



BUILDING FOR SERITI : EVIDENCE, IMPACT AND CARE

Francois Strydom: UFS partner presentation

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Inspiring excellence, transforming lives through quality, impact, and care.

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UFS
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING (CTL)

Defining student success

The SeSotho word "Seriti" means:

Something between the English words for "**dignity**" and "**integrity**". It relates to the **shadow or aura that people cast as they go through life**, a shadow that **grows through good deeds and leaves a legacy of impact**.

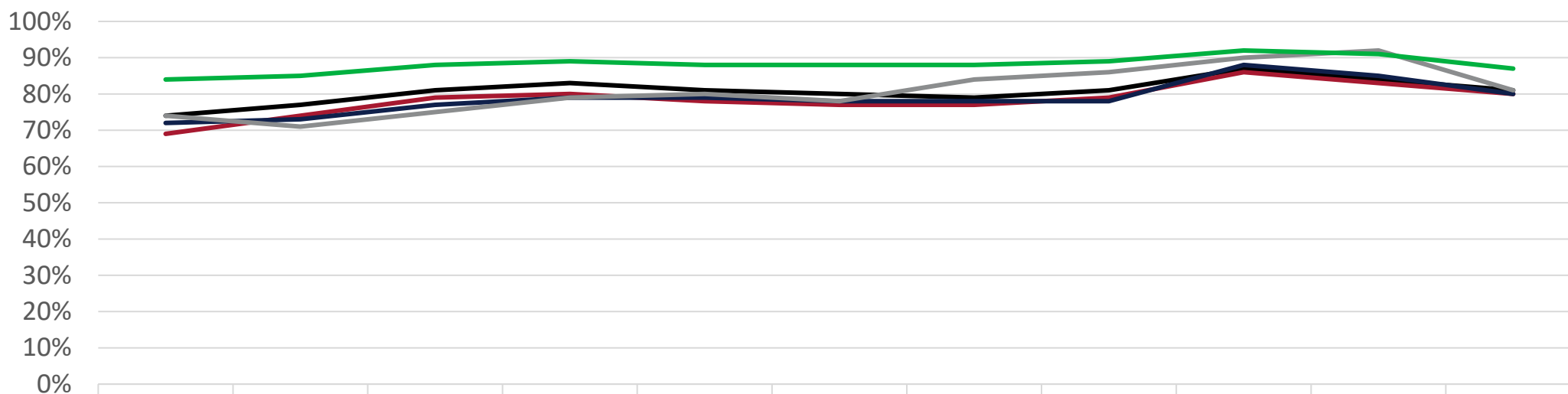
Focusing on student success and degree attainment work is about dignity as Nelson Mandela so poignantly reminds us:

“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom.”

At UFS we are deeply motivated by restoring dignity with integrity BUT especially the creation of a sustainable legacy that will continue to reduce inequalities in degree attainment and advance access to a better life.

What have we been able to achieve through Siyaphumelela?

