

**THE WELL-BEING COLLECTIVE TOOLKIT**

*A Relational Systems-Change Guide for Belonging at UConn*

**Version 2 — 2025**

Prepared by the **Well-Being Collective Incubation Team (WIT)**

University of Connecticut

## **Dedication**

For every student, staff member, and faculty member  
who has ever wondered whether they truly belonged—  
**this Toolkit is for you.**

For the communities who shared their stories with courage.  
For those who speak up, reach out, hold space,  
and weave threads of care across our campuses.

For the ancestors and loved ones who taught us  
how to tend to one another.  
For the future communities who will inherit  
a more connected UConn.

And for everyone building a world  
where belonging is not earned—  
but honored, tended, practiced, and shared.

## **Preface**

*From the Well-Being Collective Incubation Team (WIT)*

The Well-Being Collective (W-BC) began with a simple, courageous question:

**What would it look like for belonging to be everyone's work—and everyone's birthright—at UConn?**

The more we listened to students, staff, faculty, and community partners, the clearer the answers became.

Belonging is not a single program.

It isn't a workshop, a campaign, or a survey item.

It is a *practice*—a way of being in relationship with one another inside a large institution that often makes people feel small.

W-BC emerged from a truth many already knew:

Students fall through gaps not because they lack talent or motivation, but because systems are confusing, relationships are uneven, and identity-specific harms are real and cumulative.

And yet—

we also saw brilliance everywhere.

Students building care webs and peer networks.

Staff quietly doing relational labor that sustains entire communities.

Faculty creating classrooms where identity and curiosity can breathe.

Regional campuses modeling community learning ecosystems.

Identity-based centers cultivating joy, visibility, and solidarity.

Teams across UConn experimenting with new ways to teach, advise, and lead.

The Well-Being Collective did not invent belonging at UConn.

**We simply listened to it, connected it, and amplified it.**

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## Why This Toolkit Exists

This Toolkit is both a reflection and an offering.

It reflects:

- two years of listening sessions,
- dozens of identity-centered forums,
- student-led research cycles,
- campus change and graduate student inquiries,
- network analyses,
- co-design sprints,
- and countless moments of shared humanity.

It offers:

- practices rooted in care and relational leadership,
- methods for understanding lived experience as evidence,
- tools to support identity-aware belonging and wellbeing,
- ways to collaborate across units and campuses,
- design frameworks for improving systems,
- and approaches for building community capacity and institutional alignment.

This Toolkit is meant to be used—not admired.

It is a working document, designed to be written in, adapted, expanded, and challenged.

It belongs to everyone who is committed to shaping a more connected, caring, and just UConn.

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## **How We Hold This Work**

We do not pretend belonging work is easy.

It requires humility, courage, relational skill, time, and care.

It requires slowing down long enough to notice what is happening under the surface.

It requires looking at structures with honesty and imagination.

It requires hope, even when change is incremental.

The Well-Being Collective is a network, not an office.

It moves at the speed of relationship and trust.

It grows through curiosity, vulnerability, and collaborative action.

It is designed to be porous, accessible, and identity-aware.

We know that:

- structural barriers affect communities differently,
- the burden of invisibility falls disproportionately on marginalized groups,
- relational labor is often unrecognized,
- and yet, relationships are the most powerful intervention we have.

Our commitment is to build a campus ecosystem where belonging is a shared responsibility,

where identity is honored,

where care is part of the culture,

where students feel agency and possibility,

and where staff and faculty feel supported in the work of tending to others.

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## **A Living Document**

This Toolkit will continue to evolve.

New stories will surface.

New prototypes will emerge.

New collaborations will grow.

New challenges will reveal new opportunities.

We invite you to use this Toolkit with openness and generosity:

adapt what resonates,

challenge what doesn't,

add what is missing,

and bring your community's wisdom into the work.

You are now part of the Well-Being Collective.

And we are grateful you're here.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Belonging is a human need, a source of strength, and a powerful predictor of well-being, persistence, and thriving. At the University of Connecticut, belonging does not emerge from a single program or office—it emerges from relationships, structures, practices, and the ways we move with and for one another.

The **Well-Being Collective (W-BC)** began as a campus-wide effort to understand and transform the student experience through a relational, identity-aware, and systems-change lens. What started as a small group of practitioners listening deeply to students has grown into a cross-campus network of students, staff, faculty, and community partners who are cultivating a more connected, caring, and collaborative UConn.

