# Siyaphumelela Partner Convening Meeting

31 October 2023

What has been successful? How do you see that success going forward?

# Support for Student Success

- What we have implemented:
  - Student Success Framework – identify core areas to focus upon
  - Data Governance Framework – roles and responsibilities
  - Leading and Lagging indicators - monitor outcomes
  - Included student success in our 2033 Strategic Framework – resourcing and support
  - Student Success Committee – chaired by DVC: Academic & reports to Senate T&L
  - Faculty student advisory – arrange interventions
  - Mentors and tutors – direct assistance to students in need of support
  - Student success focussed orientation (Gateway to Success) – measure engagement/early data from LMS for prediction
  - Biographical questionnaire - understand student context
  - Surveys – student experience, graduate exit
  - Timeous capturing of marks – improved processes
  - Capturing of lecturers against courses – enriched data
  - AI Predictive models and dashboards – proactive response
  - Student internship pipeline - feed data engineering and data science skills
  - Intervention system – to capture interventions
  - Student support database – to communicate what's available
  - Enterprise data warehouse – integrated 360 view
  - Salesforce CRM system – support student journey/improve experience/student success (SSH)

# Leading and Lagging Indicators reviewed regularly by SSC

- Show moderate improvement in graduation rates (N-minimum time)
  - 3 year UG graduation rate increased from 31% in 2016 to 38% in 2020 (7%)
  - 4 year UG graduation rate increased from 37% in 2016 to 38% in 2020 (1%)
- 2018 Paper by Johnson and Stage: Academic Engagement and Student Success: Do High-Impact Practices Mean Higher Graduation Rates?
  - 101 public institutions participated
  - Found that offering high-impact practices (designed to improve student learning, engagement, and career preparation) may not lead to increased graduation rates
- Counter examples
  - Georgia State: 6 year graduation rate increased by 23% over last 20 years
  - University of South Florida: 4 year graduation rate increased by 20% from 2013 to 2020

> Responding by initiating an M&E project to ensure that every student success activity will focus on improving graduation rate from inception

# Tinto and Pusser (2006)



- Success requires that effective learning happens **in class**. As a consequence, one way of understanding how institutional action can influence student success is to view it as being built up from success class by class, one upon another, in a manner that leads to academic progress over time.

- How do we get our student success efforts to permeate into the classroom?
  - Improved course/curriculum design
  - Improved assessment practices
  - Academic staff development
  - Involvement of lecturers
  - Focus on bottleneck courses

- We will also be implementing the Salesforce Students Success Hub in 2024 to act as a communication glue to integrate and orchestrate all the student success components that we have built

What are the impediments to scaling your student success interventions?

# Impediments

- Wits is open minded to recognising promising new ideas and upscaling them but….

-  The classroom is the critical place where learning happens but our lecturers are not as involved in the student success initiative as we would like

How are you including student success in your UCDP 2024-2027?

- **Staff Support and Development** – Kershree
  - Teaching development and research grants

- **Student Academic Development** - Raazia
  - PG research methodologies experts, Digital capabilities online course, Faculty of Science academic support

- **Student Success** – Raazia
  - Student Success Hub (Salesforce), Nurturing excellence for student success (HS), Admin support (Raazia)

- **Student Development** – Jerome
  - Student development and support in Humanities, Mental health and psycho-social support, Co-curriculum and entrepreneurship, Student transitions and persistence

- **Curriculum development** – Greig
  - Curriculum design retreats (CLM), Generative AI integration into L&T, Integrated Science Course tutors and evaluation, Wits Writing Programme, Wits Doctoral Academy

- Grant management – Raazia
  - M&E specialist, external evaluator

- **Siyaphumelela Participation** - Fezile

# High Level Overview of Plans for Q1 2024

# Plans for Q1 2024

- Implementation of the new M&E framework for all student success related projects to drive improvement in graduation rates
  - This is a response to the DVC: Academic's concern that we have so many student success initiatives but they are not translating into significant improvements in student outcomes
- At our Gauteng Regional Network Meeting 24-26 Oct 2023 at UMP
  - Agreed that we would develop and agree leading and lagging indicators that we would share to examine our progress
  - Those institutions that are having difficulty could draw on the collective experience of the regional network to help identify a possible strategy
  - These leading and lagging indicators could be debated by the sector so that once the National Student Data Warehouse (NSDW) comes onstream, these indicators would be available to all

What service workshops will we offer from Jan-May 2024?

# Ideas..

- Workshop on Gateway to Success (Jerome – May)
- Get CESAR to do a workshop on the new M&E framework that they have developed for Wits for all student success related projects to drive improvement in graduation rates
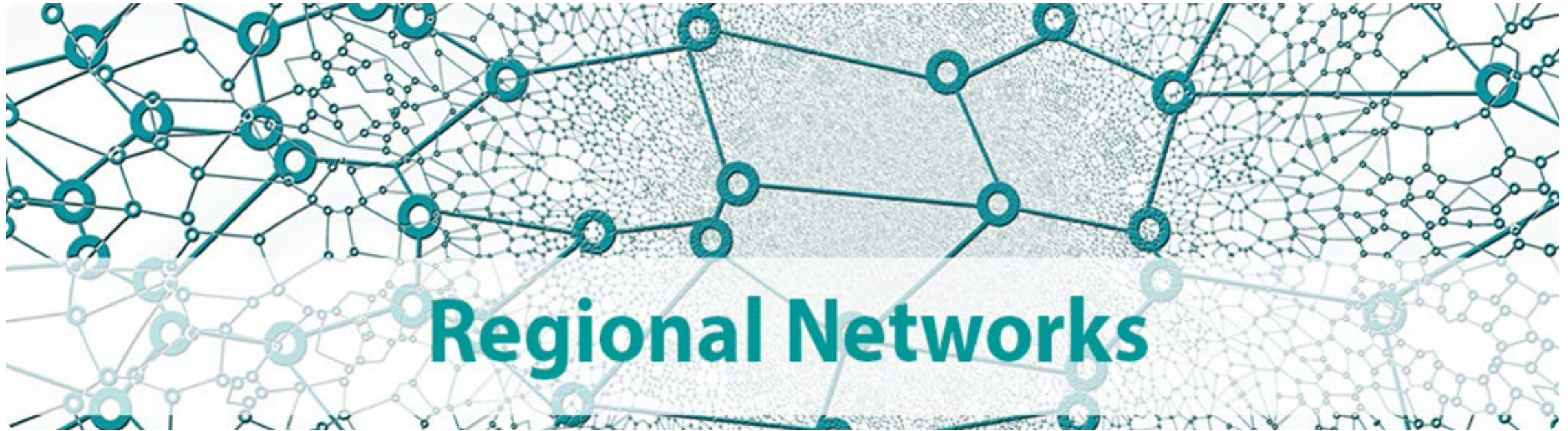
  But…

- Cost may be too prohibitive

What regional workshops will we offer in 2024?

- April 2024 – online
- September 2024 – face to face at UL