Office of the
Dean of Students
STUDENT AFFAIRS | THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Annual
Report

2024-25

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Section 1:
# Executive Summary

⇨ Mission Statement

We support student well-being and success by providing care, promoting accountability, and encouraging individual growth and development.

⇨ Our Purpose

The Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) works to advocate, support, and develop students as they navigate their time at the University of Utah. We create and offer educational and leadership experiences that help students thrive in a communal environment. We actively engage in conversations that promote compassionate, welcoming, and safe campus communities. In working with students, we are responsive to their needs and assist them in their academic and personal endeavors. In addition to these core principles, the ODOS serves as an advocate for students facing challenges to their success as students and work to empower students to know and understand their rights and responsibilities as members of our community.

Persistence After Engagement

Although the ODOS often supports students in taking a break from the institution for various valid reasons, including leave of absence, 90% of students who engaged with Accountability and 63% of those who engaged with Support either graduated or enrolled in a future term.

Accountability

5.5%
9.8%
84.7%

Support

11.4%
52%
36.6%
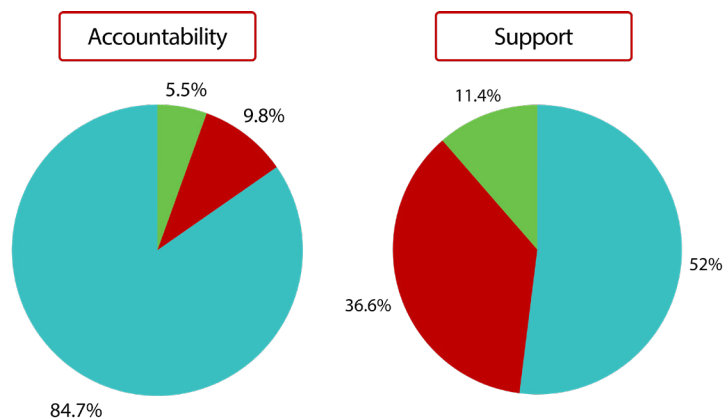
🎓 Graduated   📋 Enrolled in Fall/Summer 2025   ✋ Stopped Out

Advocate Flex

Implementing a new case management system has been a significant undertaking this year. We were able to move swiftly and get 16 workflows up and running. It is a work in progress, as we continue to expand functionality and refine our processes, but it has opened up new possibilities for collecting data and assessing our impact on students.

15%

More Students Served

This year, the ODOS helped 3555 students, a 15% increase as compared to 2023-24.

21%

More Efficient Case Management

Improved processes and case management resulted in a 6 day decrease in the average number of days cases remained open.

100%

Medical Amnesty Persistence

100% of students engaged in the Medical Amnesty process graduated or persisted

Section 2:
Major Accomplishments

In addition to the substantial work described in [Section 1](#) of this document and the work toward our Strategic Projects described in [Section 4,](#) the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) has also achieved several other major accomplishments this year. Including:

01

Enhanced Staff Professional Development

This year, the ODOS significantly expanded professional development opportunities for our team by supporting conference attendance and curating a departmental professional development library. These investments have led to increased staff engagement, morale, and a stronger sense of community and purpose within the office.

02

Formalized Emergency Housing Allocation Procedures

The ODOS developed and documented a comprehensive process for allocating the emergency apartment to students experiencing housing insecurity. The new system includes an objective rubric and a set of subjective assessment questions to ensure equitable, needs-based decisions that align with available resources.

03

Revitalized Outreach and Student Engagement

Our team also revamped outreach and tabling strategies to better connect with students, introducing new promotional items and more interactive tabling experiences. This resulted in increased student engagement and greater visibility of our services across campus.

04

Student Success Through Medical Amnesty Engagement

All students who engaged with our office through the Medical Amnesty process either persisted to the following semester or graduated. This 100% success rate is a testament to the effectiveness of our supportive, non-punitive approach to student well-being and accountability.

Section 3:
Major Challenges

Maintaining Cohesion Across Dispersed Locations

The ODOS continues to face challenges in fostering cohesion and collaboration among staff dispersed across multiple locations, including the Union, Residence Life, and the Herriman Campus. With the recent incorporation of the Office of Residence Life under the ODOS umbrella, we expect these challenges to intensify. Upcoming construction may further disrupt communication and workflow. To address this, we are employing strategies such as regular cross-location team meetings, hybrid collaboration tools, and shared professional development opportunities to strengthen our internal connections and maintain a unified departmental culture.

Ongoing Basic Needs Support and Collaboration

Although the Basic Needs Collective, which was incorporated into ODOS in 2024, has since transitioned to the Center for Student Wellness, basic needs remain one of the top five concerns addressed by our Student Support team. We will continue to collaborate closely with campus partners to ensure students facing food, housing, and financial insecurity receive timely and practical support.