This Toolkit captures the foundational practices, insights, structures, and tools that have emerged through two years of forums, listening sessions, design sprints, WeLAB student research cycles, mutual aid practices, and collaborative work across roles and campuses. It offers a comprehensive guide for strengthening belonging and relational well-being at scale—grounded in both community wisdom and evidence.

## Purpose of This Toolkit

This Toolkit exists to:

- **Illuminate** the conditions that shape belonging at UConn
- **Strengthen** relational and identity-aware practices across roles
- **Connect** the work already happening across campuses
- **Equip** staff, faculty, and students with practical tools
- **Support** cross-unit collaboration and network-building
- **Guide** systems change rooted in lived experience
- **Amplify** the insights and brilliance of community members

The Toolkit is meant to be used across:

- classrooms
- advising contexts
- student support roles
- cultural and identity-based spaces
- regional campus communities
- committees and teams
- institutional planning processes
- design and research projects
- community-building events

It is a living document—one that should evolve as our practices, relationships, and communities evolve.

## What is the Well-Being Collective?

The Well-Being Collective is:

- a **network**, not a department;
- a **practice**, not a program;
- a **community-guided, relational ecosystem** that strengthens belonging and well-being through connection, identity affirmation, and collaborative systems change.

W-BC is composed of:

- **WIT (Well-Being Incubation Team)** — backbone team that sustains, supports, and incubates system-change projects
- **Visioning Team** — holds values, clarity, purpose, and long-term direction
- **Forum Team** — hosts monthly identity-centered spaces for dialogue
- **WeLAB** — a student-led design and research lab for systems inquiry
- **Students, Staff, Faculty, and Partners** across all campuses

W-BC helps the university see more clearly—

- where belonging is happening,
- where it is constrained,
- who is carrying relational labor,
- and where structures need redesign.

## **Insights That Guide Our Work**

Across hundreds of stories, reflections, and collaborative sessions, several truths emerge:

### **1. Belonging is overwhelmingly relational.**

Students describe belonging most often through:

- one staff member who made time
- one professor who saw them
- one peer who welcomed them
- one cultural space or org that became a home

### **2. Identity shapes belonging.**

Students' experiences differ widely by:

- race
- gender identity
- sexuality
- disability
- nationality
- first-gen status
- campus context
- economic precarity
- community networks

### **3. Navigation erodes or strengthens belonging.**

Confusing processes, unclear pathways, and bureaucratic barriers undermine connection and trust.

### **4. Regional campuses are powerful belonging ecosystems.**

Students there feel seen, known, and supported.

### **5. Staff are carrying significant relational labor.**

Their quiet, everyday work holds the university together.

**6. Systems-change requires collaboration, not heroic effort.**

Meaningful change happens when units come together, share insight, and co-design solutions.

**7. Students are experts in their own experience.**

Their insight is essential—and transformative—when meaningfully included.

## **The W-BC Relational Operating System**

This Toolkit outlines a relational operating system rooted in:

- lived experience as evidence
- storywork and narrative insight
- liberatory and human-centered design
- improvement science
- mutual aid principles
- network weaving
- identity-aware facilitation
- embodiment and emotional regulation
- collaborative sensemaking

This OS shifts the university from:

**“fixing problems” to “building relationships that transform systems.”**

## **What's Inside the Toolkit**

This Toolkit contains:

### **Sections 0–6 (Narrative Foundation)**

- **Section 0:** Identity, Ethos, Values, Vision
- **Section 1:** What the W-BC Is
- **Section 2:** The Relational Operating System
- **Section 3:** Practices & Tools
- **Section 4:** Uplifting Belonging Already Happening at UConn
- **Section 5:** Assessment, Growth, Institutionalization
- **Section 6:** Strategic Priorities for 2025–2026

### **Appendices A–U (Practical Tools)**

Over 21 appendices packed with resources, including:

- connection call templates
- identity-centered forum guides
- reflection logs
- belonging indicators
- mutual aid and network mapping tools
- co-design sprint tools
- story as evidence
- institutional alignment frameworks
- relational leadership practices
- belonging design jumpstarts
- Circle Practice Guide
- Relational Quality Survey Module
- the full WeLAB Transformative Research Toolkit

These appendices are designed for direct use in meetings, classrooms, retreats, advising, and workshops.

