

Our Shared Vision


The university has set forth a bold vision for our future. The work we're doing to transform the student experience supports key objectives within our strategic vision. Our goal is to help each undergraduate student maximize their individual strengths and understand how those strengths contribute to their academic dreams, career paths, and personal well-being. Following the conclusion of the fall semester, the division reports the following outcomes for this vision.

Retention

UT will increase first-to-second-year retention rates by supporting all students and paying particular attention to the achievement gaps for first-generation and underrepresented minority students.

Outcome: As of January 18, 2022, over 95.9% of first-year students (compared to 95.3% last year) are enrolled to continue at UT for spring 2022, including fall-to-spring persistence of:

- 94.3% of Pell-eligible students
- 92.9% of first-generation students
- 94.9% of underrepresented minority students



95.9%
Enrolled for
spring

Engagement

Student scholars will intentionally maximize their strengths and understand how they contribute to their academic dreams, career paths, and personal well-being.

Outcome:

- 97% of first-year students enrolled in a first-year seminar course (FYS or college-specific), a high-impact practice.
- 94% of first-year students met with a core member of their Vol Success Teams (academic advisor, academic coach).
- Over 2,000 visits to Vol Study Center services by first-year students.



94%
Met with
Vol Success
Team


Academic Belongingness

Coordinated by the Postsecondary Education Research Center, UT will measure how many student scholars respond with "agree" or "strongly agree" to the following academic belongingness survey questions.

- I feel a part of the UT community.
- I believe that I will excel academically at UT.
- I would rate my current stress level since enrolling at UT this fall as average or less than average.

Outcome: Across four survey administrations, the responses from first-year students exceeded goals for all prompts.

- 87% of students reported feeling part of the UT community.
- 92% reported they believe they will excel academically.
- 86% reported a manageable level of stress.



92%
Believe they
will excel

Signature Programs

Vol Success Teams

The Vol Success Teams continued their efforts to impact first-year student scholars through academic and student support services. Each team is comprised of a student's academic advisor, academic coach, One Stop Counselor, and faculty, and is designed to assist student scholars in their holistic development.

Through the efforts of the Vol Success Team:

- In fall 2021, academic advisors met with 5,597 first-year students for academic advising appointments, a 10% increase from fall 2020.

	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Advising Appointments	5,103	5,597

- In fall 2021, academic coaches provided 7,906 one-on-one interactions with our students, a 61% increase from fall 2020.
- 44% of first-year, first-generation student scholars attended at least one academic coaching appointment and earned an average 3.10 GPA, in comparison to those who did not attend coaching and earned an average 3.0 GPA.
- 49% of first-year Students of Color attended at least one academic coaching appointment and earned an average 3.01 GPA, in comparison to those who did not attend coaching and earned an average 2.74 GPA.

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Coaching Appointments	1,969	4,863	7,079

Vols Study Together

The Vol Study Center was launched to increase student participation in study sessions, strengthen academic support with Supplemental Instruction, and collaborate with campus partners to expand study spaces and study sessions.

As a result:

- 19,759 student contacts with Vol Study Center services - a 118% increase from fall 2020
- 3,857 study sessions were held for tutoring
- 12,918 Supplemental Instruction appointments held
- 2,984 visits to Vol Study Center study areas

Academic support outcomes:

- A record 93% of first-year student scholars achieved good academic standing after their first semester at UT.
- Students who responded to academic alert outreach efforts yielded higher GPAs (2.30) than students who did not respond (1.82).
- First-year students attending at least one Supplemental Instruction session had an average fall 2021 GPA of 3.42, compared to the 3.23 overall average term GPA for all first-year cohort students.

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Study Sessions	1,785	2,818	3,857
Supplemental Instruction	6,754	6,245	12,918
Drop-in Study Sessions	Not offered	Not offered	2,984
Vol Study Center Total Visits	8,539	9,063	19,759

First-Year Experience

To enhance student scholars' persistence and sense of belonging, the First-Year Experience (FYE) engages first-year student scholars with peers, faculty, and staff through two courses: a first-year seminar and an academic course hosted by the student's college. Additionally, student scholars benefit from a host of programs and services in their first-year offerings.

