a new administration. Issues with turnover in admissions and marketing over the course of the review cycle, in addition to decreases in enrollment due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, have been a major contributing factor. Despite these issues, the program's retention has remained high despite decreases in incoming classes. One industry issue that is affecting our current enrollment is a reduction of children and young adults pursuing equestrian sport to the same degree shown by previous generations. Additionally, a noted increase in male identifying students has shifted the demographic in favor of a more diverse population.

2. How does this compare to institutional trends or similar programs on campus?
Enrollment on campus took an expected dip during the COVID-19 global pandemic but has since been rising due to efforts by the previous administration. Previous administration focused much of the university's resources on increasing enrollment through the development and launch of several athletics programs on campus, draining resources that had previously been used to recruit for programs like EQS. This has led to a large increase in on-campus enrollment and enrollment in other programs like business but a decrease in enrollment in the equine programs.

3. Describe recruitment efforts or goals such as increased enrollment or diversity.
Recent increases in marketing, outreach by EQS faculty, and efforts in admissions have shown a promising increase in deposited students compared to the same period in 2024, indicating an uptick in enrollment. EQS faculty have been more involved than ever in the admissions and recruitment process, attending and speaking at national conventions, presenting scholarships at major regional and national competitions in multiple disciplines, increasing marketing when faculty attend shows and clinics, and investing in additional advertising. New scholarships have been established to encourage diversity in the student population and to encourage enrollment.

4. Have these initiatives been successful
Current deposited students show a promising increase in enrollment for the '25/'26 year and the student population has seen an increase in diversity over the review cycle.

Evidence:

- [EQS Program Activity Report](#)

Retention

1. Has student retention remained in an acceptable range over the course of the review cycle?
2. What strategies are program faculty using to raise retention rates within the program?

Narrative:

Retention in the EQS major has been strong. Many students start as EQS majors before they have a thorough understanding of which major applies to which career path. Many aspiring professionals have been the most talented in their area, but when compared with industry standards, are not likely to make enough improvements in their riding and training to be paid as professionals. These students change EQ majors or sometimes move into a major outside of the equestrian program. We view this as success since the EQS major is tied so directly to talent, ability, and athletic performance.

Faculty have worked diligently to make all of the equestrian curriculum as accessible to students new to the industry as it is for those who come to the program with significant experience. This requires exceptional differentiation of instruction done in the development stages of course planning.

Fall to Fall Retention - First Time Full Time Freshman	Fall 2024 - Fall 2025	Fall 2023 - Fall 2024	Fall 2022 - Fall 2023	Fall 2021 - Fall 2022	Fall 2020 - Fall 2021	Fall 2019 - Fall 2020
Total		-	21	10	14	20
Retained Within Major		-	14	8	11	10
Retained Within Department		-	16	8	11	13
Retained Within University		-	17	8	11	15
Did Not Return		-	4	2	3	5
Retained Within Major %	N/A	N/A	66.67%	80.00%	78.57%	50.00%
Retained Within Department %	N/A	N/A	76.19%	80.00%	78.57%	65.00%
Retained Within University %	N/A	N/A	80.95%	80.00%	78.57%	75.00%
Did Not Return %	N/A	N/A	19.05%	20.00%	21.43%	25.00%

Curriculum/Course Retention and Success

1. Describe enrollment trends in the courses within the program. (upload course enrollment spreadsheet)
2. Reflect on the success of the students within the courses over the designated time frame.
 - Highlight some completion or withdrawal and failure rates in the core courses.
 - Were these in line with expectations? (we will need to provide this data)
3. For programs with dual modalities, reflect on the success of students within the courses over the designated time frame.
 - Highlight some completion or withdrawal and failure rates in the core courses.
 - Were these in line with expectations? (we will need to provide this data)

Narrative:

Course Enrollment Equestrian Science

Course	Title	2019-2020		2020	2020-2021		2021	2021-2022		2022	2022-2023		2023	2023-2024	
		Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring
EQS 212	Thry of Teachign Tech I	13/25	9/25		9/15	8/9		10/25	17/25		14/25	10/25		9/25	12/25
EQS 306	Prctl Equine Antmy & Cndtng	17/30			11/15			16/30			26/30			10/30	
EQS 328	Equine Evaluation		13/25			6/15			14/25			23/25			
EQS 404	Vet Med & Reproduction	19/30	N/A		16/18			14/30	2/2		17/30			19/30	
EQU 101	Equestrian First Year Seminar	47/50	N/A		37/40			24/27			46/50			31/50	
EQU 111	Into to Horse Industry	40/45	19/40		35/40	10/25		26/40	8/20		44/50	2/20		28/40	7/20
EQU 117	Thry Perf Hrse Hlth Mngmt I	36/50	27/70		24/30	22/45		15/90	11/45		17/45	37/50		16/25	12/25
EQU 118	Theory Perf Hrse Hlth Mngmnt II	32/50	32/90		13/30	17/28		17/45	13/45		12/45	15/45		25/25	18/25
EQU 201	Hrse Mngmnt Practicum I	15/40	13/40		12/40	15/40		10/40	14/40		14/40	11/40		6/40	14/40
EQU 202	Fund of Equ Teach & Learning		19/25		13/18	9/9		18/25	14/15		9/25	14/25		21/25	8/25
EQU 206	Introduction to Equine Entrep	11/25	8/25		20/22			6/25			17/25			24/25	
EQU 221	Stable Management	16/30	14/30		31/37	9/28		12/30	6/30		14/30	13/30		10/30	9/30
EQU 391	Horse Mngmnt Practicum II	6/25	5/25		6/25	9/25		6/25	6/30		8/25	9/25		7/25	6/25
EQU 403	Equestrian Senior Seminar	9/20	17/20		5/6	14/15		6/20	8/25		3/25	11/20		4/20	20/20
EQU 405	Equine Business Practices	10/25	11/25		9/15	7/15		7/25	7/25		6/25	10/25		16/25	8/25
EQU 415	Equestrian Senior Portfolio	9/25	17/25		5/6	14/15		6/25	8/25		3/25	11/25		4/25	20/25
EXS 104	First Aid & CPR	29/32	25/32		25/28	23/24		24/28	24/24		18/24	23/24		28/24	24/24
EQS 230	Teaching Tech II Dressage	4/25	2/25		0/25	3/6		1/25	1/25		2/25	2/25		1/25	
EQS 231	Teaching Tech II Hunter/Jumper	6/25	6/25		4/25	6/7		5/25	2/25		6/25	8/25		5/25	4/25
EQS 232	Teaching Tech II Saddle Seat	5/25	4/25		4/25				1/25		3/25	5/25		7/25	7/25
EQS 235	Teaching Tech II Western	6/25	7/25		5/25	7/8		7/25	2/25		12/25	11/25		8/25	6/25
EQS 340	Teaching Tech III Dressage	2/25	1/25		0/25	1/3		1/25			1/25	1/25			
EQS 341	Teaching Tech III Hunter/Jumper	3/20	1/20		2/20	2/7		2/25	1/25		2/25	2/25		2/25	
EQS 342	Teaching Tech III Saddle Seat	1/25	1/25		1/25	2/3					1/25	2/25		2/25	6/25
EQS 345	Teaching Tech III Western	3/25	2/25		1/25	3/8		1/25	4/25		2/25	4/25		3/25	1/25
EQS 351	Teaching Tech IV Dressage	0/25	1/25		0/25	1/7			1/25					1/25	
EQS 352	Teaching Tech IV Hunter/Jumper	2/25	2/25		0/25	1/7		2/25	2/25		2/25	1/25		3/25	2/25
EQS 353	Teaching Tech IV Saddle Seat	3/25	2/25		1/25				1/25			1/25		2/25	2/25
EQS 355	Teaching Tech IV Western	0/25	3/25		1/25	2/1		2/25	2/25		4/25	2/25		3/25	1/25
EQS 330	Dressage Issues					2/6								3/30	
EQS 331	Hunter/Jumper Issues	8/30			6/15				10/30			8/30			6/30
EQS 332	Saddle Seat Issues								4/30			9/30			3/30
EQS 335	Western Issues	10/25			8/40			6/25						8/25	
EQA 205	Facility Management Practicum I	7/15	7/15		11/15	9/10		4/15	12/15		5/15	11/15		15/15	14/15
EQA 395	Facility Management Practicum II		2/12		3/12	5/5			4/12		3/12	5/25		7/12	
EQS 208/209	Survey of Groundwork Techniques/ Lab							8/8			5/8			6/8	
EQS 311	Tack Construction & Repair	7/10													
EQS 412	Advanced Teaching Practicum	1/1	0/48		1/48	2/12		1/1			1/1	3/3			3/5
EQS 416/417	Veterinary Techniques Practicum/Lab		5/10			8/10			10/10			8/10			10/10
EQU 401	EQS Supervision and Leadership		1/15		0/15	2/15		1/15	1/15			2/15		1/15	2/15
EQU 410	Digital Edu for the Horse Industry														

While this does not include the applied riding enrollment numbers, it highlights the need to adjust rotations to maximize class counts and reduce instructor load.

Low enrollment in EQU 201 and EQU 391 has impacted the structure of the program over the reporting cycle. Students in these courses are actively taking care of the WWU herd. Small enrollment numbers can be both discouraging to students enrolled in the course (perceived as more work for them), and require more faculty involvement in daily management of the horses (to fill in the gaps). This same issue is present in the teaching techniques courses. Fewer teaching assistants means that the instructor is left to manage the applied classes on their own. The block scheduling of riding class has helped manage the horse's schedule, but makes it difficult or impossible for the applied instructor to be in the barn as the students prepare their horses as they teach back to back riding classes.

Grade Distribution:

There are some courses where the students cannot be allowed to make enough mistakes to fail the course with any regularity. EQU 201 and 391 Horse Management Practicum I and II, require faculty intervention when a student begins to struggle with the practicum component. Faculty cannot let them "sink or swim" since personal safety and the health and well-being of the horses are at risk.