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### **Why This Matters**

Belonging is not a soft concept—it is a measurable, evidence-based predictor of:

- academic success
- mental health
- retention
- persistence
- engagement
- equity of experience

Strengthening belonging is strengthening student success.

The Well-Being Collective offers UConn a way to:

- engage communities across campuses
- amplify identity-centered insight
- ground decisions in lived experience
- improve systems collaboratively
- build a relational and care-based culture
- support the flourishing of all Huskies

This Toolkit is an invitation—to see, to listen, to design, to repair, to connect, and to build a university where every member of the community can say:

**“I am seen. I am supported. I can navigate this place. I belong here.”**

## **HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT**

*A Guide for Students, Staff, Faculty, and Campus Partners*

The Well-Being Collective Toolkit is designed as a working, relational, adaptive resource. It is not meant to sit on a shelf or function as a static report. It is meant to be used in classrooms, advising meetings, circles, design sessions, leadership conversations, forums, retreats, policy discussions, and community spaces across UConn.

This guide helps you understand how to use the Toolkit in ways that are meaningful, practical, identity-aware, and aligned with the ethos of the Well-Being Collective.

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## 1. Start With Curiosity, Not Completion

You do not need to read the Toolkit front to back to begin using it.

Start by asking:

- *What am I hoping to understand?*
- *What challenge am I trying to address?*
- *Whose experience needs to be centered?*
- *What kind of space am I trying to create?*

Then choose the section or appendix that best supports that need.

If you are:

- facilitating a group → see Appendices A, B, T
- gathering stories → see Appendices E, R
- assessing belonging → see Sections 5, F, S
- connecting communities → see Appendices J, O
- redesigning a process or system → see Appendices C, D, M, Q
- mentoring or advising → see Section 3 and Appendices G, L

This Toolkit is designed **modularly**. Every section stands alone and integrates with the others.

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## 2. Use the Toolkit as a Companion, Not a Script

This Toolkit does not prescribe a single way of doing belonging work. It provides:

- frameworks
- tools
- practices
- templates
- mindsets
- questions
- examples

But the most important ingredient is **your presence and relational approach.**

Use the Toolkit to:

- guide your thinking
- deepen your understanding
- strengthen your practice
- expand your awareness
- build community capacity

Not to replace your wisdom or the wisdom of the people you work with.

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### 3. Engage With Identity at Every Stage

Belonging is not uniform.

Identity shapes:

- safety
- visibility
- access
- navigation
- connection
- trust
- opportunity

Whenever you use a tool from this Toolkit, ask:

- *Whose experience does this center?*
- *Who is missing?*
- *Who needs to be invited in?*
- *Who may feel unseen or unsafe?*

Identity-aware practice strengthens outcomes and reinforces community wellbeing.

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#### 4. Pair Story With Data

One of the core principles of the Well-Being Collective is that:

**Lived experience is evidence.**

Use:

- stories
- quotes
- reflections
- vignettes
- identity-specific insights
- community sensemaking

alongside:

- surveys
- indicators
- network maps
- institutional data

This supports deeper understanding, stronger design, and more relational decision-making.

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## 5. Prototype Before You Scale

If you want to experiment with a new idea:

- a peer support model
- a new advising practice
- a classroom belonging exercise
- a new communication flow
- a redesigned transition process
- an identity-affirming space

Don't wait for permission or perfection.

Use:

- Appendix Q (Design Toolkit)
- Appendix D (Co-Design Sprints)
- Appendix F (Belonging Indicators)
- Appendix S (Relational Quality Module)

Prototype small.

Learn quickly.

Iterate with community.

Share what emerges.

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## **6. Build a Network, Not a Silo**

This Toolkit is most powerful when used collaboratively.

Invite:

- students
- staff
- faculty
- cultural centers
- regional partners
- student organizations
- campus offices

Use appendices J and O to identify:

- partners
- allies
- missing voices
- opportunities for collaboration

Belonging work is relational work. It grows stronger through connection, not isolation.

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## 7. Adapt Tools to Your Context

Every section and appendix is meant to be:

- editable
- flexible
- expandable
- transferable

Feel free to:

- modify reflection prompts
- expand survey items
- shorten session plans
- adjust templates
- rewrite agreements
- rename steps
- add examples from your community

***Make the Toolkit your own.***

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## **8. Begin With Care and End With Care**

Whatever tool you use, remember:

- ground people
- support emotion
- normalize silence
- encourage pacing
- tend to power
- invite feedback
- close with gratitude

Belonging work is as much about *how* we gather as *what* we do.