Recalibrating Support for Student Athletes

The Student Athlete Advocacy program, initiated in 2017, has been discontinued. As a result, the ODOS is reassessing how best to support student athletes moving forward. We are exploring new models of engagement and collaboration with Athletics and other campus partners to ensure this population continues to receive the support they need.

Rising Demand Amid Growing Enrollment

As the student population increases on campus and in housing, demand for the ODOS services grows. This trend places strain on our staff and resources, impacting our ability to provide timely and practical support. In response, we are evaluating staffing needs, streamlining processes, and advocating for additional resources to ensure we can meet the evolving needs of our students. Continued institutional support is critical in scaling our services to match the university's growth.

The ODOS is facing a number of challenges in the next academic year. These challenges are significant and will require ODOS to make some difficult decisions. However, the ODOS is committed to meeting the needs of the campus community and will work to address these challenges in the coming year.

Section 4:
Status of Strategic Projects

Implementation of Advocate Flex

The Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) made significant progress in implementing the Advocate Flex case management system, a key initiative aimed at enhancing infrastructure, improving management practices, and delivering better outcomes for students.

⬆ Project Highlights

Workflows

We created 6 collections, encompassing **16 workflows,** have been successfully integrated into Advocate Flex. In the coming year we plan to add workflows for the Utah Asia Campus and Fraternity & Sorority Life.

Training

15 ODOS staff members have utilized the Advocate Flex Canvas training course. Additional training was provided via Zoom and in-person sessions. **86 users** have accessed and viewed cases within the system.

Staff Satisfaction Survey - Advocate Flex

In June 2025, we surveyed ODOS staff about their experience with the new Advocate Flex workflows. We will use feedback gathered in the survey to continue to refine processes and push for improved functionality through participating on the Advocate Client Advisory Board.

Support From Staff
Average Satisfaction 4.4/5.0
★★★★⯨

Case Tracking
Average Satisfaction 3.3/5.0
★★★⯨

Task Organization
Average Satisfaction 4.0/5.0
★★★★

Feedback Themes

Staff praised the system's user-friendliness and search functionality. Suggestions for improvement included enhanced dashboard features, more filtering options, and additional templates.

⬆ Impact

The transition to Advocate Flex has already yielded measurable improvements in efficiency and our ability to collect and analyze case data.

With these data, we were able to identify a **decrease of 21.4% in average case age** at closure overall, when compared wtih cases in 2023-24, reflecting greater efficiency and process improvements which no doubt benefit the students who engage with our team and the campus community.

With these data we have also been able to identify patterns in the workflow that can be leveraged to improve efficiency in the future. For example, as evidenced in the chart below, we noticed that increases in the age of cases being closed aligned with periods of "clean up", at the end of a sesmester or during summer. While this no doubt relfects that many cases, especially in Student Support, require monitoring through the end of the semester, we will be looking for ways to improve timely updates to ensure this metric is as accurate as possible.

⬆ Next Steps

- Continue refining workflows and expanding Advocate Flex functionality based on staff feedback.
- Use case closure date to continue to improve efficiency.

Average Case Age at Time of Closure by Month Closed 2024-25

Legend: Student Accountability (orange), Student Support (teal), All Cases (red)
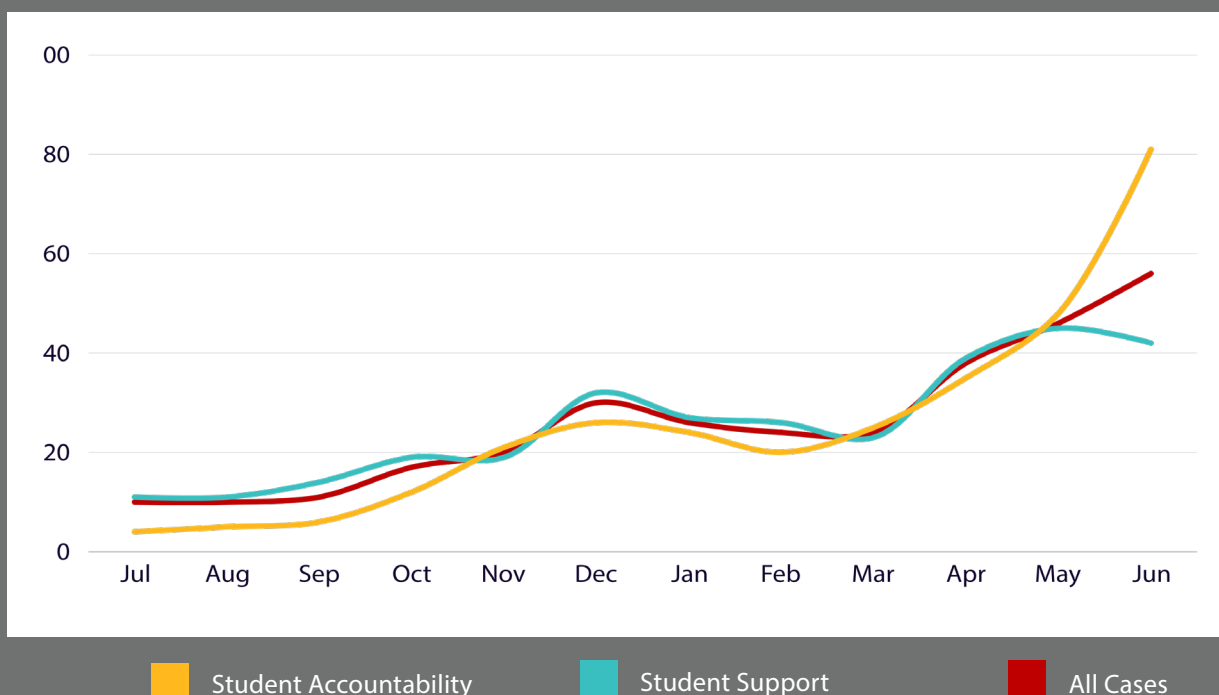
Status of Strategic Projects, Cont.