Evidence:

- [Equestrian Science Course Enrollment](#)

Completion

1. How many students are graduating from the program?
Have the completion rates been in line with expectations?
2. Describe findings resulting from exit surveys or program alumni surveys that were conducted over the course of the cycle. (programs will need to do annual exit surveys to capture this data)

Narrative:

No programmatic exit surveys were conducted during the reporting cycle.

Graduation rates for Equestrian Science majors are low as compared to the university overall. Movement away from EQS is not uncommon when many incoming students know relatively little about the life of a professional trainer/instructor. As their knowledge of the industry expands, they move toward careers that are more suited to their skills and abilities. Successful completion of this major requires moderate experience in riding and handling horses from the beginning. Appropriate recruiting is important, but the program expects many incoming EQS students to move toward Equine Administration or Equine General Studies.

Graduation rates are included here:

[Equestrian Science Retention grad rate](#)

Evidence:

- [Equestrian Science Retention grad rate](#)

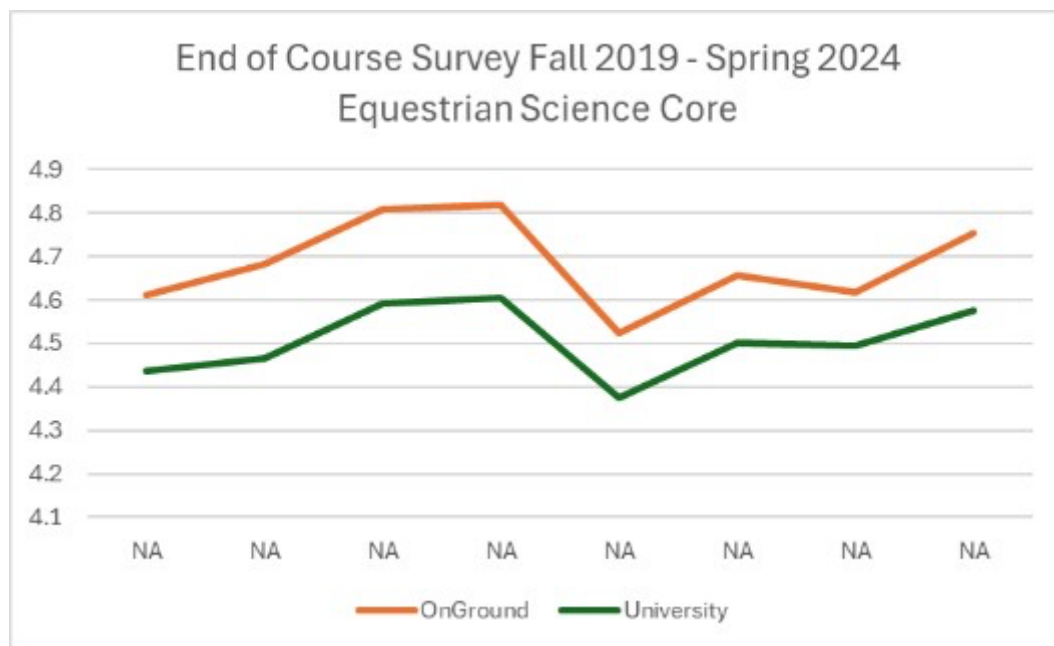
Course Evaluation Data

1. What were some positive and negative feedback received from students who completed the courses?
2. Highlight any trends or insights that came from course evaluations over the course of the cycle. (data will have to be available)

Narrative:

Question #	Totals								Online	OnGround	University
1	The expectations for the course and my role in it were clear and consistent								NA	4.610859	4.44
2	The instructor creates an atmosphere for student learning								NA	4.683929	4.47
3	The instructor demonstrates enthusiasm for the subject they are teaching								NA	4.808752	4.59

4	The instructor displays skills and competencies in the specific subject area	NA	4.818537	4.61
5	The instructor graded assignments in a timely fashion and provided feedback that was helpful to me	NA	4.524104	4.38
6	The instructor presented critical thinking questions and problems that are real world relatable	NA	4.658279	4.50
7	The instructor provided opportunities that challenged me intellectually	NA	4.618049	4.50
8	The instructor treats students fairly while setting clear expectations for learning	NA	4.752836	4.58



Equestrian Science core classes were rated higher than the University average in all areas. Faculty work diligently to create courses that can address the material in a differentiated manner and that establish a solid foundation for students.

Students sometimes struggle to understand horse assignments and limitations on the horses that they may ride in class. Faculty must keep students safe and not "overmount" them. Students are not always the best evaluators of their own ability.

Evidence:

- [EQS EOC Data](#)
- [Equestrian Science](#)

Student Advising

1. Describe the advising process for your program?
2. What strategies and structures are in place to facilitate a successful advising period?
3. What is the optimal ratio of advisees to adviser for the program?
4. Explain any other processes to increase the effectiveness of the current advising procedure.

Narrative:

1. Students in the equestrian program are assigned a faculty member to serve as their academic advisor. They are able to change advisors if they find a better fit with a different faculty member. In addition to primary advisors, they generally have two faculty members who can view their academic information if they have a second major outside of those in the equestrian program. Students are required to meet with their academic advisor before registration opens each semester.

2. In response to student confusion about equestrian courses, the majors and minors, and other graduation requirements, a new onboarding course was developed. Two assignments specific to advising occur in this course--the graduation plan and the advising study questions. These activities connect the new students with the catalog, major checklists, pre-requisites, and other important areas related to advising. As a result of the new curriculum, most advisors immediately reported that new students knew more about classes and the majors/minors than their upperclassmen. It continues to be an effective method to familiarize new equestrian students with the advising and registration process.

[EQU 101 Four Year Plan Study Questions Brightspace](#)
[EQU_101 Graduation_PLAN_ASSIGNMENT brightspace](#)

3. Equestrian program faculty have always advised as many students as assigned. However, as a performance-based area and an academic program that is heavily profession-oriented, many hours are spent with each advisee and any other students who need career or professional advice. For this reason, the two weeks designated for advising appointments are extremely challenging for equestrian faculty.

Evidence:

- [EQU 101 Four Year Plan Study Questions Brightspace](#)
- [EQU_101 Graduation_PLAN_ASSIGNMENT brightspace](#)

Student Awards and Achievements

1. Highlight the accomplishments and external honors received by students in the program over the course of this cycle.

Narrative:**Student Awards and Achievements****2019-2020****Western**

Color Breed Congress

Pinto World Championships

Saddleseat

American Royal

Hunter/Jumper

Irish Fox Horse Show at the National Equestrian Center

Leslie Reynolds and "Pacha De Nantuel"- Champion Adult Hunters

Kate Thompson and "Corona Du Domaine Z"- Mini Prix and Reserve Champ in the 1.0-1.10 Jumpers

Alex Woods and "Princessa" Placed in the Adult Hunters and MOJO Adult Equitation

Abbigail Bahr and “Above the Rest”- showed the schooling hunters
Sydney Enguland and “Beau Blue”- 3rd in the Jumper Classic, placed well in Child/Adult JUMPers
Sarah Miesner and “Chin Chin”- 2nd in the .6 Jumpers

Dressage

WWU Spring Dressage show

12 horse and rider pairs competed: a pair qualified for Regionals, multiple riders earned scores towards their Bronze at First and Second levels, three WWU horse/rider pairs took home the level championship in Training, Second, and Third Levels

St Louis Dressage Society Spring Classic, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Emily Wolf and Silvano- First and Second Level, won all classes and JR/YR High point

Emily Wolf and Hacendosa- Training and First Levels, won all classes and qualified for Regionals at Training Level

Dressage at RIO, RIO Equine Center, Oak Grove, MO

Emily Wolf and Silvano- 1st in Second Level test 3 both days and qualified for Regionals

Emily Wolf and Hacendosa- First level, won all classes

The Kirkwood Show, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Emily Wolf and Hacendosa- Training Level and First Level, qualified for Regionals at First Level and won JR/YR Highpoint in the Training Level with a 69%

Additional

Fall Event Management Class--created and ran Canter for a Cure as a benefit horse show (November 2019) 75% (3 of 4) Vet School acceptance rate. The fourth applicant was waitlisted and most likely will be accepted. Sarah Gleich was accepted to the Kentucky Equine Management Internship Program (spring 2020 class)

2020-2021

Western

Missouri Paint Horse Club Show Lake St. Louis, Missouri

Faculty—Liz Haben

Riders—Sam Gleason, Olivia Veragen, Liz Pemberton, AJ Vittone and Natalie Ciciva

Missouri Arabian Horse Association Extravaganza Class A Show Lake St. Louis, Missouri

Faculty—Liz Haben

Riders—Brittnee Meats and Erica Mantle

Saddleseat

St. Louis National Charity Horse Show Lake St. Louis, Missouri

Faculty—Sarah Track

Riders—Grace McFarland, Jamie Johnson and Emily Rhodes

American Royal Kansas City, Missouri

Faculty—Sarah Track

Riders—Grace McFarland, Jamie Johnson and Emily Rhodes

Bridlespur MHSA Kickoff Show Lake St. Louis, Missouri

Faculty—Sarah Track

Riders—Grant Hooper, Tyler Hodgkins, Grace McFarland, Emily Rhodes, Ashley Jeppesen, Amy Luppino, Haylee

Sheldon, Tatiana Miller, Devin Sell and Faith Sorum

Hunter/Jumper

Faculty- Kamerra Brown

Irish Fox Horse Show at the National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO

Leslie Reynolds and “Remington Van Beau”- Winning Adult Hunters and 6th in the Derby

Alex Woods and “Pacha De Nantuel”- two 2nd and a 3rd in the Adult Hunters and placed in the 1.0 Jumpers

Irish Fox Horse Show at the National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO

Brienne Sommerauer and “Ardeo Porsche”- Reserve in the Long Strirrup, 2nd in the the Long Stirrup Eq, and 5th in the mini derby.