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## 9. Use This Toolkit to Support Institutional Learning

This Toolkit is also a resource for:

- assessment
- reporting
- leadership decision-making
- campus-wide strategic planning
- Equity & belonging reviews
- program evaluation
- cross-unit collaboration

If you are using this Toolkit to shape institutional action:

- consult Section 5
  - incorporate Appendix M (Data Transparency)
  - engage students meaningfully
  - include identity-specific insights
  - prototype before implementing at scale
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## **10. This is a Living Document — Add to It**

You are encouraged to:

- add tools
- insert new reflection prompts
- record community guidance
- expand templates
- capture new stories
- create your own appendices
- adapt tools for your unit or campus

***The Toolkit is a collective creation.***

***Your wisdom is part of its evolution.***

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## REFERENCES

This Toolkit draws upon a constellation of frameworks, community practices, research traditions, and design methodologies that support relational, identity-aware systems change. While the majority of the content is original to the Well-Being Collective (W-BC) and grounded in UConn community knowledge, our work is in conversation with broader fields that have shaped our approach.

### **Relational, Liberatory, and Human-Centered Frameworks**

- **Liberatory Design** — developed by the National Equity Project & the Stanford d.school
- **Human-Centered Design** — IDEO, Stanford d.school
- **Improvement Science** — Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
- **Transformative Research Frameworks** — UC Berkeley's Othering & Belonging Institute
- **Circle Way Guidelines** — Christina Baldwin & Ann Linnea
- **Network Weaver Frameworks** — June Holley & the Network Weaver Handbook
- **Mutual Aid Principles** — rooted in historical and contemporary grassroots movements

### **Campus-Wide Data, Insight, and Practice Frameworks**

- W-BC Forum Summaries (2023–2025)
- Regional Campus Listening Sessions
- Graduate Student Belonging Inquiry
- Campus Change Belonging Inquiry (2024–2025)
- WeLAB Transformative Research Cycles (2023–2025)
- UConn Cultural Centers' community practices
- Student Health & Wellness relational well-being initiatives
- Office for Diversity & Inclusion (ODI) frameworks for identity, equity, and community

- CETL pedagogical belonging practices
- Tribal Education Initiative relational and land-based knowledge
- ISSS International student experience insight
- RecWell community well-being practices

### **Design, Assessment, and Collaborative Learning Resources**

- Adapted toolkit components from the Stanford d.school
- Belonging literature (Strayhorn, Kern, Allen, hooks, Yosso)
- Student experience and well-being research
- Qualitative inquiry and collaborative analysis traditions

These references informed our methods, ethics, and approaches—but the content herein is grounded in **UConn community wisdom first and foremost.**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Well-Being Collective Toolkit exists because of the students, staff, faculty, and community members whose insight, care, relational labor, networks, and courage shape the experience of belonging at UConn. This Toolkit is a reflection of their brilliance, honesty, resilience, and hope.

We offer our deepest gratitude to:

### **Students**

For your stories, your clarity, your leadership, your grief, your joy, your advocacy, your truth-telling, and your vision for what UConn can become. This Toolkit belongs to you.

### **WeLAB (Well-Being Lab Partners)**

For your inquiry, creativity, systems insight, vulnerability, and design leadership. You have shown what student-led research makes possible.

### **WIT — The Well-Being Incubation Team**

For your relational leadership, constancy, creativity, care, grounding, courageous conversations, and commitment to tending the network.

### **The Visioning Team**

For holding the values, clarity, direction, identity-awareness, and long-term imagination that guide this work.

### **Forum Team & Facilitators**

For creating spaces of truth, healing, community, and identity-centered belonging across Storrs and the regional campuses.

### **Cultural Centers**

African American Cultural Center (AACC)  
Asian American Cultural Center (AsACC)  
Puerto Rican / Latin American Cultural Center (PRLACC)  
Rainbow Center  
Native American Cultural Programs  
Women's Center  
Middle Eastern Cultural Programs

Your spaces embody belonging. Your communities teach us daily.

## **Regional Campuses**

Avery Point • Hartford • Stamford • Waterbury

For modeling the relational, close-knit, community-centered belonging that the entire university can learn from.

