



UNITED TRIBES[®] TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Strategic Plan Annual Report Year Four of Five

Submitted by:

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The United Tribes Technical College 2021-2025 Strategic Plan was developed by a cross section of stakeholders from across campus to enhance success and bring accountability to the work conducted. The team felt being strategic in our decision-making was important to better utilize our limited resources and continually improve our services, programs, and overall campus community.¹

The UTTC Strategic Plan is aligned to UTTC's institutional mission and supports the institution's vision for its students.

Unit Action Plans are developed and carried out by each major unit across the institution. The Unit Action Plans document departmental action toward achieving the college's strategic goals. Information from unit plan reports has been summarized to highlight some of the major institutional accomplishments toward achieving the college's strategic goals.

UTTC has completed the fourth year of a five-year Strategic Plan. As of the end of year four, the college has made significant progress with 22 of the 25 SMART goals.

This report highlights progress made during the 2024-25 academic year toward achieving the goals established in UTTC's 2021-2025 strategic plan.

Mission and Vision

UTTC Mission Statement

United Tribes Technical College provides quality post-secondary education and training to enhance knowledge, diversity, and leadership for all indigenous nations.

UTTC Vision Statement

United Tribes Technical College strives to build cultural, educated, and healthy leaders who empower and serve their communities.

¹ UTTC President Leander "Russ" McDonald, PhD (Dakota/Sahnish/Hidatsa), President's Message; UTTC Strategic Plan 2021-2025, p. 2

The 2021-2025 UTTC Strategic Plan Addresses Five Strategic Areas

Strategic Area	Strategy	SMART Goals: By end of 2025-26 academic year, UTTC will...
1 Commitment to Student Learning and Academic Success	1a: Improve and sustain instruction through the assessment of student learning outcomes 1b: Continually improve academic offerings 1c: Expand academic supports for students	a) Increase credit completion rates overall at UTTC from 63% to 75%. b) Develop at least two articulation agreements with other TCUs. c) Increase the credit completion rates for new degree-seeking online students by 3 percentage points from 55% to 58%.
2 Student Recruitment and Innovative Programming	2a: Increase student enrollment through recruitment strategies 2b: Streamline the admissions process for prospective students 2c: Provide innovative academic programs that align with Tribal and regional workforce needs	a) Increase college applications by 40% from 751 in fall 2019 to 1050. b) Increase college fall enrollment by 30% from 429 in 2018 to 558. c) Increase dual enrollment from 29 in fall 2018 to 50. d) Increase the number of programs of study available fully online at UTTC from 6 to 8. e) Offer a new CTE program TBD.
3 Student Retention and Completion	3a: Increase student retention through targeted retention strategies 3b: Improve quality and integration of services throughout the learner experience 3c: Improve advising processes for new, returning, transfer, and continuing students 3d: Improve tracking of internship and job placement or transfer rates 3e: Develop comprehensive alumni services	a) Fall to spring persistence rate for new and transfer students will exceed 70% annually. b) Fall to fall retention for new and transfer students will exceed 55% annually. c) Provide work-based experiences for at least 10% annually of students attending UTTC. d) Two new supports are available for online learners. e) Increase 4-year completion rates for FTFT students by 5 percentage points from 18% (2016 cohort) to 23% (2021 cohort). f) Increase percent of FTFT degree or certificate-seeking students who, within eight years of first enrolling, received a postsecondary award from the institution, remain enrolled at the institution, or who subsequently enrolled at another institution from 44% in 2018 to 50% (IPEDS Outcome). g) Essential Alumni services are identified through an alumnus needs assessment.
4 Mission-Driven Institutional Effectiveness	4a: Promote and document continuous improvement in all departments 4b: Expand research capacity at UTTC 4c: Integrate American Indian Culture and Arts	a) All departments will document at least one data-informed improvement per annual year. b) At least one new policy that advances expanding UTTC research culture and capacity development. c) Increase investment in research (positions, infrastructure, etc.) by at least 5% annually starting 2023-24 academic year. d) At least 4 new American Indian Culture and Arts courses are added to UTTC catalog. e) At least 4 American Indian Culture and Arts activities offered monthly (student activities calendar).
5 Infrastructure and Fiscal Stability	5a: Improve funding base and fiscal resources 5b: New construction and remodels 5c: Establish a firm fundraising foundation	a) Increase the number of annual donors from 44 (2019) to 150. b) Increase annual donations from \$255,250 (2019) to \$500,000. c) Make continuous and substantive progress on the UTTC master plan. d) Increase endowment to a total market value of \$1 million. e) A five-year institutional budget projection is in place and updated annually.

UTTC Strategic Plan Year 4 Report

Executive Summary

UTTC has completed the fourth year of its five-year Strategic Plan. This report provides a snapshot of the College's progress across five strategic areas, aligned with SMART goals developed in Year Two. Year Four focused on continuing progress, expanding support services for students, and addressing accreditation requirements.

STRATEGIC PLAN ORGANIZATION:

UTTC's strategic plan is built around five key strategic areas. After the second year, the college established SMART goals to measure progress on these strategies.

Every major unit contributes to these goals and documents its efforts in unit plans submitted to the Office of Institutional Research. These reports provide valuable insight into how each department is advancing the college's institutional priorities.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2024-2025 ACADEMIC YEAR INCLUDE:

- ✔ UTTC fully "Met" the Higher Learning Commission's criteria for accreditation. The next reaffirmation accreditation visit at UTTC will be held some time in 2030-2031.
- ✔ New AS degrees in Indigenous Fine Arts and Addiction Studies will be offered beginning Fall 2025.
- ✔ Automotive Technology program achieved renewed ASE Certification.
- ✔ Fall 2024 enrollment was 577 students, exceeding institutional goals.
- ✔ UTTC's work with the Postsecondary Data Partnership data has been nationally recognized.
- ✔ UTTC met with goal with the endowment valued at \$2,026,223 as of August 2024.
- ✔ Significant enhancements to the campus environment have been made, including concrete gateway signs at the front entrance, flowered landscaping, new decks, and building improvements.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS

The table below outlines the current status of each institutional SMART goal. The narrative that follows in the full report offers highlights of the work carried out in support of this strategic plan's strategies. While not an exhaustive account, it provides a snapshot of the many activities and initiatives happening across the institution that contribute to our established strategic goals.

Currently, UTTC is making strong progress with 22 of its 25 SMART goals. Two of the goals remain in development and will be a focus over the next year. One of the goals regarding dual enrollment will be discontinued as it is no longer viable.

The chart on the following page provides a high-level summary of how UTTC is doing with each of its goals.