Institutional success rate

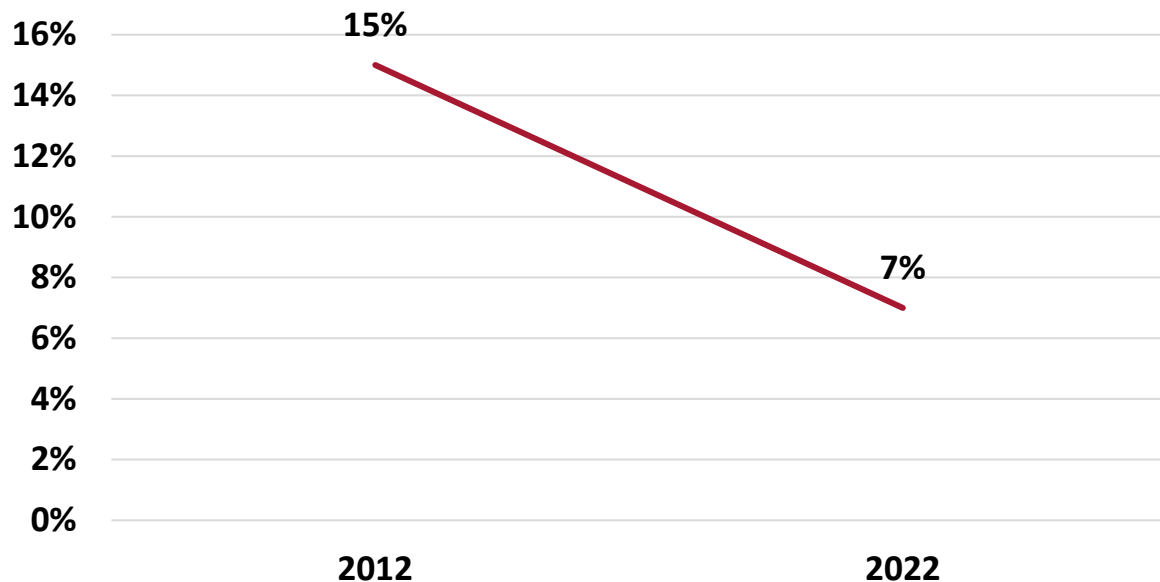


	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
— Grand total	74%	77%	81%	83%	81%	80%	79%	81%	87%	84%	81%
— African Total	69%	74%	79%	80%	78%	77%	77%	79%	86%	83%	80%
— Coloured Total	72%	73%	77%	79%	79%	78%	78%	78%	88%	85%	80%
— Indian/Asian Total	74%	71%	75%	79%	80%	78%	84%	86%	90%	92%	81%
— White Total	84%	85%	88%	89%	88%	88%	88%	89%	92%	91%	87%

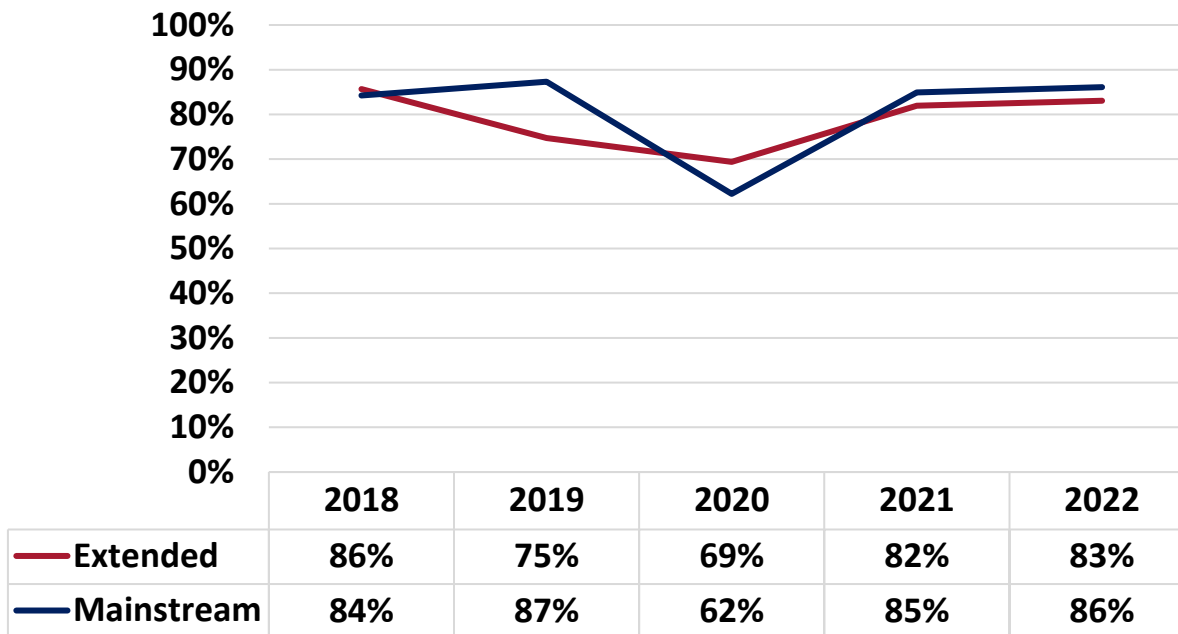
— Grand total — African Total — Coloured Total — Indian/Asian Total — White Total

What have we been able to achieve through Siyaphumelela?