## **Campus Partners**

- Office for Diversity & Inclusion (ODI)
- Student Health & Wellness (SHaW)
- Student Life & Enrollment (SLE)
- Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning (CETL)
- Dean of Students Office
- International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)
- Office of First-Year Programs
- Academic Advising teams
- RecWell
- UConn Library
- Academic Centers, Institutes, & Schools

Your collaboration, data transparency, and care for students make systems change possible.

## **Community & Tribal Partners**

For your wisdom, sovereignty-rooted insight, land-based practices, and commitment to Indigenous belonging.

## **Staff Across Campus**

Whose invisible relational labor sustains entire communities.  
Whose kindness anchors students in moments of uncertainty.  
Whose presence changes lives quietly, daily.

## **Faculty Across Campus**

Whose classrooms become spaces of curiosity, affirmation, possibility, and learning.

Whose mentoring and guidance uplift students through complexity.

**And to the broader UConn community**

Everyone who shows up with curiosity, heart, care, and willingness to dream of a more connected university.

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### **A Final Note of Gratitude**

This Toolkit is a collective creation.

It is written **with** community, not just **about** community.

It is a living document that will grow through your contributions, your insight, your reflection, and your care.

Thank you for being part of the Well-Being Collective.

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## SECTION 0 — IDENTITY, ETHOS, VALUES, VISION

*A grounding foundation for the Well-Being Collective*

The Well-Being Collective (W-BC) is not a program, office, department, or initiative.

It is a **relational network**, a way of working, a way of paying attention, and a way of being in community with one another inside a complex institution.

Section 0 establishes the identity, ethos, values, and vision that guide every practice, every collaboration, and every decision throughout this Toolkit.

We begin here because **how we move matters as much as what we do.**

This section is the soil.

Everything else grows from it.

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## I. IDENTITY OF THE WELL-BEING COLLECTIVE

The Well-Being Collective is a **cross-campus, student-centered, relational ecosystem** dedicated to strengthening belonging, well-being, and community across the University of Connecticut.

W-BC brings together:

- students
- staff
- faculty
- cultural centers
- regional campuses
- academic programs
- community partners

...to understand lived experience, illuminate structural barriers, co-design solutions, and strengthen networks of care.

**W-BC is defined by three truths:**

### **1. We are a network — not a hierarchy.**

W-BC relies on relationships, not authority.

Connection, trust, and collaboration—not formal reporting lines—are the primary drivers of change.

### **2. We are relational — not transactional.**

Students and staff are not data points; they are people with identities, needs, histories, and stories.

### **3. We are community-guided — not top-down.**

The Collective grows through listening, partnership, and community wisdom.

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## **II. OUR ETHOS — HOW WE MOVE**

The ethos of the Well-Being Collective is a set of lived commitments. It shapes the way we gather, design, listen, collaborate, and learn.

### **1. Relationships Are the Strategy**

We believe relationships are not an extra; they are the foundation. Connection is how systems change begins and how it sustains.

### **2. We Move at the Speed of Trust**

Trust-building is slow, intentional, and relational. It requires presence, care, honesty, and repair.

### **3. Care Is Operational**

Care is not decorative. It is core infrastructure. It shapes communication, pacing, facilitation, planning, and decision-making.

### **4. Identity Shapes Experience**

Belonging is deeply affected by race, gender identity, sexuality, disability, nationality, class, first-gen status, and other identities. We hold identity at the center of all assessment, design, research, and collaboration.

### **5. Lived Experience Is Evidence**

Students are experts in their experience. Their stories, emotions, and insights are data—essential, valid, and transformative.

### **6. Collaboration Is the Work**

We break silos. We work across roles, units, campuses, and communities. We believe no one can do belonging work alone.

### **7. We Learn in Public**

We prototype, test, iterate, and adapt—with transparency and humility.

### **8. We Practice Repair**

When harm happens, we pause, take responsibility, validate, and rebuild connection.

### **9. We Honor Emotional Reality**

Identity work is emotional work.  
Systems work is emotional work.  
We move with compassion.

### **10. We Stay Curious**

Curiosity opens pathways.  
Certainty closes them.

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### **III. VALUES OF THE WELL-BEING COLLECTIVE**

Our values guide our decisions, practices, and ways of working.

#### **1. Belonging**

People thrive when they are seen, valued, and supported.

#### **2. Care & Compassion**

We approach people with tenderness, patience, and presence.

#### **3. Mutuality**

We share power, responsibility, and leadership.