Strategic Plan Progress Chart

Strategic Area	SMART Goals: By end of 2025-26, UTTC will...	Status
Commitment to Student Learning and Academic Success	a) Increase credit completion rates overall at UTTC from 63% to 75%.	✓
	b) Develop at least two articulation agreements with other TCUs.	✓
	c) Increase credit completion rates for new degree-seeking online students by 3 percentage points from 55% to 58%.	○
Student Recruitment and Innovative Programming	a) Increase college applications by 40% from 751 in fall 2019 to 1050.	✓
	b) Increase college fall enrollment by 30% from 429 in 2018 to 558.	✓
	c) Increase dual enrollment from 29 in fall 2018 to 50.	⊛
	d) Increase the number of programs of study available fully online at UTTC from 6 to 8.	✓
	e) Offer a new CTE program TBD	✓
Student Retention and Completion	a) Fall to spring persistence rate for new and transfer students will exceed 70% annually.	✓
	b) Fall to fall retention for new and transfer students will exceed 55% annually.	○
	c) Provide work-based learning experiences for at least 10% annually of students attending UTTC.	✓
	d) Two new supports are available for online learners.	✓
	e) Increase 4-year completion rates for FTFT students by 5 percentage points from 18% (2016 cohort) to 23% (2022 cohort).	✓
	f) Increase percent of FTFT degree or certificate-seeking students who, within eight years of first enrolling, received a postsecondary award from the institution, remain enrolled at the institution, or who subsequently enrolled at another institution from 44% in 2018 to 50%.	✓
Mission-Driven Institutional Effectiveness	g) Essential Alumni services are identified through an alumnus needs assessment.	✓
	a) All departments will document at least one data-informed improvement per annual year.	✓
	b) Develop at least one new policy that advances expanding UTTC research culture and capacity development.	✓
	c) Increase investment in research (positions, infrastructure, etc.) by at least 5% annually starting 2023-24 academic year.	✓
	d) At least 4 new American Indian Culture and Arts courses are added to UTTC catalog.	✓
Infrastructure and Fiscal Stability	e) At least 4 American Indian Culture and Arts activities offered monthly.	✓
	a) Increase the number of annual donors from 44 (2019) to 150.	✓
	b) Increase annual donations from \$255,250 (2019) to \$500,000.	✓
	c) Make continuous and substantive progress on the UTTC master plan.	✓
	d) Increase endowment to a total market value of \$1 million.	✓
	e) A five-year institutional budget projection is in place and updated annually.	✓

Symbols: ✓ On Track, ○ Developing, ⊛ Discontinuing

Next Steps for Final Year

- ✦ Expand academic and social support for online learners.
- ✦ Target recruitment toward groups that are more likely to enroll.
- ✦ Develop strategies to more intentionally engage UTTC alumni.
- ✦ Begin planning for next strategic plan.

Progress Report: 2024-2025 Academic Year

UTTC is nearing the final year of its 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. This report provides a snapshot of the College's progress across five strategic areas, aligned with SMART goals developed in Year Two. Year Four focused on continuing progress, expanding support services for students, and addressing accreditation requirements. The following is a description of UTTC's progress and challenges in each of the strategic areas of the strategic plan, highlighting departmental contributions shared through the Unit Plans.

STRATEGIC AREA 1: COMMITMENT TO STUDENT LEARNING AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

This strategic area focuses on improving student achievement through enhanced academic pathways, targeted support, and partnerships that strengthen learning opportunities. Progress on SMART goals for the year reflects both notable accomplishments and areas for continued improvement. While credit completion rates were met for our overall student body, credit completion rates for new students studying completely online fell from the previous year.

Strategy 1a: Improve and sustain instruction through the assessment of student learning outcomes

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **increase credit completion rates overall at UTTC from 63% to 75%**. An anticipated outcome for improved instruction is that students successfully complete the credits they enroll in. Credit completion rates are calculated by dividing the number of credits successfully completed with a grade of "C" or higher by the total number of credits attempted. The credit completion rate for Academic Year 2024-25 reached 77%, exceeding the goal for the last three years, ahead of schedule. In the most recent year, students successfully completed 11,874 out of 15,395 (77%) credits attempted, reflecting strong academic performance.

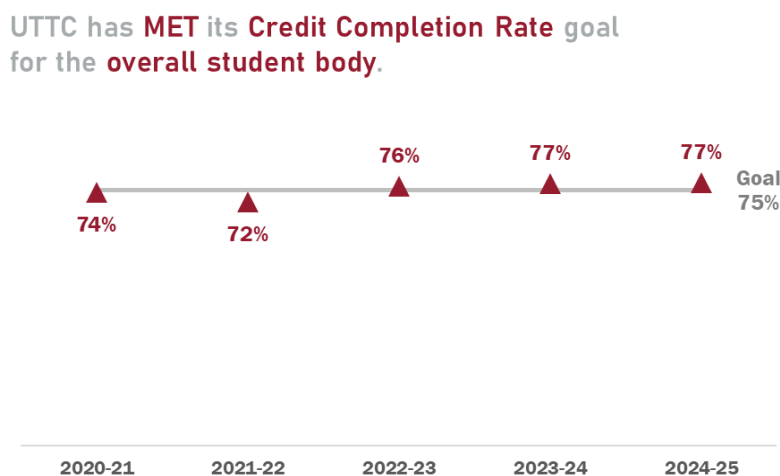


Figure 1: Credit Completion Ratios for Overall Student Body

Survey data shows high support provided for new students at UTTC

Data from the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) and Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction surveys indicates that faculty at UTTC actively support student learning by discussing assignments and course ideas outside of class. Faculty and advisors meet with students to discuss non-academic topics. For example, the Social Work instructor met with at least two students per week to discuss work/school/life balance, degree plans, internship opportunities, and behavioral health strategies. She attributes this individual attention to reduced withdrawal rates. UTTC students also report higher

levels of communication with instructors compared to students at peer institutions. These strong faculty-student interactions contribute to increased credit completion rates by fostering academic engagement and support early in their college experience. In addition, students indicated that at least one non-faculty college staff member learned their name. These relationships help to build a sense of community and belonging for students. Research on the importance of a sense of belonging to student success is strong.

The Campus Services assessment instrument was validated

The Campus Services assessment instrument was validated for use in measuring how well students learn belonging, self-efficacy, growth mindset, and cultural connectedness through our Campus services. UTTC uses this instrument to guide decisions about the kinds of supports campus services personnel can provide to help students learn these skills related to personal and social responsibility.

Strategy 1b: Continually improve academic offerings

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **develop at least two articulation agreements with other Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)**. UTTC has established articulation agreements with Navajo Technical University for environmental engineering and Bay Mills Community College for computer information systems. A larger agreement, North Dakota Agricultural Articulation Memorandum of Understanding, was enacted among a group of twelve (12) institutions to begin Fall 2025. The agreement includes two of the other North Dakota TCUs, Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College and Sitting Bull College, as well as nine state institutions to facilitate student transfer of undergraduate agricultural students among the participating institutions. The agreement includes the expansion of common course numbering and exploring sharing of teaching materials among the institutions in the agreement. Other agreements are being formed. An articulation agreement with Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC) was developed to transition students finishing their two-year degree at CCCC to the BS Environmental Science and Research program at UTTC.