Achievement gap between African and White students



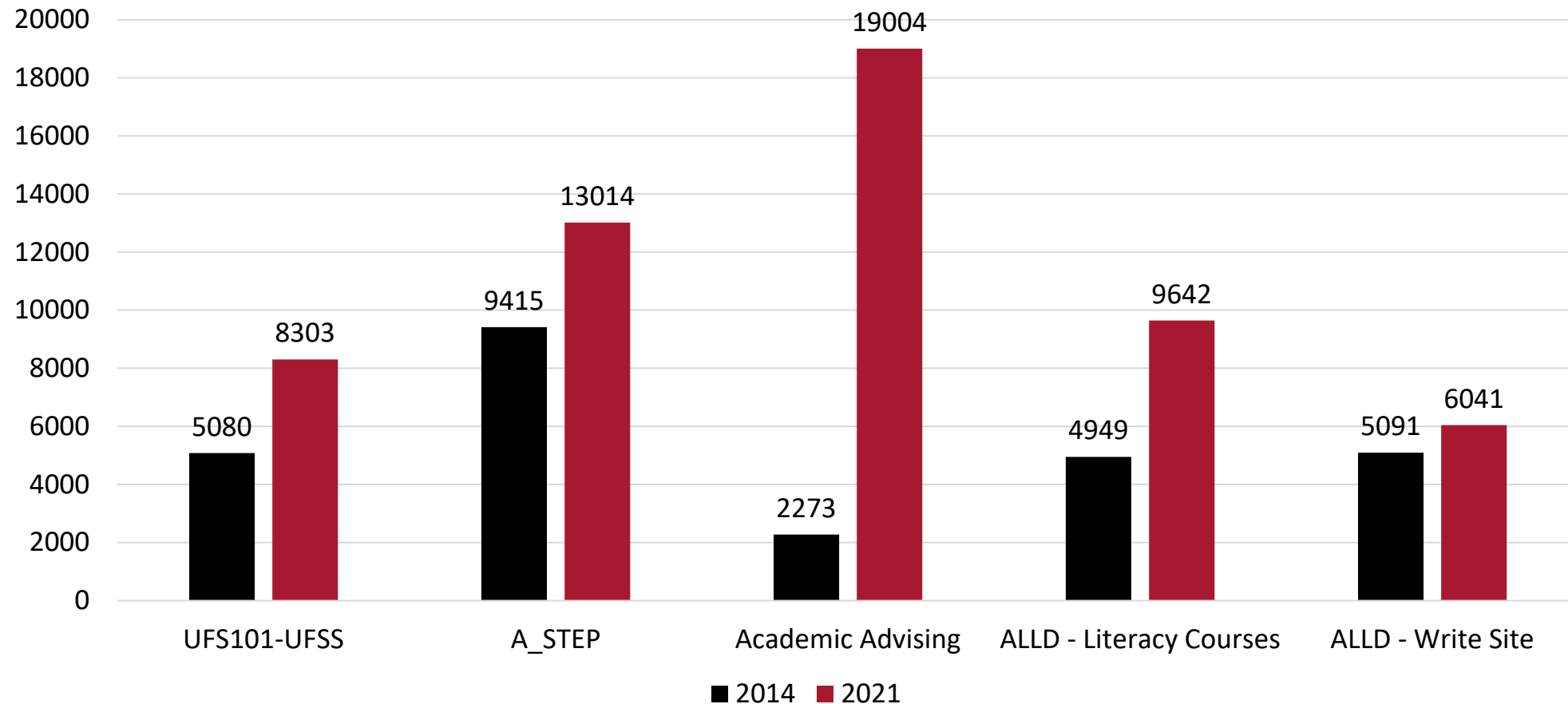
Retention rate from year 1 to 2



How have we been building for Seriti?