#### **4. Equity-Mindedness (without relying on equity jargon)**

We attend to identity, power, and historical context.

We notice who is centered and who is missing.

We act accordingly.

#### **5. Collaboration**

We build together.

We learn together.

We change together.

#### **6. Listening**

Deep listening is one of the most powerful tools we have.

#### **7. Transparency**

We communicate honestly, clearly, and openly.

#### **8. Learning & Iteration**

We design, experiment, gather feedback, and refine as a community.

#### **9. Courage**

We face structural truth.

We name patterns others avoid.

We imagine boldly.

#### **10. Joy & Creativity**

Belonging is not only about reducing harm;  
it is also about cultivating joy, connection, and communal imagination.

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#### **IV. OUR VISION — WHAT WE ARE BUILDING TOGETHER**

The Well-Being Collective envisions a University of Connecticut where **every person—students, staff, faculty—can flourish because they are seen, supported, and connected.**

##### **A UConn where:**

- Every student has a network of people who care about them.
- Identity-specific needs are understood and met with integrity.
- Navigation does not depend on knowing the “right” person.
- Units collaborate instead of competing.
- Staff are supported in their relational labor.
- Faculty lead classrooms rooted in inclusion, flexibility, and human dignity.
- Regional campuses shine as belonging hubs.
- Data is transparent, honest, and contextualized.
- Story guides institutional decision-making.
- Mutual aid is normalized.
- Community brilliance is recognized and resourced.

##### **A UConn where belonging is not a “nice-to-have,”**

but a **shared commitment woven into the culture, structures, and relationships of the university.**

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## **V. HOW WE MOVE AS A NETWORK**

The Well-Being Collective functions through:

### **1. Constellations, Not Committees**

Working groups form and dissolve based on need, interest, and community invitation.

### **2. Distributed Leadership**

Students lead.

Staff lead.

Faculty lead.

Partners lead.

Leadership emerges from relationships, not hierarchy.

### **3. Cross-Campus Weaving**

The network connects regional campuses, Storrs, graduate programs, student affairs, academic affairs, and community partners.

### **4. Transparency & Shared Learning**

Insights are shared openly through:

- forums
- connection calls
- learning sessions
- WeLAB cycles
- reports
- campus conversations

### **5. Human-Centered Infrastructure**

The Well-Being Incubation Team (WIT) provides backbone support and care-based coordination—not control.

### **6. Identity-Aware Ecosystem Strengthening**

We uplift communities often marginalized in large institutions:

- Black, Latino/a/x, Indigenous, Asian, Middle Eastern communities

- LGBTQ+, trans, and BLPQQ students
- international students
- disabled students
- first-gen students
- Campus Change students
- graduate students
- commuter and regional students

## **7. Relational Accountability**

We keep one another aligned with our shared values through:

- reflection
  - grounded facilitation
  - feedback
  - pause practices
  - repair conversations
-

## SECTION 1 — WHAT THE WELL-BEING COLLECTIVE IS

*A relational network for strengthening belonging, well-being, and community at UConn.*

The Well-Being Collective (W-BC) is a cross-campus, relational ecosystem designed to strengthen belonging and well-being at the University of Connecticut. It brings together students, staff, faculty, and partners who share a commitment to building a more connected, caring, and collaborative university.

W-BC is not a program.

It is not a department.

It is not a campaign.

**It is a way of working — a relational operating system — grounded in identity-awareness, embodied practice, story-as-evidence, and collaborative systems design.**

This section describes the structure, purpose, roles, and guiding frameworks that define what the Well-Being Collective is and how it moves.

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## I. WHAT IS THE WELL-BEING COLLECTIVE?

The Well-Being Collective is a **community-guided network** that strengthens belonging across UConn through:

- ✓ **Relational practices**
- ✓ **Community insight**
- ✓ **Student-led research**
- ✓ **Co-design and prototyping**
- ✓ **Identity-centered collaborative learning**
- ✓ **Network weaving**
- ✓ **Transparent assessment**
- ✓ **Systems alignment**

It enhances the university's capacity to:

- understand lived experience,
- respond to identity-specific needs,
- reduce barriers,
- strengthen care and connection,
- and redesign systems that affect student well-being.

W-BC is both a **movement** and a **method**, rooted in the belief that:

**People thrive when they feel seen, supported, connected, and able to influence their environment.**

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## II. THE W-BC ECOSYSTEM

The W-BC ecosystem is composed of interconnected teams, roles, and practices that collectively sustain the work. These teams form a constellation — dynamic, adaptive, non-hierarchical — and move at the “speed of trust.”