UTTC Seven Generation Seed Bank and Degree Level Change

The Land Grant established UTTC Seven Generation Seed Bank available to students and the community. A draft of 'seed-bank' policies and procedures has been developed for daily activity and special yearly events to guide the usage of the bank. In addition, the Sustainable Agriculture program made curriculum changes to change the degree from an Associates of Applied Science to and Associates of Science degree to create more opportunities for transfer to bachelor's degree programs.

Partnerships with United States Geological Survey and Native American Fish and Wildlife Society

Environmental Science & Research developed MOUs with United States Geological Survey (USGS) to host students and collaborate on research and outreach initiatives and with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (NAFWS) to host ungulate data and assist with data analysis for tribal communities, ensuring respect for data sovereignty. The agreement with NAFWS allowed for establishment of a shared framework for cooperation, resource sharing, and co-developed programming that supports Tribal natural resource professionals and students, resulting in co-hosting a series of capacity-building workshops designed to provide hands-on training, knowledge exchange, and professional development.

Strategy 1c: Expand academic support for students

○ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **increase credit completion rates for new degree-seeking online students by 3 percentage points (from 55% to 58%)**. New students who are taking only online courses have lower credit completion rates than the overall student population at UTTC. While UTTC has met its target in some years, in the most recent year, *new, full-time students who were taking only online courses* successfully completed just 135 out of 356 (38%) credits attempted, reflecting poor overall

academic performance. This credit completion rate is well below our goal of 58%. As enrollment of online-only learners increases at UTTC, the college needs to provide better support to these distance learners.

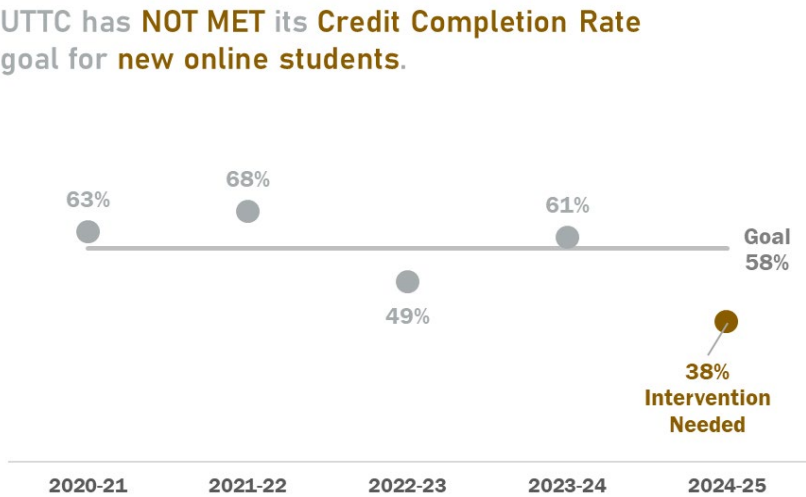


Figure 2: Credit Completion Ratios for New Full-Time, Online-Only Students

Technology helps to foster support and connection with students.

Faculty continue to use the Thunder alerts in the Retention system to identify students early who may be at risk for academic failure. The General Education faculty meet to discuss ways to better support students with Thunder alerts. Yellowdig is a new software that is used in online courses to foster a sense of community for distance learners. Zoom is also used to increase engagement and to support relationship-building with students in online courses.

Tutoring is provided in person and using technology

All UTTC instructors offer tutoring for students enrolled in their classes. General Education faculty also hold dedicated tutoring/office hours each semester. A new tutoring schedule is posted on the college website and UTTC’s social media accounts every Fall and Spring semester. Tutoring is tracked by UTTC through the Academic Affairs office. According to a report provided by Jenifer Heid (Online Learner Success Coordinator), 18 faculty members provided 552 tutoring sessions to a total of 198 students during the 2024-25 fall and spring semesters. Most of the tutoring sessions attended by students were in Math, English Composition, and Introduction to Computers.

Brainfuse, a tutoring software, offers students 24/7 online tutoring in a wide range of subjects, providing flexibility and additional academic support for those who may not be able to attend in-person sessions. The platform includes live tutoring, writing assistance, and study tools designed to help students succeed. According to the report provided by Jenifer Heid, UTTC students engaged in a total of 117 sessions, with 83 utilizing the writing lab. In addition, students accessed Brainfuse's academic resource library 4,440 times in addition to direct tutoring sessions. Most frequently used were Flashbulb, an interactive flashcard study tool, and eParachute,, a career exploration resource.

Online Learner Success Coordinator Hired

The Online Learner Success Coordinator now serves as a dedicated point of contact for online students—providing guidance, connection, and personalized support. One of her first initiatives was launching the Online Learner Hub on MyUTTC, a centralized space designed to help students stay informed, engaged, and connected. In addition, she is redesigning MyUTTC to better meet student needs. The updated platform will feature a more visually appealing layout and an improved user experience, with student resources reorganized for easier access and navigation.

STRATEGIC AREA 2: STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING

This strategic area focuses on increasing student enrollment through effective recruitment strategies and improving the efficiency of admissions and enrollment processes. In addition, this strategy focuses on providing academic programming that aligns with Tribal and regional workforce needs to attract students.

2a: Increase student enrollment through recruitment strategies

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **increase college applications by 40% from 751 in fall 2019 to 1050**. It is important to note that although the number of applications went down for the 2024 fall semester, enrollment went up (see 2b). The focus will change to the conversion rates of applications to enrollments rather than on number of applications alone.

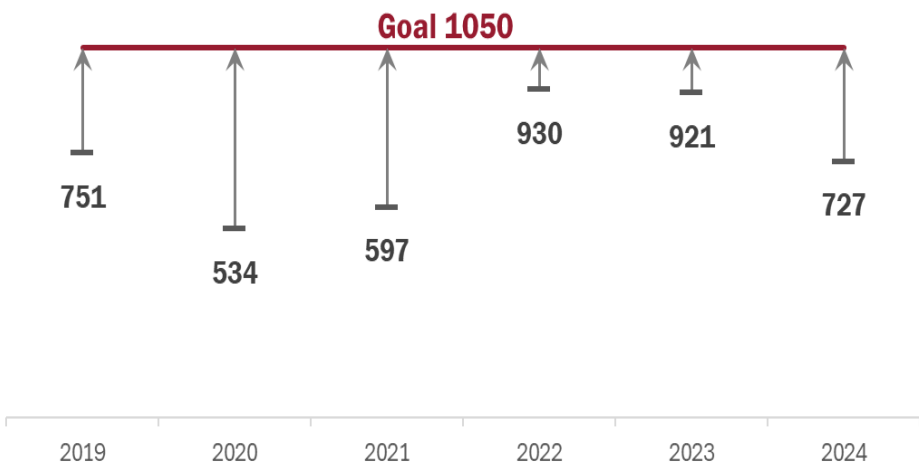


Figure 3: Applications received for Fall semesters annually

New conversion rate goal for admission application to enrollment set

The goal is to increase conversion rate of admission application to enrollment 1% each year for next five years (28% to 33% in 2030) through improved communications to students to make it more inviting and culturally responsive.