High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

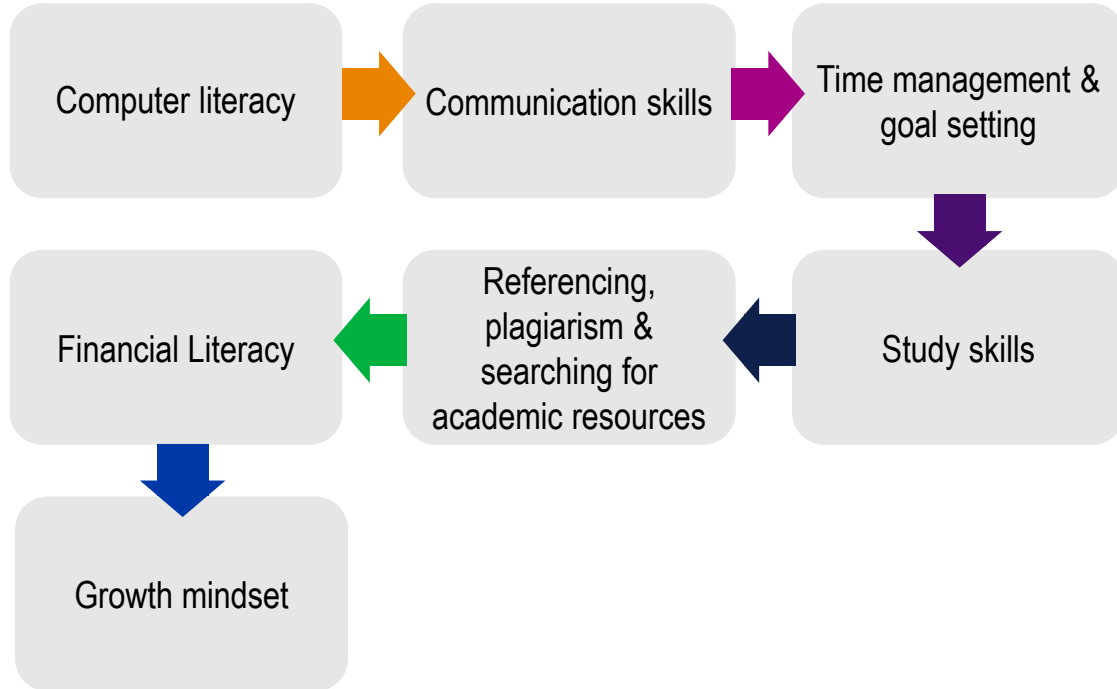
Students supported in HIPs: 2014 vs. 2021



Supporting first-year students' transitioning: UFSS

UFSS – mandatory 16 credit course for ± 8200 per year

- Purpose: Assist student with transition and lay foundations for success



- **66-78% correlation with other first-year modules final marks**



Supporting first-year students' transitioning: UFSS

Module	UFSS mark	AP score	Quintile	Sample Size
2021_1504 (main)	81%	0%	1%	4508
2021_1522 (ext)	70%	6%	3%	1960
2022_1504 (main)	82%	5%	6%	5236
2022_1522 (ext)	72%	1%	5%	1936

- Students' UFSS marks on average contributed 25 times more to their average first year final marks than their AP score and 20 times more than their school quintile status.
- As with the national data, UFS also enrolls more students from **quintile 1-3 schools** each year. This data shows the **effectiveness and impact of transitional support on students' retention**.

Providing peer support: A_STEP tutorials

- The A_STEP programme **trains and employs over 400 tutors.**
- In 2022, **10217 face-to-face** tutorial sessions took place.
- **Quality assurance:**
 - Student evaluations
 - Tutor portfolios
 - Additional blended training sessions



Qualitative responses from students on the value of tutorials

- Tutoring is essential, **especially for first years when they're trying to get used to the environment...**they're more like the link between the lecturers and the students.
- These **sessions are more interactive**, you can ask more questions.
- Tutors, as they are still students, but senior, they are more like our peers, **it's much easier to interact with them.**
- **In small groups you get to voice out your opinion more** and what you're struggling with rather than in a bigger class, because in a bigger class, you think that someone else will ask the question.
- **Tutorials in different languages is a brilliant concept.** It helped all of us.

Academic Language and Literacy Development (ALLD)

- **Only 1 out of every 4 UFS students who write NBTs are proficient in academic literacy.**
- **National Benchmark Test (NBT) algorithm:** Around 8000 predictions, with an 85% accuracy rate. Automated emails to students - automation cut down a process that took around **four weeks to four minutes.**
- **Impact analysis:** when African students participate in at least 1 individual Write Site session, they pass 8.1% more credits, and they are 15.3% more likely to graduate.
- There is a **15% average first year final mark correlation** with EAL course participation.
- Students from **quintile 1-3 schools** who participated in an academic literacy course have **8% higher average final marks** than those not participating in literacy courses.