**Core elements include:**

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### 1. The Well-Being Incubation Team (WIT)

WIT is the backbone of W-BC.

Its purpose is to:

- hold institutional memory
- ensure continuity and values-alignment
- offer care-based coordination
- support teams working on belonging and system-change projects
- maintain stability during transitions
- nurture relationships and connections
- organize communication pathways

WIT is not an executive body.

It is a **care-centered coordination team** that stewards the network ethically and relationally.

**WIT functions as:**

- facilitator
  - connector
  - sensemaker
  - coach
  - accountability partner
  - incubator for emerging projects
-

## 2. The Visioning Team

The Visioning Team holds the deeper purpose, values, and long-term direction of the Well-Being Collective.

Their role is to:

- tend to the ethos
- articulate purpose
- support identity awareness
- ensure grounding in community wisdom
- hold the big-picture arc
- reflect on emerging needs
- maintain relational accountability

The Visioning Team protects the heart of the work.

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## 3. WeLAB — The Well-Being Lab for Student Access & Belonging

WeLAB is the student-led research, design, and systems inquiry arm of W-BC.

Students (“Lab Partners”) collaborate with mentors (“Architects”) to:

- conduct story-based research
- synthesize identity-centered insights
- map systems and barriers
- identify opportunities
- design prototypes
- test small improvements
- generate recommendations

WeLAB is a model for **student-led systems change**, aligned with liberatory, participatory, and relational research methods.

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#### **4. The Forum Team**

The Forum Team hosts monthly identity-centered gatherings across campuses that explore belonging through:

- lived experience
- story
- identity
- community dialogue
- structural reflection

Forums create visibility and connection for:

- Black students
- LGBTQ+ and BLPQQ communities
- international students
- disabled students
- Indigenous communities
- graduate students
- Campus Change students
- identity-based communities across Storrs and regional campuses

These forums generate insight that informs institutional learning and design.

---

#### **5. The Broader W-BC Network**

Outside of organized teams, the W-BC network includes:

- staff across departments
- faculty across schools and colleges
- regional campus partners
- cultural centers
- student organizations

- student leaders
- advising teams
- professional and graduate programs

Anyone who shows up with curiosity, care, collaboration, and commitment is part of the W-BC.

---

### **III. W-BC'S PURPOSE & FOCUS**

The Well-Being Collective exists to strengthen belonging and well-being across UConn by:

#### **A. Understanding lived experience**

Storywork, forums, interviews, and student-led research illuminate how identity, campus context, and structural conditions shape belonging.

#### **B. Reducing structural barriers**

Students repeatedly name friction points that affect well-being:

- confusing processes
- unclear communication
- inequitable navigation
- inaccessible spaces
- lack of recognition
- cultural or identity-specific harms

W-BC brings these to the surface.

#### **C. Strengthening relational ecosystems**

Networks of connection are essential for well-being.

W-BC supports network weaving across campuses, identity groups, roles, and units.

#### **D. Supporting communities often marginalized or unseen**

This work centers:

- BIPOC students
- LGBTQ+ and BLPQQ communities
- disabled students
- international students
- first-generation students
- regional campus students

- graduate students
- Campus Change students

### **E. Building collaborative capacity**

The Collective develops shared language, tools, practices, and frameworks to help units collaborate more effectively.

### **F. Supporting evidence-based systems change**

W-BC blends qualitative insight, relational data, storywork, network mapping, and improvement science to support redesign efforts.

---

#### **IV. WHAT THE WELL-BEING COLLECTIVE IS NOT**

This clarity matters.

##### **W-BC is not:**

- a replacement for Student Health & Wellness
- a duplication of ODI, CETL, or campus programs
- a clinical service
- a top-down directive
- a task force
- a checklist
- an “initiative” with an end date
- a branding campaign

##### **W-BC is:**

- a living, relational, evolving network
  - a hub for belonging and community insight
  - a gathering place for collaborative change
  - a support system for units doing belonging work
  - a catalyst for care-based redesign
-

## **V. GUIDING FRAMEWORKS THAT SHAPE W-BC**

The Well-Being Collective draws on multiple rooted traditions, including:

### **1. Network Weaving**

Strengthening relational connections across units, identities, and campuses.