Enrollment Management uses data to identify target students

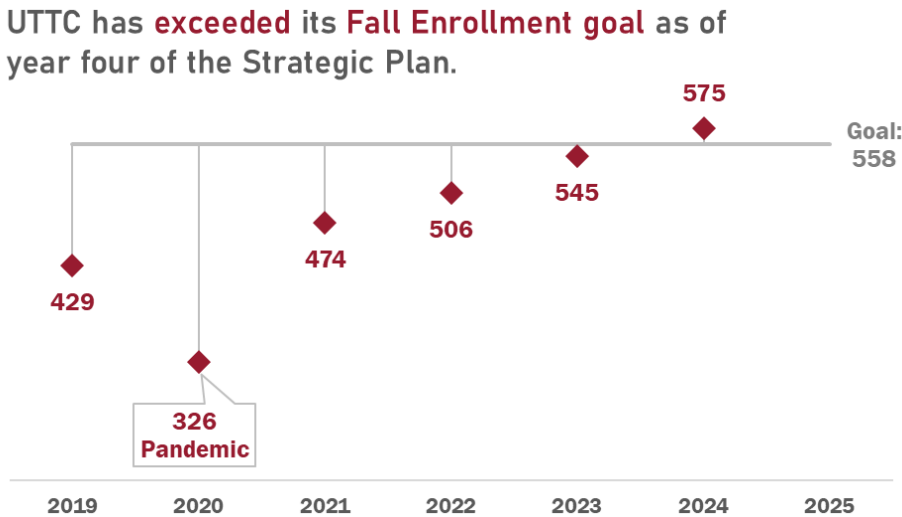
Using data from the Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP), Student Tracker, and UTTC's admissions applications, we identified three groups of potential students for targeted outreach. The first group, which included individuals who applied to UTTC but did not enroll, either at UTTC or any other institution, were sent updated admissions materials and information about upcoming application deadlines. The second group, which consisted of students who had completed an associate degree, either at UTTC or another institution, but had not gone on to earn a bachelor's degree, were provided with information about admissions to UTTC's bachelor's programs. The third group consists of individuals who have earned college credits but have not yet completed a degree or credential. The goal is to identify whether financial holds or other barriers are preventing their return. For those without such obstacles, we will conduct targeted outreach to encourage their re-enrollment in upcoming semesters.

Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems (SAFS) holds recruitment activities

In April, two in-person food sovereignty outreach/extension demonstrations were held at Mandan High School. Two different schools in the Bismarck public school system attended UTTC for a day to tour the greenhouse, visit the Land Grant department, and to participate in a food sovereignty activity. The Land Grant department also hosted a Hemp Conference at UTTC and promoted the SAFS program.

2b: Streamline the admissions process for prospective students

✓ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is to increase college fall enrollment by 30% from 429 in 2018 to 558. UTTC exceeded its goal for fall enrollment in 2024. While many colleges are reporting decreasing enrollments, UTTC has experienced an average growth rate of 7% annually since the after the pandemic.



⊗ The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is to increase dual enrollment from 29 in fall 2018 to 50. Despite having grant funding to help UTTC build its dual enrollment program, UTTC plans to sunset its dual credit programming. This decision is based on several factors, including declining program enrollments, the prolific presence of Bismarck State College in the local high schools, and the development of dual credit programs by the other TCUs in the state. Dual credit programming is not viable for UTTC.

Strategic Enrollment Management plan updated

The Strategic Enrollment Management Plan now includes a Recruitment Activities Calendar, and the Student Lifecycle has been revised to reflect new processes in how students move through enrollment. A key highlight of the Student Lifecycle update was the strengthened collaboration between Admissions and IT, who worked together to clarify and streamline procedures for issuing student IDs and emails.

Housing is working to improve processes for students needing meal plans

BadgePass is the badging technology used to manage both door access and student meal plan usage. It was found to allow multiple meal plan entries for individual students, creating confusion for students, cafeteria staff, and Cozy Creek regarding daily meal limits and available flex dollars. In addition, students who changed their housing status were sometimes mistakenly charged for meal plans they no longer needed. The Housing Office is now working closely with all relevant departments to address and resolve these issues.

2c: Provide innovative academic programs that align with Tribal/regional workforce needs

✓ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is to increase the number of programs of study available fully online at UTTC from 6 to 8. UTTC added the Elementary Education AS degree program to its menu of programs available fully online. As of the 2024-25 academic year, students can pursue from UTTC the following seven programs of study fully online: Business Administration AS and BS; Criminal Justice AS and BS; Elementary Education AS; General Studies AS; and Paralegal AAS degrees.

Elementary Education AS degree is now available online

Elementary Education courses are now primarily taught by UTTC's on-campus Teacher Education faculty. Two adjunct instructors, who also developed the online versions of these courses, bring added consistency through their familiarity with the curriculum, textbooks, and resources. Academic advisors have connected with online students via Zoom and phone, and students were encouraged to meet on campus when possible. A digital filing system for each student has been established.

✔ The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **offer a new CTE program**. This goal was met with the addition of the Commercial Vehicle Operations certificate program in 2023. However, UTTC added Indigenous Leadership AS program in 2024 and two additional AS degree programs in 2024. UTTC will begin offering an Indigenous Fine Arts AS and an Addiction Studies AS in 2025. The Addiction Studies degree is transferable to a bachelor’s degree at Minot State University through an articulation agreement.

STRATEGIC AREA 3: STUDENT RETENTION AND COMPLETION

This strategic area focuses on creating a stronger, more connected student experience from enrollment to graduation and beyond. This includes targeted efforts to boost student retention, streamline services throughout the learner journey, strengthen tracking of internships and post-graduation outcomes, and begin building more intentional alumni engagement. Together, these strategies aim to support students at every stage and ensure they feel informed, supported, and prepared for their next steps.

3a: Increase student retention through targeted retention strategies

✔ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is that the **fall to spring persistence rate for new and transfer students will exceed 70% annually**. UTTC has inconsistently met this goal in three of the last five years.

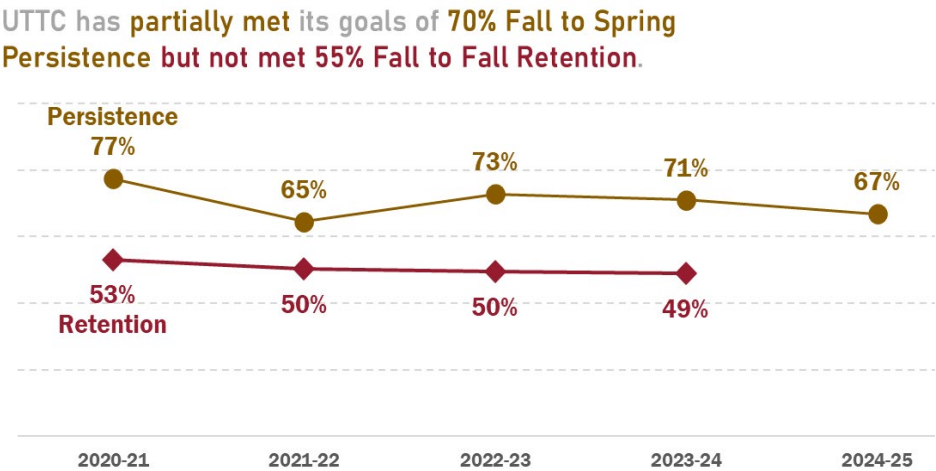


Figure 5: Persistence and Retention Rates for New and Transfer Students

○ The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is that **the fall-to-fall retention for new and transfer students will exceed 55% annually**. UTTC has not met this goal. The retention rate for the 2024-25 year will be calculated after fall 2025 census date. We know that the group of students who struggle most with persistence and retention are full-time online learners. UTTC is working on strategies to better support students who are studying online, especially in their first year.