Centralization of Student Support and Accountability Efforts

Building on the 2022 external audit recommendations, the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) initiated the centralization of student support and accountability functions, including the integration of Housing and Residential Education (HRE) and Basic Needs Collective (BNC) staff.

⬆ Project Highlights

Staff Integration

⬊ The BNC was successfully incorporated into the ODOS in August 2024. However, following a strategic realignment, BNC has since transitioned to the Center for Campus Wellness to better align with its mission and services.

⬊ Integration efforts continue with Housing and Residential Education, with full incorporation of Residential Life staff expected in the next academic year.

Staff Survey - Staff Integration

Instead of a formal satisfaction survey, we invited staff to provide open-ended feedback to guide ongoing improvements.

Feedback Themes

⬊ A desire for more transparent communication regarding roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines.
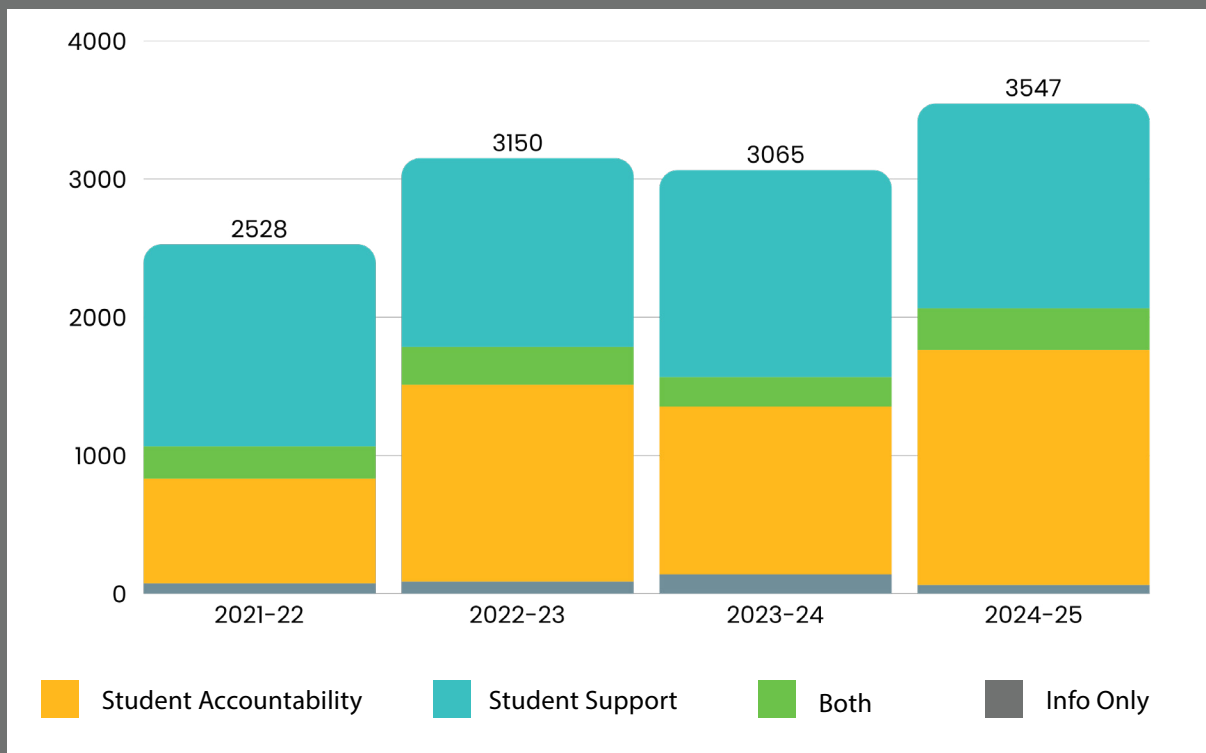
⬊ Interest in more opportunities for cross-departmental engagement (e.g., tours of residence halls).