Kennedy Crisp aboard “Remington Van Beau”- second in the Adult Equitation

Natalie Hinz aboard “Forrest Warfare”- Champion .60 Jumper Rider

Yari Rivera aboard “BBF Bohemian Renegade” - Champion .60 Jumper Horse

Anna Ranson aboard “Pacha De Nantuel” second in the mini Derby

Jessica Kidd aboard “Gemini”, Abigail Bahr aboard “Spyglass Mojo”, Emily Hagan aboard “Ernie” and Melanie Norby aboard “Chin Chin” all received great ribbons

Dixie Encore Hunter/Jumper Rated Show, Germantown, Tennessee

Faculty—Kamera Brown Allen

Multiple Championships and top 8 placings by—Kathleen Thompson, Melanie Norby, Alanna Bielawski, Leslie Reynolds, Natalie Hinz, Jessica Kidd and Sydney Englund

Leslie Reynolds accepted into the USHJA Emerging Athletes Program

Dressage

USEF/USDF Region 4 Dressage Championships, Maffitt Lake Equestrian Center, Cumming, IA

Emily Wolf and Hacendosa- 9th in the JR/YR Training Level Championships and 12th in the JR/YR First Level Championships

April at the Arch Dressage Show

Faculty—Bailey McCallum

Emily Wolf and “Hacendosa”-First and Second Level

Emily Wolf and Rembrandt- First Level and Dressage Seat Equitation

Heather Klopp and “Sydney”- First Level

Sydney Brueneman and “Antares”- Training Level and qualified for Regionals

Xanadu Spring Spectacular, Xanadu Farms, Washington, MO

Sydney Brueneman and “Antares”- First Level, 1 qualifying score

Haley Cronin and “Aftershock”- Intro Level

Xanadu Summer Show, Xanadu Farms, Washington, MO

Cassandra Ruhlen and “Wroyal Dancer”- Training Level

Sydney Brueneman and “Antares”- First Level, qualified for Regionals

National Dressage Pony Cup, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Cassandra Ruhlen and “Wroyal Dancer”- Training Level, 3rd and 4th placings

Sydney Brueneman and “Antares”- First Level, 1st, 2nd, and 4th placings

Additional Accolades

William Woods Intercollegiate Judging Team U.S. Arabian and Half Arabian National Championships

Coaches—Liz Haben and Jennie Petterson

Team 1—Morgan Crooks, Brittnee Meats, Sam Gleason, Jillian Jarvis and Ashley Thompson
2nd Halter Team

3rd Performance Team

3rd Oral Reasons Team

3rd Overall Collegiate Team

Team 2—(competing for individual awards) Jolie Miner, Anna Pappas, Courtney Leape and Paige Hardy

Individual Placings

Ashley Thompson- 4th in halter, 10th in performance and 2nd in oral reasons, 5th place overall collegiate award

Jillian Jarvis- 6th in halter

Sam Gleason- 9th in halter

Brittnee Meats- 10th overall in collegiate division

Anna Pappas-9th individual reasons

2021-2022

Western

2021 Pinto World Championships Tulsa, Oklahoma

Winner--Best Display (stall set up) at the Pinto World Championships sponsored by Stateline Tack

6x Amateur World Champion and 2x Amateur Reserve World Champion Brittnee Meats and WWU's WV Kyss of Fame—

Highpoint Amateur All-Around Pleasure Type Pinto

Amateur World Champion and multiple top ten award winner Sam Gleason and WWU's Heza Hershey Bar

Amateur Reserve World Champion and multiple top ten award winner Olivia Veragen and WWU's Jazzy San Pep

Open Top Five and Top Ten award winner Liz Pemberton and WWU's WV Kyss of Fame

2021 Color Congress Tulsa, Oklahoma

19 Congress Championships, multiple Top Five and Top Ten awards from riders:

Sabina Shifrin, Olivia Veragen, Brittnee Meats, AJ Vittone, Lexi Schumacher, Sam Gleason, Billee Page, Lauren Stone

and Grace Barnett

Amateur High Point Pleasure Type Brittnee Meats and WV Kyss of Fame

Saddleseat

Breyer Model of the Year Marc of Charm--American Saddlebred Reveal Drill Team

Student Riders: Jamie Johnson, Grace McFarland, Emily Rhodes, Ashley Jeppesen, Tyler Hodgkins, Grant Hoofer, Faith

Sorum and Devin Sell

Students Assistants: Tatiana Miller, Haylee Sheldon and Amy Luppino

St. Louis National Charity Horse Show Lake Saint Louis

Reserve Grand Champion Tyler Hodgkins and WWU's Gridded Grand Guard

2 Top Three placings Grant Hoofer and WWU's Nut Job

4th Faith Sorum and WWU's A Sharp Temper

American Royal Kansas City Missouri

Missouri/Kansas Park Grand Champion Grant Hoofer and Nut Job

Missouri/Kansas Three-Gaited Pleasure Tyler Hodgkins and Gridded Grand Guard

Missouri/Kansas Five-Gaited Pleasure Ashley Jeppesen and Ozark's Big Mac

Missouri/Kansas Junior Exhibitor Five-Gaited Faith Sorum and A Sharp Temper

Hunter/Jumper

World Equestrian Center Ohio Midwest Indoors II Wilmington, Ohio

Champion TB Jumpers and 3 Blue Ribbons Rounds Jessica Kidd and personal horse Star Seeker

3 Blue Ribbon Rounds and Top Five/Ten 1.0 m Jumpers Yari Rivera and Topflight

1 Blue Ribbon round, 4th Child/Adult Jumpers Natalie Hinz and Fine China

Multiple Top Five and Ten Low Child/Adult Hunters Emma Boschert and Ardeo Porsche

1 Blue Ribbon Round and 2 Top Ten awards Child/Adult Hunter Alanna Bielawski and Chin Chin

DMG Show, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Emma Boschert and Jupiter Moon

Jessica Kidd and Star Seeker

Flying Fox Horse Show, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis MO

Eliana Nolan-Shafer and "Forest Warfare"- Reserve Champ in the .65 jumpers

Brienne Sommerauer and "Spyglass Hills Mojo"- placed in the .65 jumpers

Emma Boschert and "Ardeo Porsche"- placed in the Adult Hunters and 5th in the Hunter Derby

Jessica Kidd and "Star Seeker"- Reserve Champion in the .85-.95 jumpers and 4th in the MOJO Classic

Elizabeth Stewart and "Chin Chin"- won the Adult Eq and placed in the Long Stirrup

Spring Bay Horse Trial in Lexington Kentucky

Melanie Norby and Forest Warfare

Fine China and Anna Ranson

Star Seeker and Jessica Kidd

Emma Boschert was accepted into and participated in the USHJA Emerging Athletes Program

Dressage

USDF Region 4 Dressage Championships, Maffitt Lake Equestrian Center, Cumming, IA

Emily Wolf and "Rembrandt"- Third Level, won all classes

Sydney Brueneman and "Antares"- Competed in the JR/YR First Level Championship

April at the Arch, National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO

Haley Cronin and "Psassy"-Intro Level

Heather Klopp and "Sydney"- Third Level and a qualifying score

Cassandra Ruhlen and "Wroyal Dancer"- Training Level, won two classes

Abby Peters and "Aftershock"- Intro and Training Level

Sydney Brueneman and "Antares"- First Level, qualified for Regionals

Emeri Kitchell and "Rembrandt"- Training Level, won all tests and qualified for Regionals

Sarah Asbury and "Carolina Brew"- Training Level, 2nd and 3rd placings

Laurel Williams- Training Level, one qualifying score

Xanadu Spring Classic, Xanadu Farms, Washington, MO

Laurel Williams and "Gigolo"- Training Level, won all classes and JR/YR High Percentage

Emma Boschert and "Ardea Porsche"- Training Level, won all classes

SLADS Summer Classic, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Emma Boschert and "Ardeo Porsche"- Training Level, multiple placings

2022-2023

Paddock Club Team Invitational Champion Team

Student Coach Jolie Miner

Student Riders: Jessica Kidd, Sydney Brueneman, Olivia Veragen and Taylor Thompson

Western

Three-Gaited Show Pleasure 18-38 Reserve Champion Tyler Hodgkins and Ludovic

Color Breed Congress 2022

Olivia Veragen and Pep

Olivia Veragen and Foxy

Liz Pemberton and Pep

Shay Leake and Foxy,

Megan Corrigan and Reign

Dylan Hassett and Myles

Jess Ramos and Hershey

Hannah White and Prelude

Hannah White and Cash

Lily Brachio and Garth

Liz Haben- Harold

- NSBA Champion Open Ranch Riding, Oliva & Pep
- Grand Champion AM Palomino Halter, Shay & Foxy
- 2 x class champion, 18x top five, 30x top ten

Saddleseat

American Royal National Championship-Kansas City, Missouri

Missouri/Kansas Park Reserve Grand Champion Grant Hooper and Nut Job

Missouri/Kansas Three-Gaited Pleasure Reserve Grand Champion and Reserve Champion

Tyler Hodgkins and Ludovic

Missouri/Kansas Five-Gaited Pleasure Grand Champion and Champion Faith Sorum and For No Apparent Reason

Missouri/Kansas Junior Exhibitor Five-Gaited Grand Champion Megan McLeod and Loaded Question

Missouri/Kansas Three-Gaited Country Pleasure Grand Champion and Champion Taylor Thompson and He's Divine

Missouri/Kansas Three-Gaited Country Pleasure Reserve Champion Ella Ziemer and Jon Snow

Missouri/Kansas Three-Gaited Amateur Reserve Champion Megan Bishop and Lyle Lovett
St. Louis National Charity Horse Show St. Louis, Missouri

Three-Gaited Show Pleasure 18-38 Reserve Champion Tyler Hodgkins and Ludovic

Hunter/Jumper

World Equestrian Center Midwest II & WEC Medal Finals, World Equestrian Center, Wilmington OH

Jessica Kidd and "Star Seeker" - 11th in the Low Adult 1.0 m Jumper Classic

Eliana Nolan Shafer and "Forest Warfare" - clear in the .65 jumpers

Alanna Bielawski and "Painted Damask" - 4th in USHJA 2'6 Hunters

Alanna Bielawski and "Chin Chin" - placed in the Non pro 2'6 Derby

Rachel Kellar and "Fiama" - clear in the .75 jumpers

Dora Moutinho and "Fine China" - clear in the .75 and .85 jumpers

Natalie Hinz and "Fresca" - placings in the USHJA 2'6, Adult Hunters and 4th in the Adult Equitation.