EALL teaches you not only to write academic papers but develop your skills and to apply those skills in other modules.

It doesn't only teach you English and how to speak it, but it also makes you understand your modules' instructions carefully and to answer according to what is asked.

Academic Advising

- **UFS advising reached 12706 students in 2022** through individual appointments, online advising, group advising and workshops, and training peer advisors (tutors, teaching assistants, mentors, residence committee members, and success coaches).
- As part of a multi-institution collaborative UCDG enabled through Siyaphumelela, the following highlights of 2022 can be shared:
 - **303 Professional Academic Advisors trained** to date through the Academic Advising Professional Development Short Learning Programme.
 - **18 of the 26 institutions** participated in training.
 - **Eletsa**, the South African association for academic advisors' membership continued to grow (74 members).
 - Two **National Academic Advising Seminars** have taken place.

But....there are still challenges

- **Success rates do not lead to degree attainment in minimum time**
 - Less than 40% of students in 3-year degrees graduate in minimum time
- **Achievement gaps**
 - 20%-25% gaps
 - Females graduating faster than males
 - White students graduating faster than African students
- **Career development and employability**
 - Producing competitive graduates

Forming new partnerships towards Seriti



Digitally Enhanced Student Success and Employability Programme

Student Success

Employability



1. Digital Skills and Competencies

Creating & implementing an institutional digital literacy framework for higher education and beyond

- Digital literacy framework & curriculum pathway development
- Embedding of digital framework into existing modules & course content



2. Scaled Responsive Student Tracking

Leveraging analytics and technology to identify and reach out to students proactively to provide support.

- Tracking for rapid response & support
- Tracking & support to systems development
- Minimising time to degree and achievement gaps



3. Career Development & Employability

Integrating career development efforts at the UFS in a career development and employability pathway.

- Career pathway development
- Scaled employability

UFS Digital Skills and Competencies Pathway

LEVEL 1



ICT Proficiency (Blackboard, UFS systems, Basic MS)



Digital citizenship (awareness and identification)



Information, data and media literacy (Identification and detection)



Digital creation (Identification)

LEVEL 2



ICT Proficiency (Intermediate MS)



Digital citizenship (Differentiation and application)



Information, data and media literacy (Interpretation and implementation)



Digital creation (Creation)

LEVEL 3



ICT Proficiency (Advanced MS)



Digital citizenship (evaluation and creation)



Information, data and media literacy (Assess and organise)