⬊ Suggestions for improved data visibility, such as identifying student housing status and campus location.

Distinct Students Served by Fiscal Year

Legend: Student Accountability | Student Support | Both | Info Only

Values: 2021–22: 2528, 2022–23: 3150, 2023–24: 3065, 2024–25: 3547

⬆ Impact

While the full integration of the Office of Residential Life will continue into the coming year, we have already seen how better coordination between the ODOS and ORL has created improved outcomes for students. Comparing similar cases over time, we have observed a continued increase in the number of students receiving help from case managers across offices for accountability and support services. This year, we were able to help **14.7% more distinct students** than we did in 2023-24, and we did so more efficiently (see pg. 7).

⬆ Next Steps

- Conduct a comprehensive staff satisfaction survey post-integration to assess the effectiveness of the centralized model.
- Complete the integration of Residential Life staff and formalize centralized procedures to ensure seamless operations.

Section 5:
New/Continuing Strategic Projects

Centralization of Student Support and Accountability Efforts

In the coming year, the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) will continue to implement the recommendations of the 2022 external audit by integrating the Office of Residential Life under the ODOS umbrella and centralizing student support and accountability processes within the ODOS. By consolidating resources and streamlining operations, the ODOS aims to enhance the student experience, improve efficiency, and foster a more coordinated approach.

↘ Scope

This project involves integrating the Office of Residential Life (ORL) and the ODOS, which 2024 will continue into the coming academic year. The project scope includes developing standardized procedures, training staff, and implementing new workflows to ensure a seamless transition. The secondary phase will focus on organizing the ORL and strengthening the relationships between the ORL and the ODOS. Additionally, we plan to continue refining and evaluating the 2026-27 academic year.

↘ Project Objective and Initiatives

Strategic Objectives

- Improve Collaboration & Strategic Partnerships
- Improve Management & Practices

Strategic Initiative

- Create Proactive & Personalized Pathways

↘ Project Metrics

- Student satisfaction survey measuring overall satisfaction with support services
- Staff satisfaction survey assessing the effectiveness of the centralized model
- Increase in the number of students accessing services

> **We've already made significant progress in creating a more efficient and effective system that better serves students. We will continue to re-evaluate processes and improve outcomes for students.**

Understanding and Monitoring the Reengagement of Students Who Did Not Graduate or Persist

As the ODOS better understands the students we are serving, we gain a clearer view of students who have left the University. In our most recent dashboard, we identified nearly 500 students who left the University. By creating an assessment tool specifically to learn and understand why students are leaving, the ODOS can work to educate and support students proactively in an effort to increase persistence.

⭨ Scope

This project primarily involves working with University Analytics and Institutional Reporting to ensure our data collection is accurate. After the data integrity is confirmed, we will work to identify key stakeholders for process review. Developing a working strategy will assist the ODOS in where to strategically invest time in proactive programming and education to assist in increasing persistence.

⭨ Project Objective and Initiatives

Strategic Objectives

- Improve Meaningful Connections & Belonging
- Improve Management & Practices
- Improve Collaboration & Strategic Partnerships

Strategic Initiative

- Revitalize Engagement & Belonging

⭨ Project Metrics

- Creating an assessment tool to understand why they are stopping out
- Number of students who do not re-enroll after engagement
- Identify key stakeholders for long term reengagement/reenrollment strategy

Reimagining and Realigning the Residence Life Experience

With the bifurcation of the Housing and Dining Programs and the Office of Residence Life (ORL), Student Affairs is positioned to reimagine and realign the Residence Life experience. In understanding the University's Campus Physical Development Framework plan, the goal is to create a residential campus centered on student life. The Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) and the ORL will work together to create a staffing plan that focuses on developing "neighborhoods." This will enable ORL staff to develop deeper and more meaningful relationships with students, thereby supporting their time in our residential facilities more effectively. A better understanding of students and their needs will also inform our approach to programmatic efforts, both social and educational. This will further enhance our ability to assist students in persisting at the University.

⬆ Scope

This project is based on reviewing benchmark institutions and adapting our staffing to reflect our goals of developing and supporting students. Working closely with the ODOS, Residence Life Staff will engage in reimagining how we create and grow relationships in the residence halls and how we utilize community mapping to better program for our students.

⭷ Project Objective and Initiatives

Strategic Objectives

- Improve Meaningful Connections & Belonging
- Improve Collaboration & Strategic Partnerships
- Improve Management & Practices

Strategic Initiative

- Revitalize Engagement & Belonging

⭷ Project Metrics

- Creating an assessment tool to understand why they are stopping out
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