General Studies Program

General Studies is enhancing document management for General Studies students to improve advising across the program. In response to the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) results, the team explored the

use of Yellowdig as a platform to build engagement among both campus-based and online first-year students. Additionally, the online section of FND 106 will include a new module focused on navigating MyUTTC, which is already part of the campus-based course. Faculty also incorporated more interactive and culturally grounded activities into FND 106 to deepen student engagement. These included a campus scavenger hunt to familiarize students with support services, a cultural storytelling presentation, and an assignment requiring students to attend a student club meeting, leading some to become active members. Students were also encouraged to connect with the stories and successes of UTTC graduates as inspiration to set personal goals and persist toward degree completion.

Revise Native American Tuition Policy

In Spring 2025, the General Education program review revealed that low credit completion ratios for new online learners may be linked to students taking more credits than they can manage, particularly in their first semester. Because students must be enrolled full time to qualify for the Native American Tuition Waiver (NATW), the college administration is working to revise the policy to better accommodate those taking less than a full-time load. In alignment with this effort, one of the scholarships awarded this year was intentionally given to an online student to promote equity in support.

Academic Retention Strategies

Business Administration faculty personally reached out to students who had not yet registered for summer or fall, resulting in successful transitions from the AS program to the BS in Business Administration. Plans are underway to develop a registration follow-up survey, although collecting responses from online students continues to be a challenge. The business faculty have integrated videos and course content guides into each of their online courses. Some of the videos are created for individual courses, but there are standard videos available for the business faculty to use across various courses. The *Criminal Justice* faculty identified at-risk students earlier through improvements made with internal communication and effective use of the retention module. This has led to increased student engagement and a noticeable decrease in withdrawals and academic contracts. *Social Work* faculty maintain regular, personalized outreach, often weekly, to discuss academic pathways with students. These conversations cover options for adding a second track, benefits of graduate studies in behavioral health, social work licensure requirements in the state, and opportunities for internships, jobs, and community involvement.

First year gateway course completion rates monitored

Gateway courses are foundational, credit-bearing courses that are required and are often a prerequisite for more advanced courses. At UTTC, these courses are Composition (COM110) and Intermediate Algebra (MTH 102). Research shows that students who successfully complete gateway courses in their first year have stronger retention and completion rates. We plan to work with faculty to set goals for gateway course completion rates and to develop strategies to meet those goals.

Campus Security works to improve customer service

Training was provided for Safety & Security staff to improve customer service and communication in December 2024. The training was in response to findings collected from the SENSE survey. The focus areas of the training were Attitude for Service, Conflict (Maintaining Emotional Control), and Communication with Diplomacy and Tact. The Safety & Security staff who completed the course have demonstrated improved customer service and addressing difficulty calls for service has improved according to staff feedback and reviews of bodycam footage on calls for service.

Athletics

The Athletic Director and coaches work closely with faculty via the retention module to monitor student progress. By promoting campus involvement and creating a strong sense of belonging, they achieved an 81.8% retention rate for student-athletes from fall to spring (27 of 33 students).

Wellness Services Support Students

Wellness services provided a wide range of wellness, advocacy, and resource-based programming throughout the year and responded to incidents reported by Safety and Security. The *Chemical Health* program led initiatives including the Opioid Response through OneBox deployment, the Overdose Awareness Event, and the "Recovery Rocks" campaign. *Domestic Violence Advocacy* efforts hosted educational events and worked closely with counselors and the DV coordinator to support students, including referrals to community-based resources. The *Counseling* team responded to Early Alerts, conducted class visits for First Year Experience, led campus-wide mental health awareness activities, and supported students through the *Campus Cupboard* with financial literacy programming and referrals to off-campus support. *Disability Services* provided process and procedure training for faculty and staff, while continuing to meet individually with students to coordinate academic accommodations. *Student Health Services* offered referrals to community providers, hosted an interactive "Hidden in Plain Sight" awareness event, and facilitated immunization-related programming through the EXCITE Grant and ND HHS Immunization Grant. Lastly, *Cultural Wellness* activities included weekly Inipi (sweat lodge) ceremonies, college and elementary school classroom visits, hand game events, and other culturally relevant events and programs throughout the academic year. Following is a summary of services provided in the 2024-25 academic year.

Table 1: Number of participants in Wellness services offered

Services	# Provided
# Transportation services provided for health purposes in the community	31
# Campus Cupboard visits where students received food or supplies	158
# Students who received financial literacy education through Campus Cupboard program operations	74
# Wellness clinic services or visits (Student Health, Counseling, Chemical Health, etc.)	804
# Students who completed Medicaid applications	28

Child Development Center

To support continuity in services, the CDC contacted previously enrolled families to confirm childcare needs for the upcoming year. From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, 68% of enrollees were returning students' children; that number increased to 78% from Fall 2024 through Spring 2025, indicating strong retention among student families. In addition, the CDC provided childcare outside of regular operating hours to accommodate UTTC events (i.e. NDSU Extension course, Hidden in Plain Sight event) and parenting classes.

Elementary School and Housing Services

UTTC provides housing and elementary school services for students. These programs are important for our students who have families. Campus housing space, particularly single family housing, is limited as are childcare slots and sometimes students must be placed on a waiting list until a space opens. Following is a summary of students served in the 2024-25 academic year.

Table 2: Number of participants in housing and elementary school services

Services	# Summer	# Fall	# Spring
Children served at Theodore Jamerson Elementary School	42	79	93
Children served by FACE Program	0	9	4
College students in campus housing	80	219	134
On campus housing waiting list or turned away	4	16	4

3b: Improve quality and integration of services throughout the learner experience

✓ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is to provide work-based experiences for at least 10% annually of students attending UTTC.