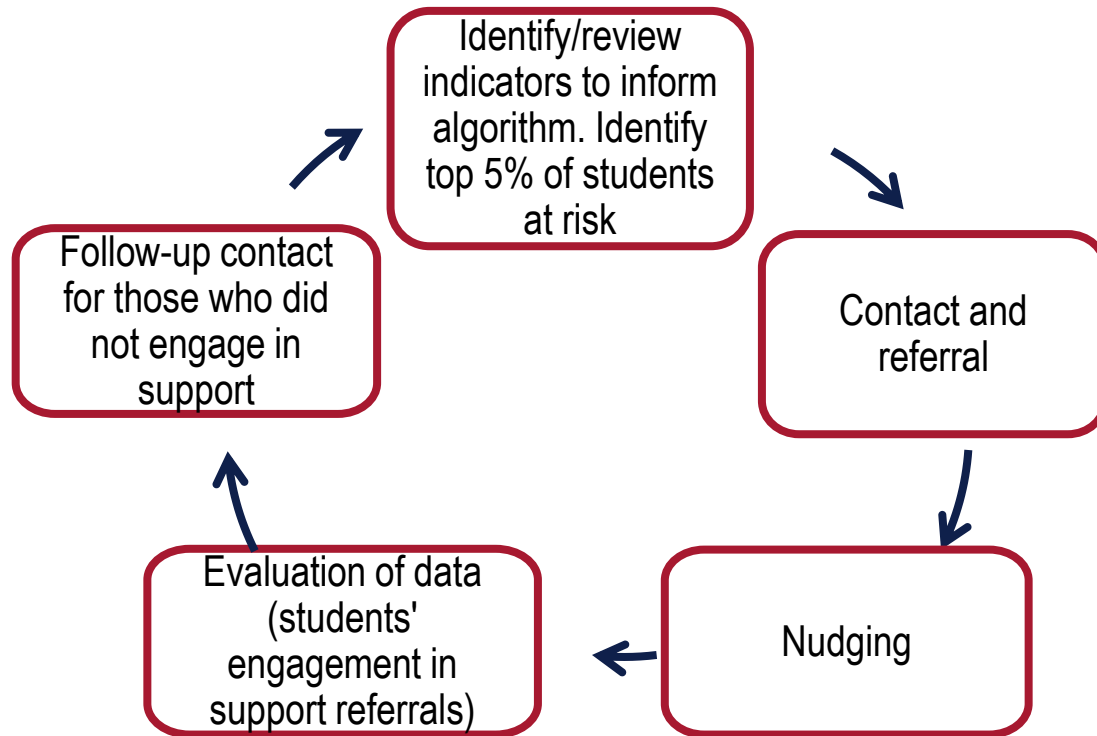


Digital creation (Evaluation)

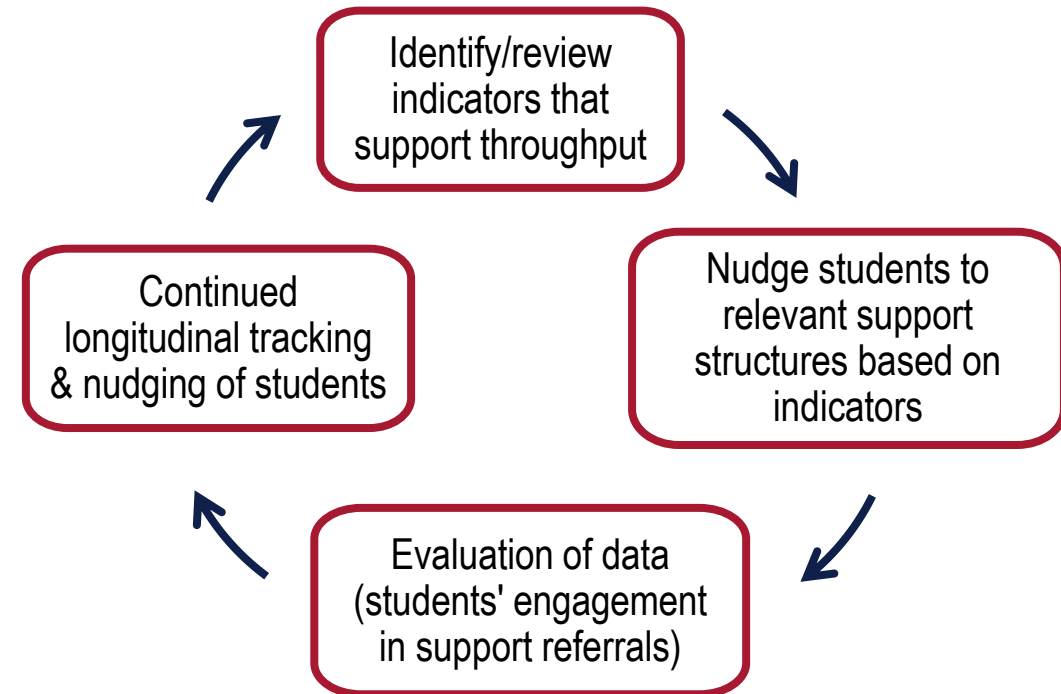
LEVEL 4 – Industry specific demands

Scaled Responsive Student Tracking Project

Scaled Responsive Student Tracking Project (SRSTP): **Rapid response**



Scaled Responsive Student Tracking Project (SRSTP): **Throughput tracking**



Career development and employability pathway



Kresge as co-builders of Seriti

- **Thank you** for believing in South Africa and staying with us on this journey.
- We look forward to **continuing to work with you** on how we can **scale and build *seriti*** in South Africa but also in the USA.





Thank you

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