Leslie Reynolds and "La Nora" - clear in the .85 jumpers. 9th in the Novice/Child Adult jumper classic

Leslie Reynolds and "Painted Damask" - non pro 2'6 derby

Emma Boschert and "Ardeo Porsche" - placings in the USHJA 3'0 hunters and the Derby

Elizabeth Stewart and "Chin Chin" - clear in the .75 jumpers and placings in the Intermediate Adult Hunters.

Flying Fox Horse Show, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Emma Boschert and "Painted Damask" - Reserve Champ in the Adult Hunters and 1st in the MOHJO Adult Eq

Jessica Kidd and "Taz" - Reserve Champ in the Baby Greens

Jessica Kidd and "Star Seeker" - Reserve Champ in the .85-.95 jumpers

Ashley Thompson and "Pacha de Nantuel" - 2nd in the mini Derby and 2st in the Long Stirrup

Audrey Weredyk and "High Steppin" - placings in the .60 jumpers, Baby Greens, and mini Derby

Lainey Rutter and "Top Flight" - 1st in the .60 jumpers

Kayla Walsh and "Dehli" - placings in the .60 jumpers

Eliana Nolan-Shafer - 1st and placings in the .60 jumpers

Miranda Faulkner and "BBF Bohemian Royal Renegade" - 1st in the crossrails and eq and placings in the Hunter

Rachel Kellar and "Ardeo Porsche" - placings in the Adult Hunters and 2nd in the MOHJO Adult Eq

Abbigail Ponti and "Remy" - 1st in the Baby Greens

Dressage

USEF/USDF Region 4 Dressage Championships, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis MO

Laurel Williams and "Sydney" - Training Level 2nd and 3rd placings

Emma Boschert and "Ardeo Porsche" - Training Level open show, 1st and 2nd placings

Sydney Brueneman and "Antares" - 6th in the JR/YR First Level Championship

April at the Arch, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Abby Peters and "Aftershock" - Training Level, 2nd, 3rd and 5th placings

Cassandra Ruhlen and "Wroyal Dancer" - 6th and 4th in Training Level and 2nd and 1st in First Level.

Xanadu Summer Show, Xanadu Farms, Washington, MO

Laurel Williams and "Sydney" - Training Level, won all classes and qualified for Regionals

Danielle Davidson and “Antares”- Intro Level, won all classes with scores above 70% and won High Pint JR/YR

SLADS Summer Classic, National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO

Danielle Davidson and “Antares”- Intro Level, won all classes

Laurel and “Sydney”-Qualified for Regionals at Training Level, Showed First Level to a 3rd place

Additional Accolades

Paddock Club Team Invitational Champion Team

Student Coach Jolie Miner

Student Riders: Jessica Kidd, Sydney Brueneman, Olivia Veragen and Taylor Thompson

WWU Hosted the 2023 EAP Regional Training Session

Multiple WWU riders and horses participated

2023-2024

Western

Color Breed Congress. Tulsa, OK:

Dylan Hassett ‘26- Unanimous Champion Equitation WT Solid

Abby Burkhalter ‘26- Champion Youth Ranch Pleasure WT

Hannah White ‘26- Reserve Champion under 2 individual judges in Youth Ranch Reining Solid

Olivia Veragen ‘24- Champion Open Solid Mares

Shay Leake ‘24- Champion AM Palomino Showmanship

Saddleseat

American Royal, Kansas City, MO:

Grant Hoofer ‘24 Champion and Grand Champion MO/KS/IOWA 5-Gaited Amateur

Faith Sorum ‘24 Champion and Grand Champion MO/KS/IOWA 5-Gaited Pleasure

Hunter/Jumper

Silver Fox Show, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Kayla Walsh and “Painted Damask”- Champion in the Beginner Rider Hunters both days

Dora Moutinho and “Cold Case”- Champion in the Open Hunters and 2nd in the Jumper Classic

Rachel Kellar and “La Nora”- Reserve Champ in the Novice Adult Hunters

Ava Clark and “Chin Chin”- Reserve Champ in the Silver Fox Hunters

Grace Clark and “Chin Chin”- Reserve Champ in the Silver Fox Hunters

Hailey Butler and “Pacha de Nantuel”- Reserve Champ in the Intermediate Hunters and 4th in the Eq

Alanna Bielawski and “Field of Tulips”- placings in the Future Hunters

World Equestrian Center Midwest II & WEC Medal Finals, World Equestrian Center, Wilmington OH

Alanna Bielawski and “War Paint”- to a 7th in the Intermediate Adult Jumpers

Abigail Ponti and “Capitol Image”- USHJA 2’6 hunters and in the non professional derby

Hailey Butler and “Pacha De Nantuel”- Low Adult Hunters and Adult Equitation.

Elizabeth Stewart and “Ardeo Porsche”- 5th in the Low Adult Hunters and 6th in the Adult Equitation

Rachel Kellar and “La Nora”- 1st .90 jumpers and had clear in the Novice Adult Jumpers.

Dora Moutinho and “Cold Case”- clear in the .80 and .90 jumpers and 8th place in the Novice Adult Jumpers.

Ava Clark and “Chin Chin”- 8th in the Non Professional Hunters.

Grace Clark and “Chin Chin”- 1st in the .75 jumpers.

Silver Fox Show, National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO

Shay Leake and “Up in the Air”- Championship in the ground poles and 2nd in the Eq

Kayla Walsh and “Fine China”- Championship in the .65 Jumpers

Abigail Ponti and “Fumonia B”- 2nd in the .65 Jumpers

Zella Hekkert and “Capitol Image”- Reserve Champ in the Academy Hunters and 2nd in the Academy Eq

Dressage

USDF Region 4 Championships at Maffitt Lake, Cumming, IA

Laurel Williams and “Sydney”- Qualified and competed at Training Level

KDA Summer Dressage at the Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington, KY

Sydney Brueneman and “Sydney”- Third Level

SLADS August Classic, National Equestrian Center, Lake St Louis, MO

Sydney Brueneman and “Sydney”- Third Level

Alanna Bielawski and “Antares”- Training Level, won all classes a with scores up to 74% and High Score AA for Saturday

Clubs and Co-Curricular

1. Does your program support any clubs and co-curricular activities that contribute to positive student experiences?
2. How does this contribute to the program?
3. To the campus experience of students?

Narrative:

Does your program support any clubs and co-curricular activities that contribute to positive student experiences?

The program operates 5 active clubs that all contribute to creating activities for students outside of the classroom.

Paddock Club combines representatives from all four disciplines and hosts activities where students from all four seats can come together; examples include the Paddock Club Invitational, the Halloween Haunted Tackroom and Costume Competition, and Barn Olympics.

Each of the four disciplines maintains their own seat-specific club that hosts meetings and activities for students. Examples of activities hosted by the various seat-specific clubs include fun shows, clinics, movie nights, bake sales and other fund raisers, field trips, trips to the corn maze, trips to haunted houses, bonfires, picnics, etc.

The program and its faculty also support William Woods University’s LEAD program by offering countless opportunities for students to gain LEAD points towards their scholarship by attending co-curricular activities like guest lectures, movies, plays, lectures, panel discussions, Q&A’s, and more. Horse shows and clinics offered by the individual clubs also act as LEAD event, encouraging students who are not involved with the program to visit the EQS Complex and learn more about the equine industry and equine studies. Lists of LEAD events offered each year can be referenced in the individual annual assessments (evidence).

2. How does this contribute to the program?

The program provides ample opportunities for students to gather outside of the classroom environment. These opportunities are often used to continue student education but also provide much-needed activities for students to spend time together without the pressure of the classroom or assignments. Clinics hosted by the program and the clubs offer invaluable experience and education to students, learning from established, successful professionals in the industry that they would otherwise not be able to afford. Shows hosted by the program encourage students to try competitions that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive. These on-campus events also provide options for students to attempt a different discipline and learn more about how other facets of the equine industry work. Each event hosted by the program

and its clubs helps to expand each student's knowledge of the industry at large, often providing them with insight into the industry they may never otherwise get.

3. To the campus experience of students?

All LEAD events and all events hosted by the program and the clubs are open to any student on the William Woods Campus. This provides many opportunities for students not involved in the equine program to learn more about what our program does and the kinds of careers our equestrian students are working towards. The EQS Program as a whole is a completely unique program not only on William Woods campus but it is unique among similar programs at peer institutions thanks to its commitment to providing real-world experiences to its students and its ability to immerse students fully in the professional side of the industry; no other program provides this level of multi-faceted education about the equine industry

[EQS Annual Assessment 2019-2020](#)

[EQS Annual Assessment 2020-2021](#)

[EQS Annual Assessment 2021-2022](#)

[EQS Annual Assessment 2022-2023](#)

[EQS Annual Assessment 2023-2024](#)

Evidence:

- [EQS Annual Assessment 2019-2020](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2020-2021](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2021-2022](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2022-2023](#)
- [EQS Annual Assessment 2023-2024](#)

Program Analysis

SWOT Analysis

1. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

Narrative:

Strengths

The equestrian program is a niche offering that appeals to students outside of William Wood's traditional recruiting geography. The full complement of academic tracks within the program provides a profession-oriented education suitable for students pursuing many different career paths in the industry. With a foundation of 50 years of innovative equestrian education to build on, the program enjoys a firm reputation and foothold in the equestrian job market for its graduates.