Career advising and soft skills seminars

The Transfer & Career Services Coordinator provides support and guidance for students. She provided career advising sessions that impacted 291 students and had 56 students who participated in soft skills training workshops and seminars in the 2024-25 academic year. Students have access to a range of work-based learning opportunities, including on-campus and off-campus research internships, non-research internships (both paid and unpaid), and apprenticeships. According to unit plans submitted by programs and enrollment services staff, there were a total of 163 research experiences, 7 of which were completed internationally. See Table 3 for the number of work-based experiences accessed by students each term:

Table 3: Students in Work-based experiences as documented in Unit Plans

Work-Based Experience	Summer 2024	Fall 2024	Spring 2025
On-Campus Research Internship	11	15	17
Off-Campus Research Internship	5	5	7
International Research Experience	1	0	6
Non-Research Internship (unpaid)	7	28	16
Non-Research Internship (paid)		5	16
Apprenticeship		12	12
% of Enrollment Participating:	14%	11%	15%

Wellness Center plans enhancements for coming academic year

Next academic year, we will launch a Peer Support Specialist model to connect students with guidance and encouragement from others who share similar life experiences. This person-centered, peer-to-peer approach will foster meaningful connections, create new opportunities, and inspire hope, helping students thrive both academically and personally. We are also enhancing our campus environment to be more safe, supportive, and welcoming, with spaces such as a calming room, halotherapy room, nursery/mother’s room, upgraded workout facilities, and an improved student union. Student-led events and activities will further build networks, relationships, and opportunities for both personal and professional growth. Our programming will include parenting classes, anger replacement training, the Women Inspiring Women group, the Warrior Circle Men’s Group, and postpartum support groups for both mothers and fathers. In addition, the Health & Wellness Department will provide ongoing education, awareness, and prevention initiatives to support the well-being of our entire campus community.

Continued work with partnering organizations

UTTC will continue to work with its partners on several initiatives, including the American Indian College Fund, AIHEC, Achieving the Dream, and other partners to continually to develop our capacity to better serve our students and to promote stronger student outcomes.

✓ The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is that two new supports are available for online learners. Several supports have been implemented for online learners. UTTC required synchronous meeting times for online courses so that faculty could interact directly with online students. This is designed to facilitate regular and substantive student-teacher and student-student interaction to build relationships and to build trust. In addition, UTTC has implemented a new, more student-friendly discussion platform called Yellowdig. Yellowdig, is designed to promote and track student and faculty interactions and uses game technology to engage students and enriches the course experience for both

students and faculty. Third, UTTC has hired an **Online Learning Support Coordinator** as a dedicated point of contact for online students. In addition, she is developing strategies for enhancing online learner engagement and connection with UTTC. Finally, UTTC implemented **Brainfuse**, a tutoring software that is available for all students to use, whether they are located on campus or studying remotely.

Onboarding support for online learners

After a process review was conducted by an evaluation partner, we discovered the need to conduct placement testing with our online learners. This will help us to better advise online learners in course selections and course loads. Welcome week activities will also be offered for new students studying completely online to provide a warm welcome and begin to develop a stronger sense of belonging.

3c: Improve advising processes for new, returning, transfer, and continuing students

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **increase 4-year completion rates for FTFT students by 5 percentage points** from 18% (2016 cohort) to 23% (2021 cohort). **FTFT students are first-time, full-time students.*

UTTC has consistently met its 4-year completion goal for New and Transfer students.
This rate is calculated based on students who start fall semester.

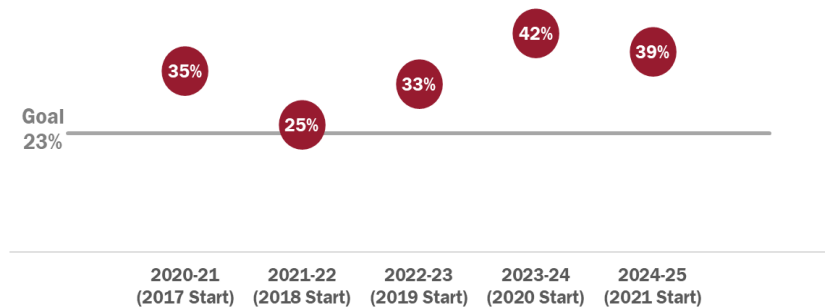


Figure 6: Four-Year Completion Rate

UTTC has consistently met this goal. Student surveys consistently indicate that the advisors and advising systems at UTTC are strong and they appreciate the individualized attention they receive from their advisors inside and outside the classroom.

3d: Improve tracking of internship and job placement or transfer rates

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **increase percent of FTFT degree or certificate-seeking students who, within eight years of first enrolling, received a postsecondary award from the institution, remain enrolled at the institution, or who subsequently enrolled at another institution** from 44% in 2018 to 50% (IPEDS Outcome). The cohort of FTFT students are derived from eight years prior to the completion year. For example, the rate for 2020-21 is based on the cohort that began in 2012.

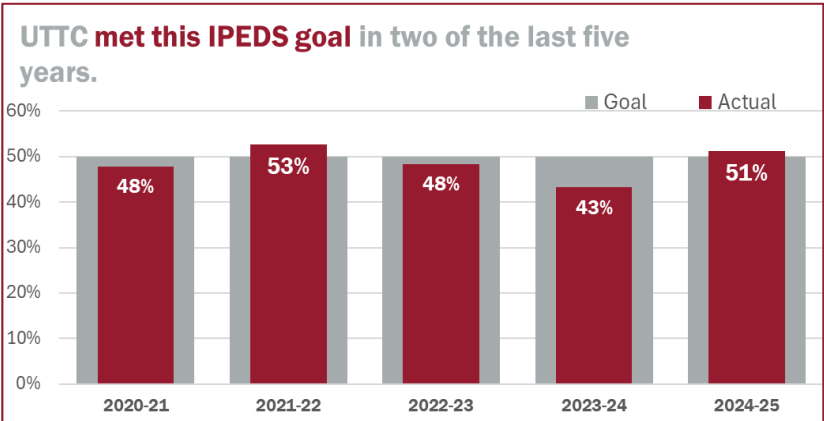


Figure 7: IPEDS 8-year enrollment and completion of First Time Full Time

Internships and Apprenticeships

The Apprenticeship Coordinator assists with ensuring documentation and paperwork for internships and apprenticeships is complete, interns and apprentices are placed, and following up with supervisors and student workers regarding their work experiences. In fall 2024, there were 39 internship experiences and 4 apprenticeships and in spring 2024, there were 24 students who completed an internship course and 16 paid internships funded by Project Success. *Computer Information Systems* degree program includes a required internship course. All students attained an internship with an industry partner. Although one student did not finish the internship, they did attend a substantial amount of time to gain experience. Two students were hired as interns in the UTTC IT department, receiving on-the-job training in the IT field, focusing on frontline support, technical troubleshooting, and real-world communication skills that align with industry needs. Three students attained jobs with the internship employers' connections and organizations, with one working in Geospatial Engineering for the National Guard.

3e: Develop comprehensive alumni services

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **have essential Alumni services are identified through an alumnus needs assessment.**

Building Pathways to Rural and Tribal Employment (BPRTE)

UTTC has partnered with the College Fund on an initiative entitled *Building Pathways to Rural and Tribal Employment* (BPRTE). Through BPRTE, alumni data will be collected at the Tribal Leaders Summit and at the International Powwow. Graduates will also be surveyed about their experiences with transitioning from college to employment and how UTTC might better support them after graduation.

Engineering tracks alumni

The Engineering department chair has created an alumni tracking system for all students who have completed the program of study. The graduates have been tracked since Summer 2004.