Approximately 97% of first-year student scholars completed the CliftonStrengths assessment, and their top five strengths are noted in the table below and compared to the fall 2019 cohort.

Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Restorative	Restorative
Achiever	Achiever
Empathy	Competition
Adaptability	Adaptability
Positivity	Empathy

Outcomes included:

- An improved FYS 101 curriculum with a focus on well-being, learning science, and leadership.
- 3,306 student scholars, or 97% of the fall cohort, enrolled in FYS 101 course during the fall 2021 semester, representing a 43% increase from fall 2020.
- Student scholars who participated in an FYS course had higher average term GPAs (3.29) than those who did not (3.09).

The Volunteer Experience—Student Success Grants

As part of UT's Strategic Vision, the Volunteer Experience is a comprehensive, university-wide approach to promoting student well-being and career readiness, both inside and outside the classroom. It is both a culture and culminating experience designed to help students thrive. This initiative includes three interrelated strategic investments - targeted academic initiatives, strategic student services, and a transformational student experience centered on deep, meaningful engagement.

In fall 2021, the Volunteer Experience initiated the Student Success Grant program and awarded grants to the biology faculty to focus on Biology 150 and 160. In partnership with Teaching & Learning Innovation, this faculty-led initiative seeks to enhance course success rates and close achievement gaps between student populations by embedding pedagogy that promotes well-being.

UT Success Academy

In its inaugural year, the UT Success Academy (UTSA) provided high-level support and programming to maximize UT's first-year Black, Latinx, and multiracial men's transition to college. Combining access to academic support services and opportunities for social engagement, UTSA scholars received a fall semester experience that is grounded in empirical research and best practices for students' success and retention. As of December 17, 2021, program outcomes included:

95% Fall-to-spring retention rate

94% Attended two or more academic coaching appointments

80% Strongly agree or agree that understanding their strengths helped them perform best

89% Reported making a social connection with UTSA

76% Completed six or more study sessions*

*Vol Study Center, Math Place, Herbert Writing Center, or TA-approved study groups



Additional Activities

Academic Inclusive Initiatives

Hosted the 4th annual UT First-Generation Student Celebration Week.

- Weeklong celebration of UT first-generation faculty, staff, and students with specialized activities, programs, social engagements, and participation in UT's homecoming parade.
- Approximately 530 faculty, staff, and students attended first-generation week events.
- Attendees were asked, "What did they enjoy most about first-gen week?" Responses included:

- Meeting other first-generation students.
- Being celebrated, it doesn't happen often.
- It felt good to be recognized.
- Pride and positivity in being first-generation students.
- The program gets great exposure and sends the message that this is to be celebrated and not embarrassing by the lack of education in previous generations.

Honors & Scholars Programs

The Honors FYS 101 seminar course is offered to assist first-year honors students in making a smooth transition to their academic pursuits at college. Like other first-year experience courses, FYS 101 provides students with comprehensive information on their academic expectations, as well as resources to promote student success.

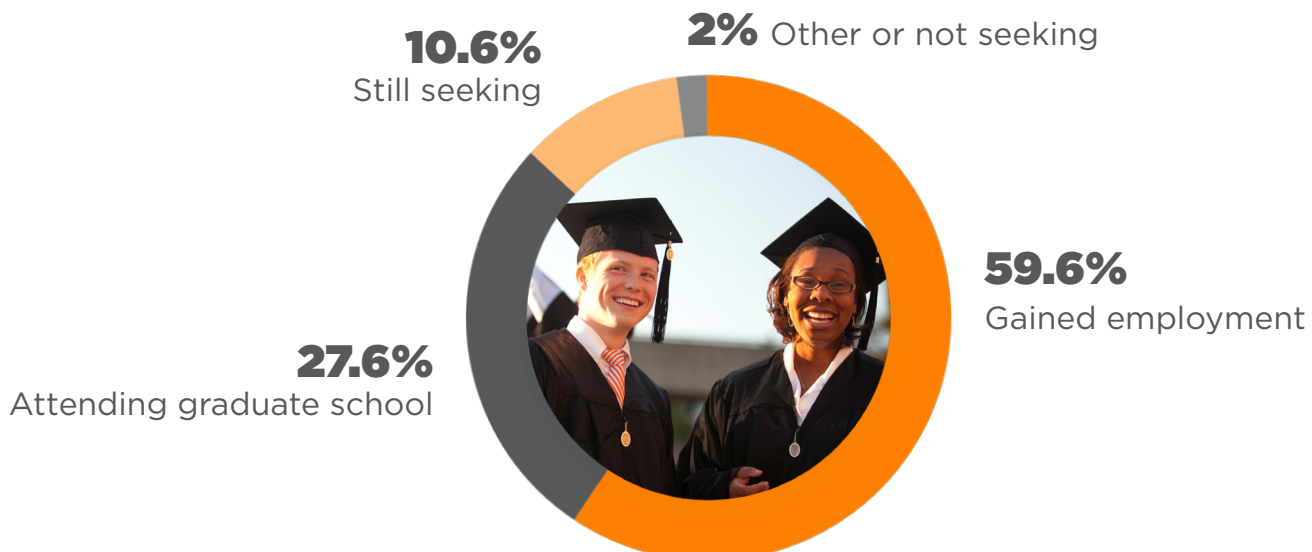
We surveyed honors students in honors specific FYS 101 sections, and they reported:

- 92% agreed or strongly agreed that FYS 101 helped them acclimate to honors at UT.
- 96% agreed or strongly agreed they are confident they can be successful at UT.
- 87% agreed or strongly agreed they are confident they can be successful in honors at UT.

Center for Career Development & Academic Exploration

Approximately 100 students participated in VolTreks, an event offering students site visits to local and campus employers to explore career opportunities across five industries. Students' evaluations indicated the visits were highly effective in helping with career decision-making and planning.

Additionally, career outcome data were collected for 75% of the class of 2021 bachelor's graduates. Preliminary numbers indicated employment and graduate school outcomes have increased from 2020.



The Path Forward*Advising Beyond 2020*

In spring 2022, we will begin the strategic development process for academic advising at UT that is rooted in well-being, UT and national data, and advising best practices. Our visioning process will include an external review by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA); student, faculty, and staff focus groups; and an in-depth needs assessment.

Big Orange Welcome

In summer 2022, New Student Orientation will revitalize an in-person experience as part of UT's multiphase orientation program. As part of this experience, students will engage with their academic college, engage with Volunteer Traditions, meet their peers, and learn about student engagement opportunities across campus.

Continued First-Year Programs Development

With the initial improvements to first-year seminars underway, efforts will continue towards a redesign of FYS 101 and FYS 401 and the development of an advisory board, all of which will focus on the academic content of well-being, learning science, and leadership.

Helping Scholars Thrive---Volunteer Experience

Following goal one of UT's Strategic Vision and in collaboration with the campus community, we will continue to develop the Volunteer Experience which will harness the power of our students' strengths, promote their well-being, and produce graduates who are self-motivated, resilient, confident and driven by service.

- The Volunteer Experience committee will convene in spring 2022 to create a framework for deep engagement and meaningful experiential learning for UT's undergraduate students.
- The search for the inaugural Volunteer Experience Faculty Director will launch to identify an individual who will support academic departments seeking to improve student success metrics and will lead a group of Volunteer Experience Faculty Fellows.
- The Student Success Grant Program will launch its second grant, the Departmental Research Assistantship program, that is designed to increase undergraduate research participation and strengthen relationships with departments by recognizing undergraduate faculty mentors.
- A review committee, formed in partnership between the divisions of Student Success and Student Life, will review learning communities at UT, current literature, and best practices for moving forward in support of UT's Strategic Vision.

Honors & Scholars and Office of Undergraduate Research & Fellowships Executive Leadership

In spring 2022, UT will search for its next associate vice provost and executive director of Honors & Scholars Programs, who will foster a challenging and nurturing learning environment for UT students through innovative pedagogy, a rigorous curriculum, and effective student support services.

In summer 2022, UT's Honors & Scholars Programs will welcome its inaugural faculty director who will be charged with enhancing the collaboration between Honors & Scholars, academic colleges, and departments to enhance student success.

Office of First-Generation Initiatives

To provide enhanced service to and renewed focus on UT's first-generation students, the Office of First-Generation Initiatives (formerly Academic Inclusive Initiatives) will launch in spring 2022.