Weaknesses

The equestrian facilities, except the Center for Equine Medicine, are suffering from both annual neglect (by virtue of budget) and reluctance to make improvements. An aging equestrian facility requires regular maintenance, and deferring this gives our competitors a distinct advantage. The equestrian program has historically relied on students to do the bulk of the daily work with the horses and the facility. When enrollment declines, so does the workforce. While some regular tasks have been moved to WWU staff (afternoon feeding, for example), the overall daily operations still rely heavily on enrolled students.

Opportunities

While our facility is aging, it has two indoor, heated arenas with sound systems in a region where indoor equestrian facilities have transformed into antique malls and fireworks warehouses practically overnight. The community wants to come to our complex and is willing to financially support community programming. It is incredibly inconvenient to plan and run regular events that bring the community to the barn to rent stalls, pay entry fees, and generate revenue during the semester, but this is a clear opportunity for revenue generation. Faculty are experts and professionals who know how to make money in the industry and can be incentivized to engage in these activities to support the program while enrollment recovers. The program has a variety of revenue-generating opportunities that should be explored and implemented aggressively.

Threats

The equestrian program becomes expensive when the ratio of students to horses is out of balance, or the total enrollment drops below what provides a sustainable number of riders, horse caretakers, and facility workers. A program left to pull new students without any marketing or recruitment plan is ultimately doomed to fail. Prospective students don't look for colleges the way they did in the past, and equestrians aren't entering the sport in the same fashion either. We risk losing our foothold if we rely on tradition and our own perception of our worth in the marketplace. Waiting for things to change without doing anything differently is likely to be detrimental to the program's sustainability.

Campus Facility and Resources

1. Provide an analysis on how adequate the spaces that are most used by the program on campus (laboratories, office space, classrooms/LMS, etc.).
2. Please discuss any updates or modifications to the facility or resources available to the program that have impacted student learning.
3. Recommendations to Improve Facilities and Resources

Narrative:

The Center for Equine Medicine is well-designed and functional. It is a state-of-the-art facility with many uses. The lab and classroom space at the CEM (while unconventional) is well-equipped. It is well-positioned to serve both the equestrian and pre-veterinary students and faculty for multiple courses, events, and projects.

The stable complex on the main campus suffers from the impact of a limited budget. While the necessities have been maintained, there are many areas where repairs or replacement were necessary but never done. Our equipment is aging and has started to require expensive repairs. Regular replacement of tractors, implements, vehicles, and horse trailers has not been a part of a long-term plan. One new truck (1 ton flatbed) was donated to the equestrian program during this program review period, and this has allowed instructors to limit the use of the oldest truck in use for transporting horses. This alleviated many of the concerns, but still leaves the bulk of the fleet in need of replacement.

Horses are incredibly hard on the barns--particularly the stalls. The stall fronts and walls need repairs at least once a year and often more frequently. Floors need to be repacked and leveled and stall mats reinstalled annually. Repairs to automatic waterers and feeders are weekly or sometimes even daily. Major areas of concern are the fencing in the Monroe St. turnout lots (cattle panel, t-post and hot wire), the Westminster turnout lot and round pen, and the outdoor arena. The temporary fencing at the Monroe lots was required for a period of time, but has been ready to be replaced by permanent fencing for years. The cattle panel

fencing is unsightly and not the safest choice for equine fencing.

The equestrian classrooms are well equipped with dual monitors in EQS 100 and a single monitor in EQS 102. The seating was replaced approximately 5 years ago and is holding up well. WIFI in the stable complex has been a challenge at times, but UIT support has corrected most of the issues.

Library Report

* Upload the Library report provided by the University Library

1. Please describe the usage of library resources.
2. How do faculty and students feel the library meets the program's needs?

Narrative:

The equestrian collection at William Woods is extraordinary. Many outside the field are unaware of the extensive collection of books, periodicals, and videos in the library and equestrian media collection. This is the result of many decades of work by the equestrian faculty and library staff.

[Library Collection Analysis -- Equestrian Science 2025](#)

The library staff does an exceptional job working with equestrian faculty to provide the students with the resources they need.

Evidence:

- [Library Collection Analysis -- Equestrian Science 2025](#)

Cost Analysis

1. What was the annual budget for the program for the past 5 years?
2. How was the budget spent? (breakdown of budget expenses)

Narrative:

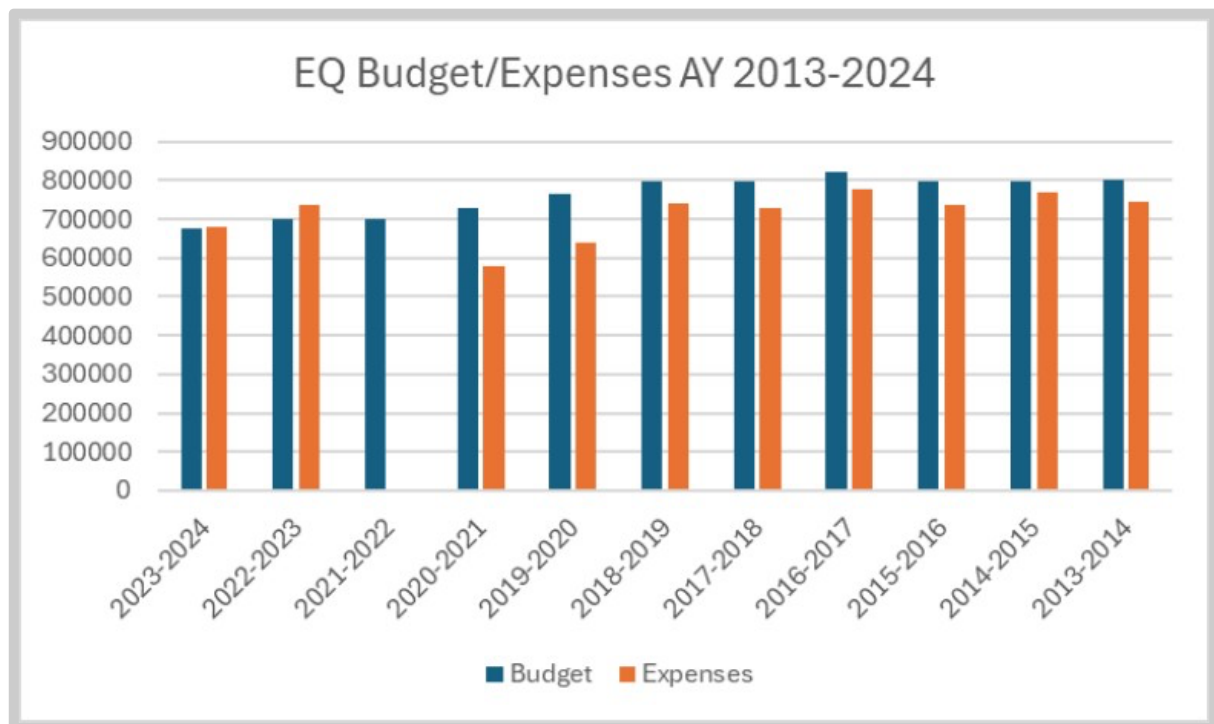
A five-year snapshot of the EQ budget reflects a variety of challenges. Budget allocations have historically been made months into the fiscal year, and cutting overall budgets has been made in February or March. This leaves very little time to react. The program's dependency on live animals, which require substantial investment in agricultural products like feed and forage, leaves it vulnerable to significant fluctuations in expenditures.

With this, the program has not only kept within its budget but often finished the fiscal year under budget. Decisions about how many horses are kept and carried for the academic year, and therefore how much forage (primarily grass and alfalfa hay) is purchased during the growing season, are made based on projected student enrollment in the program. Overly optimistic projections for fall new equestrian enrollment provided by the administration or by enrollment are not advantageous to the program. They can result in accepting donated horses and procuring hay for the upcoming year that is not proportional to the needs of the program. While the extra hay can be financially offset the next year, getting rid of horses

quickly is difficult.

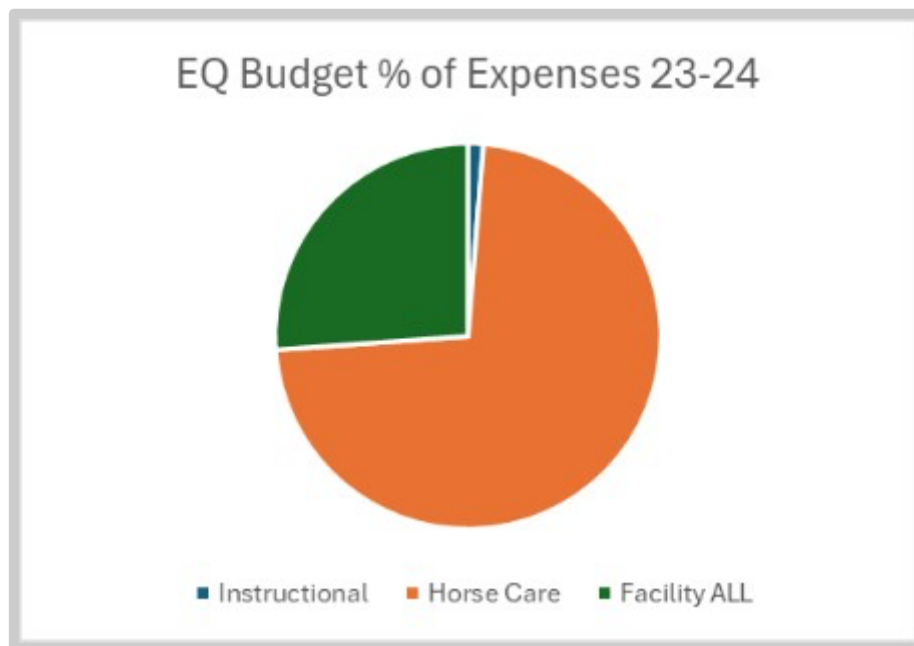
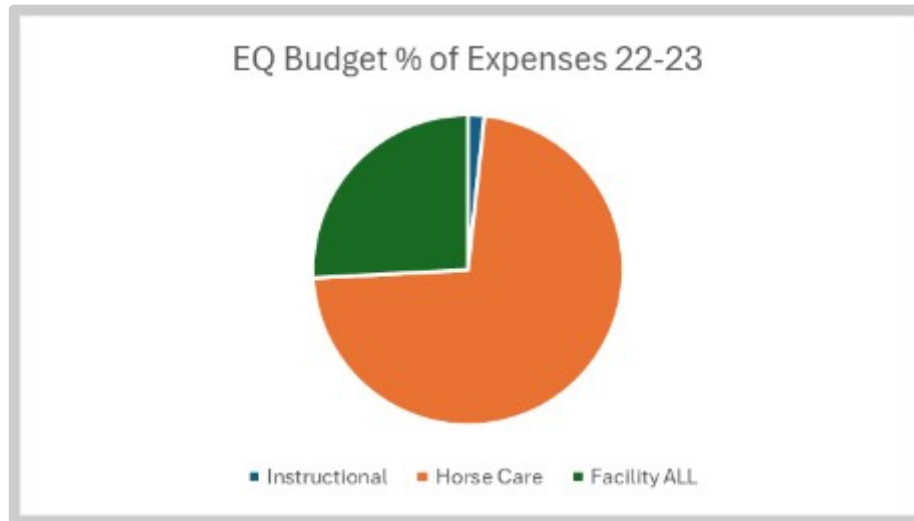
TABLE: Academic Year Budget Allocations, Expenses and Percentage of the Budget Spent