STRATEGIC AREA 4: MISSION-DRIVEN INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

While all areas of the strategic plan are mission-driven, the strategic focus of mission-driven institutional effectiveness centers on ensuring that UTTC operates with excellence, accountability, and alignment to its mission. This includes a commitment to documenting continuous improvement in all departments to strengthen programs and services. It also includes expanding the college's research capacity through thoughtful policy development and sustained investments in personnel and infrastructure. In addition, this area works toward enriching the student experience by broadening opportunities to engage with American Indian culture and arts through new courses and regularly offered cultural activities. Together, these efforts advance institutional quality while honoring and promoting the cultural foundation at the heart of UTTC's mission.

4a: Promote and document continuous improvement in all departments

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is that **all departments will document at least one data informed improvement per annual year.** This is accomplished, in part, through the Unit Plan process. Every department is asked to choose an area of the strategic plan each year to work on, set a goal, and measure progress toward that goal.

Faculty and staff data discussions

Data discussions are held regularly with faculty and other academic personnel through Faculty Friday data discussions and professional learning activities at the beginning and end of each semester. Data discussions provide opportunities for faculty and staff to make informed decisions about their own practice.

General Education

BNC requested removing rental textbooks from student options and offering only digital formats when no purchase option is available. In response, the General Education department surveyed students to compare preferences between digital and rental formats. The results showed that most students prefer physical textbooks, even rentals. As a result, General Education will continue to offer rental options whenever a physical purchase option is not available. However, it has been noted that more publishers are shifting toward virtual-only formats, which may limit physical rental availability in the future.

Human Resources addresses findings from employee satisfaction survey

Between 2018 and 2023, LRMU experienced an average annual employee turnover rate of 20%, with a five-year retention rate of only 38%. Additionally, 42% of employees reported having employment outside their regular position at LRMU. While employees take pride in their work and value the institution's commitment to meeting student needs and fostering strong peer relationships, they also identified several challenges. These include concerns about interdepartmental communication, compensation and workload alignment, adequate staffing, and mistrust regarding fair treatment. Some employees perceive that familial relationships within the organization contribute to unfair decision-making and unequal treatment. The Human Resources department is working on strategies for addressing challenge areas.

Theodore Jamerson Elementary promotes stronger culture of positive thinking

The School Counselor and Social Worker led staff training sessions at TJES, sharing key takeaways from their recent conference on social emotional health. During these sessions, staff were also introduced to the book Educator Wellness, which focuses on supporting their own mental health, and were taught practical strategies to incorporate into the classroom. Incident reports could not be compared to the previous year due to a lack of 2023–24 data; however, the goal moving forward is to decrease incident reports by 10% annually. Additionally, a new harassment, bullying, and discipline policy was developed and approved.

4b: Expand research capacity at UTTC

✓ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is to **develop at least one new policy that advances expanding UTTC research culture and capacity development.**

New policies created and enacted include:

- ✔ Research Faculty position type created
- ✔ Research Faculty designation with a separate line in the salary scale created to identify the unique requirements and expectations of research faculty
- ✔ Sabbatical Policy provides opportunity for intensive training or Intergovernmental Personnel Act positions with federal agencies
- ✔ Course-release policy provides opportunities for faculty to buy-out teaching time (with supervisor approval) to conduct research during the school year when appropriate
- ✔ An Internal RFP process promotes UTTC faculty/staff research expansion and support for new PI in different fields of expertise
- ✔ Vehicle leasing through federal grants policy is now an option and one that was used to purchase/lease a vehicle for IRRC
- ✔ Post-baccalaureate Research Assistants programs (like RaMP) provide 12-month research full-time research assistants
- ✔ Archive receives support from Mellon Foundation Initiative to advance the development of its archive and widen its scope of service as part of the college library and make its archive collections accessible to a wide audience.

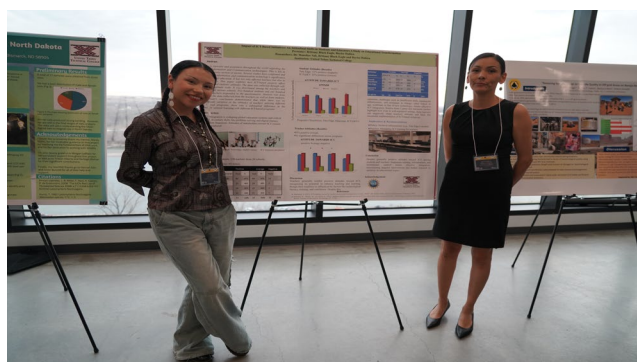


Figure 8: Research Symposium photo courtesy of UTTC College

Research protocols to address tribal data sovereignty

A Research Protocol presentation was provided by IRRC during an All Hands meeting to describe standard and expected research review/approval processes when working with tribal nations. We identified a gap in our own IRB bylaws in that it does not specify that IRB review is required of faculty/staff who are conducting research off campus and/or not on our own students or employees. A revision to bylaws to cover this gap is being considered at the next IRB meeting. When that decision is finalized, the research protocol information will be posted on the UTTC website.

Library and Archives receives grant from the Mellon Foundation

The Library and Archives received a grant from the University of North Dakota/North Dakota Tribal College System Mellon Foundation Initiative to help expand access to our archival materials. With this support, we purchased archival supplies, are developing an apprenticeship program, and have joined the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM). The Archives Advisory Council held its first meeting this year. Our Archivist completed specialized training in archival and museum studies as well as digital humanities to strengthen preservation and outreach efforts.

TCU Institutional Research Conference held at UTTC

United Tribes Technical College hosted Tribal College and University Institutional Research Collaborative (TCU IRC) from July 8–10, 2025. The TCU IRC is a community of institutional researchers and staff dedicated to advancing data-informed decision-making and supporting institutional research (IR) staff across Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). This year's conference focused on the importance of Indigenous control over data and the role TCU IR staff play in that effort. The event drew 80 participants. Keynote speakers included Dakota Goodhouse (UTTC History and Indigenous Studies professor), Dr. Stephanie Evergreen (an award-winning expert in data visualization), Anita Frederick (President of the Tribal Nations Research Group), Dr. Melanie Nadeau (University of North Dakota), and Laura Robison (Lightcast). In addition, the conference had 11 presenters from TCUs and several others from Association of Institutional Research, National Student Clearinghouse, Achieving the Dream, the American Indian College Fund and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium.

✓ The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **increase investment in research (positions, infrastructure, etc.) by at least 5% annually** starting 2023-24 AY. The UTTC Intertribal Research and Resource Center (IRRC) provides significant support toward this goal. Research equipment investments totaled over \$452,000 in the last academic year.

UTTC Intertribal Research and Resource Center (IRRC)

The UTTC IRRC, funded by the National Science Foundation, provides research, outreach, training, and education and conducts community-based research that focuses on issues relevant to tribal nations in the Northern Plains. The research investments through IRRC included:

- ✦ In FY23, research-specific activities totaled \$1,383,749, contributing to an overall research portfolio of 61 active awards worth \$25.7M.
- ✦ FY 2023 brought major investments in physical lab capacity through the IRRC TEA Center and Research DEN awards. While construction of the new lab spaces has been delayed to summer. with expected completion in February, equipment acquisitions included a Sanger DNA sequencer, QiaCube Automated DNA Extractor, MicroPlate Reader, three trinocular stereoscopes, high-sensitivity analytical balances, a wildlife drone package, and a field vehicle.
- ✦ The new NetZero Greenhouse (Land Grant) received IRRC grant support for research benches and outdoor classroom tables.
- ✦ Cyber Consortium proposal to expand data science and cybersecurity training was awarded \$817,000,
- ✦ GRANTED proposal for sponsored programs and research office development is close to funding recommendation.
- ✦ FY 2024 IRRC added a third Research Faculty position focused on Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Indigenous Research Methodologies.
- ✦ FY 2024 Significant equipment investments included the purchase of a scanning electron microscope through an NSF equipment grant (\$116,000), along with a gold-sputter coater for SEM samples, a Type I and Type II water purification system, and advanced analytical balances.
- ✦ FY 2024 IRRC hired a full-time lab equipment technician through a Department of Education RDI grant, who started July 2024.
- ✦ Construction in spring 2025 for the \$2M Science and Tech Center addition featuring office space and two new labs that will house the Research DEN (Dakota Equipment Nexus).

4c: Integrate American Indian Culture and Arts

✓ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is **at least 4 new American Indian Culture and Arts courses** are added to UTTC catalog. This has been accomplished with the addition of **14 new courses** that are part of the Indigenous Leadership and Indigenous Fine Arts AS degrees.

Indigenous Leadership and Fine Arts degrees add culture and art courses

New cultural courses developed include Indigenous Beadwork of North American, Indigenous Ceramics of North American, Contemporary Indigenous Art, Indigenous Jewelry, Indigenous Language I and II, Intro to Indigenous Culture Competency I and II, Intro Indigenous Leadership, Intro Federal Indian Law, Indigenous Leadership & Ethics, Indigenous Workplace Communication, Indigenous Rights, Advocacy, and Social Justice, and Indigenous Leadership in Practice Capstone.

UTTC hosted the 19th annual Dakota Lakota Summer Institute (DLSI).

UTTC hosted the Dakota Lakota Language Institute (DLSI) on campus in the summer of 2025. A three-week language program, the DLSI provides immersive language learning opportunities. Participants have the option to earn college credit or continuing education units (CEUs) for their efforts. Participants included enrolled UTTC students, dual credit students, and others from the general public.



Figure 9: DLSI Courtesy of College Relations

✓ The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is **at least 4 American Indian Culture and Arts activities offered monthly** (student activities calendar). Cultural activities are provided for students on a regular basis during the year. Weekly Inipi (sweat lodge) and regular drum practices, along with other cultural events constituted offerings of an average of 7 cultural events per month, exceeding the goal.

UTTC hosts community graduation Powwow

UTTC hosted a graduation powwow and invited graduates from UTTC as well as from the area high schools that partners with our Monarch Project grant and from the other colleges in Bismarck. High school and college graduates were recognized for their achievements in front of a full gym.

Cafeteria promotes Native American recipes

The UTTC cafeteria held monthly meetings with students and staff for collecting indigenous recipes. The goal is to feature monthly Native American recipes from student tribal nations.



Figure 10: Graduation Powwow

STRATEGIC AREA 5: INFRASTRUCTURE AND FISCAL STABILITY

This strategic area focuses on improving the century-old and other physical infrastructure of the institution as well as ensuring fiscal health and stability for the next century. UTTC continues to work toward establishing a foundation and developing relationships with donors through the College Relations office. Fundraising capacity has been built for scholarship fundraising through Events Week, Athletics, Employee Giving, and other initiatives.

5a: Improve funding base and fiscal resources

✓ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is to **increase the number of annual donors from 44 (2019) to 150**. College Relations reports 63 donors in the fall and 89 donors in the spring of the previous year. This constitutes a total of 152 donors. The donor list has grown since 2024, and the college has maintained connections with current donors. New potential donors have been reached out to by email and letters to try to establish new relationships.

The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **increase annual donations from \$255,250 (2019) to \$500,000**. College Relations reports that a total of \$982,584 was received through annual donations last year. \$486,592 was collected in the fall and \$495,992 was collected in spring. An unanticipated outcome was the small, recurring donations, indicating growing support. Changes were implemented to streamline donor communication by forming a new tracking system, which has already shown improvements in efficiency. However, there were some challenges in securing major gifts due to economic instability.

5b: New construction and remodels

✓ The SMART goal associated with this strategy is to **make continuous and substantive progress on the UTTC master plan**. Substantive progress continues on the UTTC master plan.

Remodels and maintenance projects help keep the campus healthy, safe, and up-to-date.

Several infrastructure improvement projects have been completed on campus this year. The decks on the front and back of the Education and Sakakawea buildings were replaced, and new landscaping was added to create a more welcoming and polished appearance. Similar updates were completed for the Cultural Building, with a new deck and landscaping in place. Significant progress has also been made on the

Japanese American Internment Memorial, located in the south courtyard of the Education Building, with a dedication planned for September 5, 2025.

The All Nations Circle extension to the new campus front gate has been finished, and the east intersection has been re-paved. In alignment with the campus plan, Buildings 45 and 74, both in severe disrepair, have been demolished.

New construction underway and some has been completed

Significant progress continues on the UTTC master plan. New lighting and signage now highlight the campus' front entrance, creating a more welcoming arrival experience. A new parking lot has been added at the Greenhouse, and both a bus garage and cold storage facilities have been constructed. In addition, expansion work is underway at the Science and Technology Building to support future growth.

A full list of projects include:

Construction or Remodel Project	Status
All Nations Circle Extension Paving Project – New Entrance	Complete
All Nations Lighting & Signage Project	Underway
East Intersection Paving Project	Complete
Sakakawea Hall Dorms Parking Lot Project	Complete
Green House Parking Lot Project	Complete
Bus Garage	Complete
Cold Storage	Complete
House Moves Project	Complete
Building 6, 7, 10, 11 Decking & Landscaping Project	Complete
Cultural Building Deck & Landscaping Project	Complete
Education Building Landscaping Project	Complete
JACS Memorial Courtyard Project	Underway
STC Expansion Project	Underway
TJES Secure Entrance Project	Complete
Building 45 & 74 Demolition Project	Complete
Sakakawea Hall Renovation Project	Underway

5c: Establish a firm fundraising foundation

✓ The first of the two SMART goals associated with this strategy is to **increase endowment to a total market value of \$1 million**. UTTC met with goal with the endowment valued at over **\$2.3 million** as of August 2025.

✓ The second SMART goal associated with this strategy is a **five-year institutional budget projection is in place and updated annually**. A five-year budget is now prepared annually by the Chief Finance Officer. The five-year projection is based on cash flow, annual audit information, past spending, and projected income. This is a Higher Learning Commission accreditation requirement. The budget projection is shared annually with the Board of Directors.