AY	Budget	Expenses	Percentage
2023-2024	675000	681316.8	101%
2022-2023	700500	737401.5	105%
2021-2022	698,500	unverified	unverified
2020-2021	730,000	579,882	79.50%
2019-2020	764,000	641,163	84%
2018-2019	797,400	741,706	93%
2017-2018	796,000	727,408	91%
2016-2017	821,000	779,142	95%
2015-2016	796,000	736,879	92.50%
2014-2015	796,000	770,325	96%
2013-2014	800,000	744,687	93%



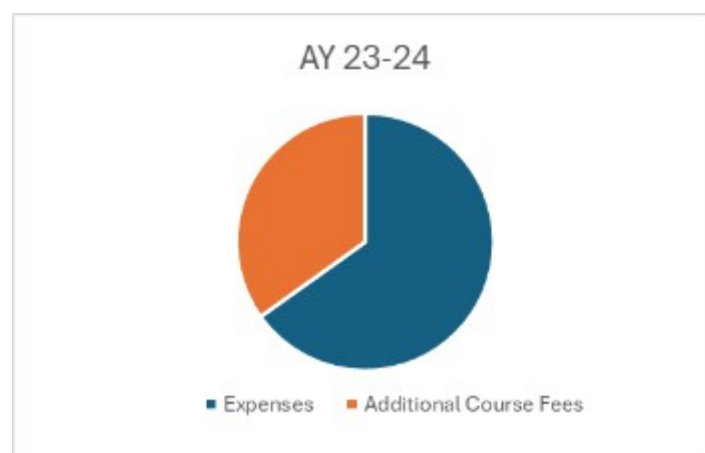
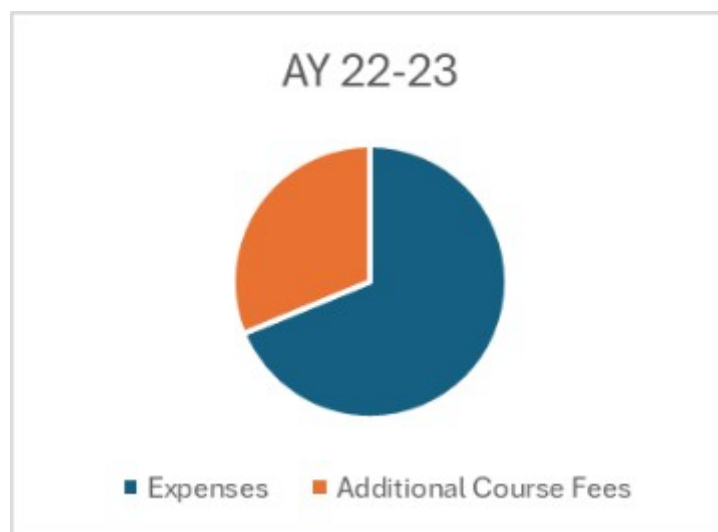
If the Midwest suffers from weather-related price hikes for feed and forage (flooding, drought, export changes), then the expenses can change dramatically. Overall, the ratio of spending on horse care, instructional/classroom-related expenses, and facility expenses has remained consistent. The facility expenses include all electricity, gas, sewer, garbage, staff uniform cleaning, grounds maintenance, etc. Other than payroll, it is comprehensive. The instructional budget (academic, administrative, and class-related) is a small percentage of the overall budget. Significant changes to expenses are almost always impacted by the number of horses that the program carries.

Category	AY 22-23	Percentage of Budget	Category	AY 23-24	Percentage of Budget
Instructional	\$ 11,933.17	1.70%	Instructional	\$ 8,690.59	1.30%
Horse Care	\$ 504,023.30	72.00%	Horse Care	\$ 494,596.10	73.40%
Facility ALL	\$ 179,731.31	25.60%	Facility ALL	\$ 178,030.07	26%



The equestrian program courses carry course fees that offset expenses. The largest fee is the applied riding fee (\$1200 per 1 credit riding class 2019-2023, \$1500 2023-present). Most lecture classes are set at \$35.00, with other applied courses between \$200 and \$750. The table and chart show the course fees compared to total expenses (instructional, facility, and horse care) for Academic Year (AY) 2022-23 and 2023-24.

AY	Expenses	Additional Course Fees
22-23	\$ 737,401.47	\$ 334,685.00
23-24	\$ 681,316.76	\$ 364,885.00



Historically, the course fees have offset the horse care expenses. The equestrian program has not been immune to inflated prices and the impact of a changing global economy. Many of the products and services (farriers, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, natural gas, medications) we rely on are much more expensive now. Owning horses for everyone is more and more expensive across the board. Faculty are working to generate more revenue, while efforts are underway to bolster equestrian enrollment.

The program also generates revenue that is used to supplement the allotted budget. The last truck purchased for the program was with money earned by faculty teaching outside riding clinics. This revenue is not represented in any of the information above and is approximately \$100,000 carried year to year.

Specialty Accreditation

Does the program hold specialty accreditation?

If yes, please include the name of the accrediting body and upload the most recent accreditation letter. (description of the data points – describe the accreditation cycle– identify any points of concern noted on the most recent accreditation)

Narrative:

NA

Industry and Program Trends

Analysis of the Discipline

1. Provide context for the status of the discipline today.
2. What are some emerging trends in this discipline across the country?
3. What is happening in the industries related to this discipline?

Narrative:

The horse industry is tied to the economy. It is expensive to own horses, take riding lessons, or otherwise be engaged in horse-related activities. The cost to start a competitive career as a youth, amateur, or pro is continuing to rise. Industry governing bodies recognize the need for growth in the youth sector, as many active participants are "aging out" of the sport. Without robust youth participation at all levels of the horse industry, the entire equestrian community suffers. Kids are not longer likely to run across a riding stable or the opportunity to ride in their daily lives. Initial encounters with horses are critical and organizations are working to create opportunities for these experiences. All of this impact our target audience and how we recruit.

While growth in some areas of the industry has flatlined or declined, other areas are still strong. The western and hunter/jumper disciplines are the largest in the United States. The American Quarter Horse Association is the largest breed registry in the world. The industry's direct and indirect contributions to the US economy is \$177 billion according to the 2023 AHC Economic Impact Study. Just over 30% of US households have what the AHC defines as a "horse enthusiast." While in 2022 only 1.23% of the US population owned horses, more than 30% owned, spectated or participated in horse-related activities (over 39 million households).

Just as the industry has recognized the need to grow interest in horse-related activities, so have equestrian educational programs. Developing programming that brings youth in contact with horses and equestrian professionals is key to growing a robust funnel of both prospective students for WWU and new horse enthusiasts to the greater equestrian community.

Comparison to Similar Programs at Peer Institutions

1. Identify and discuss how similar programs compare to your program in terms of size, curriculum and any relevant attributes.

Narrative:

Most schools that offer an equestrian-related academic major share similarities. Common coursework includes equine health care, stable management, riding, and training courses. Many offer more than one riding discipline, and many offer student horse boarding on campus. Facilities share similar characteristics with indoor arenas, large stables, pasture,

and turnout space.

WWU has some distinct differences in coursework that are important. Since the start of the Equestrian Science major more than 50 years ago, the goal has been to produce educated professionals in the horse industry. Much of the coursework is centered not just on managing horses and teaching riding, but the hard work of understanding the ethics of riding, training and owning animals, the intricacies of operating in the "horse economy," and developing exceptional leaders. Courses in discipline-specific issues, conflicts and controversies, equine industry-specific business practices, entrepreneurship and event management are examples of how this is integrated into the academic offerings. EQS majors take EQA courses as electives, and EQA majors will take EQS courses for the same purpose. Exposure to four major riding disciplines whether or not the student rides all of them, contributes to their understanding of the diversity of the horse industry. They may arrive breed-centric, but will graduate with an appreciation and respect for all four disciplines and many different breeds of horses.

The logistics of horse management differ between institutions. Some operate with horses leased for the academic year and returned to their owners when the semester concludes. Others run robust training programs where horses are "sent to school" for a semester for students to train. Some follow a model similar to WWU, with horses donated directly to the institution. There are pros and cons to every model. WWU is, with very few exceptions, the owner of the horses used in the program. The quality of our donated horses is very high, not only in comparison to peer institutions, but in the context of the competitive horse show world. This gives us the ability to provide students with exceptional, real-world competition experience at rated and breed level horse shows. The financial liability is that WWU owns many horses.

Senior Exit Surveys

1. What were some positive and negative feedback received from students as they complete their degrees?
2. Highlight any trends or insights that came from exit surveys over the course of the cycle.

Narrative:

Regular reporting of exit surveys or alumni feedback has not been consistent for the reporting cycle. However, many graduates stay engaged with the equestrian program both on social media and at equestrian events.

New exit survey structure will improve collection of this information moving forward.

Graduate/Alumni Feedback on the Program

1. What were some positive and negative feedback received from alumni?
2. Highlight any trends or insights that came from alumni feedback over the course of the cycle.

Narrative:

Regular reporting of exit surveys or alumni feedback has not been consistent for the reporting cycle. However, many graduates stay engaged with the equestrian program both on social media and at equestrian events. During dedicated equestrian alumni events, informal conversations about program updates and changes to policies have generated positive feedback. We have not been afraid to implement change based on student, stakeholder and graduate feedback.

While preparing a new brochure, the following comments from alumni were featured. They speak to the holistic nature of the program. Although only one is a graduate of the five year reporting cycle, the common theme from the group is the broad, diverse approach to equestrian education that prepares students for a wide variety of careers.

WWU's Equestrian Program showed me just how many directions a career in the horse industry can take. I'm so grateful for my time at WWU. It gave me the foundation to build a career I'm passionate about, and I truly can't imagine working in any other industry. It also led to relationships that have lasted well beyond graduation and endured across many state lines.

Claire Murphy '18 Senior Digital Marketing Manager Kimes Ranch

The foundation and connections I gained through this unique program have made all the difference in my career. William Woods University did not simply prepare me for a job--it empowered me to pursue a calling. The hands-on experience I received while at The Woods, along with the summer internships I was placed into, was absolutely invaluable.

Tiffany Wheeler '99 Owner/Trainer Autumn Hills Farm, LLC

The decision to go to William Woods for Equestrian Science shaped my life and career in the best possible way. My education at WWU prepared me for navigating a challenging industry, and my mentor from William Woods is a huge part of my life to this day. The connections I made at WWU have become relationships I value deeply both professionally and personally.

Jojo Kyger '17 Owner/Trainer Just Cruising Equestrian Center

The equestrian program at William Woods was an essential part of my life path that nothing else would have been able to prepare me for. And my experience was not limited to my riding; it allowed me to become open-minded to the professional industry of grooming and pursue my own business in equine tail extensions, along with developing my horses in dressage.

Emily Wolf '21 Owner, Wolf's Equine Extensions

Recommendations from Previous Program Reviews

1. Summarize recommendations from previous PRs, describe how those recommendations were applied throughout this cycle.

Narrative:

1. Recommendations from the 2019 program review of EQS reflected a positive picture of the program. However, a comment about the common ground covered by the EQ majors paved the way for conversations about consolidation from 3 majors into one equestrian major with

multiple concentrations.

This suggestion was aggressively pursued by the equestrian program during the reporting cycle but was quickly dismissed by university leadership and admissions. While this section of the report calls for discussion of the application of recommendations, it is prudent to note which were attempted but not completed and the reasons why.

2.2 Reflection on course offerings and enrollment of courses, rotation, and demand is complete.

Please rate the statement with: 3-Exemplary, 2-Adequate, 1-Needs Improvement, or 0-Not Evidenced and then justify your rating in the below section.

Score: 3

Reports did a good job of covering this material. It did leave me to question why there are 3 majors rather than 1 major with multiple concentrations, but I believe that will be addressed in another section of the report.

2. Students reported to the external reviewer in the previous 5-year review that they had difficulties in the courses borrowed from outside of the equestrian department. At the start of the reporting cycle, the EQA major replaced BUS Business Communications with EQA Equestrian Communications. BUS Entrepreneurship was replaced with EQU Equine Entrepreneurship. Students have been satisfied with the results and although we only have a few years of annual assessment data after the changes (students transitioning from the old catalog), the results reflected in the data appear positive.

2.3 Course offerings appear appropriate for the needs of the program.

Please rate the statement with: 3-Exemplary, 2-Adequate, 1-Needs Improvement, or 0-Not Evidenced and then justify your rating in the below section.

Score: 3

Absolutely. Cross-listing courses from other programs prevent reinvention of the wheel, so to speak. However, it would be good/better if non-equine faculty would be more willing to work with equine students with regard to paper topics and methods of application of course material to the equine focus of these students. This statement is based on commentary from the student/reviewer meeting.

3. The learning management system adopted during the 5 years addressed a concern identified by students and communicated to the external reviewer in the last program review. General feedback from students who had experience with both LMS systems (OwlNet/eRacer and now Brightspace/D2L) indicates a higher preference for the new LMS. This was not a program decision but an institutional decision.

3.3 Summarizes the technology equipment needs and supplies noting any deficiencies and the impact on student learning.

Please rate the statement with: 3-Exemplary, 2-Adequate, 1-Needs Improvement, or 0-Not Evidenced and then justify your rating in the below section.

Score: 3

This was addressed very clearly, including some limitations in classrooms (presentation technology). Students noted that LMS (learning management system) was complex and not user friendly, and they felt there were regular issues with notifications from classes not arriving in a timely manner.

Evidence:

- [EQS_Program_Review](#)

Industry Relevance and Employment

1. How do your student learning outcomes align with industry needs?

Narrative:

1. How do your student learning outcomes align with industry needs?

Objective 1- Analyze ethical issues and industry characteristics of the equine industry

Students will need to make informed decisions as professionals. Ethical issues in the equine industry have become more public each year. The industry is currently struggling with social license to operate and professionals in the industry need a firm understanding of equine welfare and how public perception of industry practices can negatively affect their career. Students develop a clear understanding of the characteristics of different disciplines, the history and tradition behind those characteristics, and what the most current research and experience has established as best practices.

Objective 2- Understand the theories and processes of equine management

The equine industry required practical, hands-on experience and thorough understanding of the theories behind equine management strategies. The more practiced and conversant students are in equine management practices, the more marketable they will be as a professional.

Objective 3- Develop communication and managerial strategies for the equine industry.

The program has always leaned heavily into developing managerial strategies for students pursuing a career in the industry; of late, the need for additional communication strategies has become more vital. Much of the business of the industry now takes place online. Professional equestrians not only need excellent entrepreneurial skills but also experience in social media management and digital communications. The program has leaned more heavily into this developing requirement by establishing an Equine Media minor that can be paired with any of the major programs.

Objective 4- Demonstrate proficiency in selecting, conditioning, and training the competition horse

One of the major aspects of the program that sets it apart from other programs is the dedication to producing professional trainers, instructors, and coaches. Intercollegiate programs and show teams at other universities offer limited show experience and little to no practical experience in conditioning and training horses for competition. Students of the program select William Woods because of the countless opportunities to immerse themselves into the training and competition facets of the equine industry. This additional knowledge sets William Woods students apart from other graduates of similar programs and our students enjoy a very high job placement rate due to the program's dedication to this objective.

Objective 5- Demonstrate effective teaching practice and methodology as a riding instructor

Similar to the reasoning for Objective 4, the program and its course progression offer a unique opportunity for students to learn and then experience teaching in the equine industry. Experienced riding instructors are more trusted by both non-equestrians who are branching

into riding lessons for the first time as well as well-established equestrians looking to improve their skills and succeed in competition. Our dedication to establishing safe, effective, knowledgeable instructors makes our students highly desirable as professional instructors upon graduation.

Employment Outlook

1. Describe employment outlook for the degree.
2. What types of employment would constitute working "in the field?"
3. Are there changes to program offerings and activities that would improve the employment outlook for graduates?

Narrative:

1. Describe employment outlook for the degree.

Employment outlook for students entering into the equine industry is currently very positive. The American Horse Council's most recent economic impact study, published in 2023, shows an increase in factors like wages for equine professionals and jobs. The horse industry's contribution to the US economy has risen from \$122 billion in 2017 to \$177 billion and jobs in the industry have risen from 1.7 million jobs in 2017 to 2.2 million jobs in 2023. Despite the COVID-19 global pandemic, the horse industry has continued its growth. Additional jobs related to communications and digital marketing have notably increased over the time period as more of the industry embraces technology.

2. What types of employment would constitute working "in the field?"

Students of the Equine Science degree would be seeking jobs in horse training, riding instruction, show/competition coaching, and equine management. However, students graduating with the EQS degree have been employed by industry organizations, in marketing and communications, in sales, in veterinary medicine and research, and several other facets of the industry.

3. Are there changes to program offerings and activities that would improve the employment outlook for graduates?

The program regularly revises and improves the offered curriculum to stay as current as possible, to teach best practices in the industry, and to create a logical and efficient course progression. The program is currently undergoing a revision to create a course for students undergoing their proficiency exams, to improve the Teaching Techniques series, to increase required practical handling and/or training courses, and to reduce curriculum sprawl. Faculty in the program are dedicated to providing opportunities for learning and experience in the industry and new events, clinics, shows, and lectures are being added to the co-curriculum every year.

External Review

Executive Summary

General observations and comments are provided as to how the program aligns with and supports the University mission and curriculum, the quality of student learning and the achievement of student learning outcomes, the qualifications and achievements of faculty, the student experience, the state of facilities, the value of online resources and supports (if relevant), on-campus resources, financial resources, and how the program is responding to trends within the larger perspective of the program field.

Narrative:

All in all, the equestrian program is in line with the university mission/vision statement through its unique opportunities that provide education in four equestrian seats. Graduates of this innovative program are highly respected within the equine industry. The program continues to be progressive with diverse, broad learning opportunities across multiple equine tracks and minors. The future of the program looks bright due to a solid combination of faculty, students, and administration.

Quality of and achievement of student learning outcomes:

The faculty in the equestrian department were able to switch gears and accommodate the students' needs in a positive manner. The reported data conveys the covid repercussions.

Additionally, the faculty's passion for all equines in the program is marked through their safe and interactive learning environment.

The three core student objectives are consistent with all three equine tracks. This provides a successful segue to additional program-specific student objectives.

All SLO's are mapped positively to each student objective in this report cycle. Equestrian faculty are able to meet teaching objectives during a time of deferred maintenance and budget constraints.

A recommendation for the written proficiency examination would be to streamline the majority of questions to be seat-specific. It is imperative to continue with a portion of general equine questions to develop a well-rounded education. This change would align with the other seat-specific portions of the proficiency examination.

Qualifications and achievements of faculty:

Extremely qualified faculty are passionate about molding well-prepared students who will be successful when choosing to enter the professional equine world or continuing their education after graduation.

Faculty turnover impacted on the program's succession for a brief period. Teamwork from the remaining faculty played a significant role in managing students' needs by covering courses taught by vacated instructors.

A vital strength of the equestrian program continues to be the faculty and staff. Their commitment to the program as well as the students, is apparent. This is evident in curriculum

changes provided in the report and the extraordinary time spent generating a wide variety of donations that include tack, veterinary supplies, horses, and monetary gifts.

Student Experience:

An abundant list of activities is listed in the reports. These are available for students to participate in, and include: off-campus horse shows, clinics, and widespread immersive professional experiences within the equine industry.

Comfortable class size and approachable faculty members are two elements of the program's success.

All campus LEAD events are integral pieces of community involvement that build student social interaction. This program leads to financial advancement through scholarships for participants. This is a win-win scenario that mutually benefits William Woods University.

Facilities, resources and support:

Additional revenue is generated through a wide variety of events on campus.

The Center for Equine Medicine supplies immersive learning opportunities for students in an intimate atmosphere

Deferred maintenance and budget constraints are a challenge. However, this creates a disadvantage during campus tours and events related to student recruitment.

Industry trends:

All equestrian faculty are extremely proactive in assisting students in obtaining summer internships and post-graduate employment. This is through personal faculty experience and professional development.

The reported three equine tracks accommodate all students who are passionate about equines but may need to focus on an equine career outside of teaching and training. This shows wide diversity and inclusiveness within the equestrian program.

Commentary

Reviewers provide comments about the program strengths and challenges.

Narrative:

Strengths:

Extremely qualified faculty are passionate about molding well-prepared students who will be successful when choosing to enter the professional equine world or continuing their education after graduation.

The program provides a safe and interactive learning environment.

Graduates of this innovative program are highly respected within the equine industry.

Challenges:

The William Woods University equestrian program had several challenges during the review cycle. Most likely the Covid outbreak was the most significant. The faculty in the equestrian department were able to stitch gears and accommodate the students' needs in a positive manner.

Deferred maintenance and budget constraints are challenges. However, this creates a disadvantage during campus tours and events related to student recruitment.

Student feedback referenced several concerns regarding lack of real-world experiences offered in the Equine Assisted Therapy Concentration.

Recommendations

Comments provide future direction for the faculty to use to improve student learning. Evaluative feedback is offered, as well as suggestions to improve any aspect of the program. Recommendations that require no new resource as well as those that do are welcome, alongside identifying areas for program development based on market/industry demands not yet identified by the university or program faculty. The report may include recommendations that have been shown to be effective elsewhere.

Narrative:

- The fee structure to attend off campus horse shows contains elements that could be streamlined to improve clarification and communication between the program and participants. A recommendation would be creating a set fee for horse shows that would be revisited annually and be cost-effective.
- A recommendation for student advising would be to create a campus-wide fall/spring advising day. This day would preferably be held on a Wednesday with no classes meeting. Advisors will use this day to exclusively advise students for the upcoming semester. This will create a more successful advising process for both students and advisors.
- A recommendation for students who are double-majoring would be to provide an advisor from each major department. This will improve communication between the major departments and lead to graduation success in a timely manner.
- A recommendation for course evaluations would be a shift from voluntary student participation to required student participation. This can be implemented through class time or online completion resulting in grade reveal.

Program Response to External Review

Program Response

After the External Report is submitted, the Program faculty will respond to any comments where the reviewer has noted need of improvement or where additional explanation is needed. The faculty response will also include a response to the recommendations of the reviewer and their action plan to move forward with recommendations, or what is needed for the program to move forward with a recommendation. This response is added to the report and submitted to Academic Council for final review.

Narrative:

One of the first questions asked by the review was why we had three separate program reports when so much was the same. Much of the report is indeed impossible to separate. The horses and their expenses are used for all three majors and the minors in a variety of ways. Students who are not EQ majors also ride, so separating the budget by major is impossible. The library holdings are also very similar for each major because of so much industry overlap. All three EQ majors share the same core program objectives by intent, although not all of the assessment measures are identical. Marketing and recruiting efforts aren't focused toward a specific EQ major, but rather the equestrian studies program. Students move in a fluid manner between the EQ majors until the end of their sophomore year and sometimes into their junior year.

Much of the face-to-face time between the equestrian faculty, staff, and the external reviewer was used to update them on changes in coursework, assessment, and recruiting after the reporting period. Some of the external reviewer recommendations were not included in the written report, as action had already been taken (boarding student horses on campus, encouraging revenue-generating events at the facility, creating new recruiting pieces), and curricular revisions and rotation changes had already occurred.

The program faculty appreciate that the qualifications and commitment of the faculty are identified as a strength of the program. As noted in all three of the reports (EQS, EQA, and EQGS), there were multiple faculty changes during the reporting cycle. In the one-year additional gap after the reporting cycle and the submission of the completed reviews and external reviewer visit, additional faculty and staff changes occurred. Maintaining continuity and a successful student experience in the face of faculty changes is a challenge. A change in a riding instructor is like a head coaching change for a sport. It can be a major adjustment for students and recruiting.

The recommendation to make advising a day of no classes was well received. The program faculty all agreed that a dedicated advising day would be incredibly beneficial and allow more time to assist students with career plans, summer opportunities, and other valuable conversations outside of just scheduling courses. Squeezing in the appointments is a challenge for equestrian faculty who are already being pulled in many directions during the week. The suggestion for a second advisor for double majors is already widely implemented at WWU.

The faculty disagrees with the recommendation to revise the written proficiency test to be seat-specific. It is possible that the students initiated this conversation in their meeting with the reviewer. The written test covers material in EQU 111 Introduction to the Horse Industry, EQU 118 Theory of Performance Horse Management, EQU 221 Stable Management, and EQU 202 Foundations of Equestrian Teaching and Learning. None of the course objectives tied to these classes are discipline specific. We believe that the foundation of the program is strong because the students receive early instruction that is not discipline-specific. It is only after they have moved through their 100 and 200 level courses that they will encounter some classes that are entirely focused on a specific riding discipline. In short, a horse's body, nature, behavior, and physiology don't change because of the saddle and bridle style that they wear. The written proficiency exam is meant to demonstrate a foundational knowledge of those topics so that the student can then apply that knowledge to more and more specific groups. They are not western, saddle seat, dressage or hunter/jumper majors, but rather equestrian science majors.

Recommendations for a set fee structure for showing were well received, but some of this is happening already and probably not communicated very clearly to the reviewer.

Course evaluations and the lack of participation have been a concern. The reviewer suggested that their institution had implemented a system that required participation for the final grade reveal. The faculty supports any modifications that could result in a higher participation rate.

Academic Council Review

Academic Council Response

Academic Council will review the report in its entirety and come together to discuss any remaining questions or concerns. The council will highlight noted areas of improvement for program focus. Issues of resources are discussed if additional resources are needed to implement improvements noted by the Reviewer, the faculty or Academic Council.

Strengths:

- The service to the university portion was well-written and highlighted some of the cool aspects of having the program on campus--interdisciplinary opportunities, the ability for non-EQS students to enjoy the horses and barns, etc.
- The responses to the program assessment data are forthright and identify areas for growth and correction. The assessment program identified multiple measures per objective.
- Teaching effectiveness scores were above the university average.
- The faculty workload narrative effectively communicated the unique responsibilities of EQ faculty.
- Very impressive and detailed list of student accomplishments.
- The advising section is well done and the use of the equestrian course to resolve confusion in advising was a great idea. It also helps students to see the differences within the curriculums and find their fit.
- A program strength is the diversity of faculty skills within the varied specialties in the equestrian profession.
- The faculty workload narrative effectively communicated the unique responsibilities of EQ faculty.
- The program review was thorough and provided ample evidence for most sections.

Challenges:

- The report is missing Information Literacy in the General Education portion where the report speaks to how the program coursework expands on the skills learned in General Education.
- In the "Service to the University" section, what is described is tied to the physical fact of the horses on campus, and has less to do with the EQ curriculum. This isn't a weakness except it suggests there isn't as much to say about the curriculum in this regard but highlights the facilities as a benefit to campus.
- The data in the report is clear on the Percentage of students who met the benchmark, but not clear on the benchmark – when looking at the first round of charts. Also, it

would benefit the reader to know the N for the different cohorts, it helps to put the data into perspective.

Recommendations moving forward:

- The program should continue to operate with a revenue generating mindset to find ways to help offset the cost of the program and boost the income brought in. We are fortunate to have the facilities that we have and with the available stalls- due to lower enrollment – we can find revenue generation through stall rentals and doing shows that could generate more income.
- Faculty should revisit combining the three EQ majors into one with specific concentrations.
- Faculty could look into an orientation or welcome to non-eqs students to explain “the barn”? It might not be needed but I know several students who have said they wanted to go over to the barn but didn’t know the protocol or where they could and could not go.
- The program is very present on social media – wondering if there are other ways to “hook” students into watching – engaging in more WWU EQS content in a way that would bring them to apply. Ideas like: posting a recording of a Turnout, or riding lesson, or parts of students teaching in an informal way that are not PR quality but things that would get the student to watch another video – or look up the school.... Video bios on horse of the week?? Just thinking of things that EQS enthusiasts want to see that might help convert them to a student – but also – the faculty are doing a lot – could this be part of the communication class or part of another course across campus with the COM or mediacorp?? Understand that the resources are limited but are there ways that the program could increase the video presence where prospective students live – on video.
- Keep doing an excellent job. The program review was thorough.

June 2, 2026 AC Review