### **2. Mutual Aid**

Building systems of shared care, solidarity, and community support.

### **3. Liberatory & Human-Centered Design**

Designing solutions *with* communities, not *for* them.

### **4. Transformative & Participatory Research**

Recognizing lived experience as knowledge and centering community voices in every stage.

### **5. Improvement Science**

Prototyping small changes to improve systems iteratively.

### **6. Identity-Aware Belonging Research**

Understanding belonging across dimensions of visibility, connection, support, navigation, participation, and agency.

### **7. Embodied & Somatic Practices**

Using grounding and emotional regulation to support safety and presence.

---

## **VI. HOW W-BC SUPPORTS SYSTEMS CHANGE**

The Well-Being Collective creates conditions for systems change by:

### **1. Surfacing insights**

Stories, quotes, patterns, barriers, and identity-specific experiences.

### **2. Convening communities**

Forums, connection calls, learning sessions, design sprints.

### **3. Mapping systems**

Barriers, networks, collaborations, gaps, and opportunities.

### **4. Prototyping ideas**

Student-led and staff/faculty-led solutions that can be tested quickly.

### **5. Strengthening networks**

Reducing isolation, enhancing communication, fostering community.

### **6. Supporting institutional learning**

Providing leaders with grounded insight and pathways for improvement.

### **7. Building a culture of care**

Embedding relational practice in classrooms, advising, staff teams, and leadership.

---

## **VII. WHY UCONN NEEDS THE WELL-BEING COLLECTIVE**

A large, complex, multi-campus university is full of brilliance — and full of barriers.

Students consistently describe:

- feeling invisible or unrecognized
- difficulty navigating systems
- inconsistent communication
- identity-based harm
- a lack of clarity in support pathways
- being unsure where to go for help
- significant differences between regional and Storrs experiences

Staff describe:

- heavy relational labor
- unclear expectations
- lack of structural support

Faculty describe:

- wanting to foster belonging
- needing more tools and relational capacity

The Well-Being Collective responds to these realities by:

- bringing people together
- naming patterns
- weaving networks
- strengthening relationships
- designing collaboratively
- centering identity
- amplifying lived experience
- reducing structural friction

- building community capacity

It strengthens the ecosystem from the inside out.

---

## SECTION 2 — THE RELATIONAL OPERATING SYSTEM (ROS)

*A guiding system for how the Well-Being Collective moves, collaborates, listens, designs, and practices belonging.*

The Relational Operating System (ROS) is the beating heart of the Well-Being Collective.

It is a set of beliefs, practices, and ways of working that shape how we approach belonging, community, well-being, and systems change at UConn.

It is the **“how”** beneath every forum, co-design sprint, research cycle, network gathering, and collaboration.

Rather than relying on hierarchy, compliance, or transactional efficiency, the ROS is grounded in:

- relationships
- lived experience
- identity awareness
- emotional presence
- community wisdom
- storywork
- iteration
- collaborative design
- repair
- reflection
- co-leadership

This section outlines the foundations, practices, roles, principles, and methods that make the W-BC's ROS a powerful force for transformation.

---

## I. WHY A RELATIONAL OPERATING SYSTEM IS NECESSARY

Large institutions tend to rely on:

- procedures,
- hierarchy,
- compliance,
- documentation,
- and individual work silos.

These structures are necessary for some functions but insufficient for belonging and well-being.

Belonging emerges from:

- relationships
- recognition
- identity affirmation
- clear support pathways
- emotional safety
- connection
- care
- community

Yet these are rarely designed into institutional systems.

The ROS provides a **supplemental, relational infrastructure** that supports:

- community building,
- cross-unit collaboration,
- identity-centered practices,
- story-informed systems design,
- relational leadership,
- and student-led inquiry.

## II. THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE RELATIONAL OPERATING SYSTEM

The ROS rests on four foundational pillars:

---

### PILLAR 1 — LIVED EXPERIENCE IS EVIDENCE

Students, staff, and faculty possess deep insight into the structures they navigate.

The ROS treats:

- stories,
- emotions,
- quotes,
- metaphors,
- identity-centered experiences,
- patterns across forums and connection calls

...as valid, necessary forms of data.

This approach draws from:

- Transformative Research,
- narrative inquiry,
- human-centered design,
- and community-based participatory research.

**When we say “lived experience is evidence,” we mean:**

- Stories reveal systems.
- Identity shapes experience.
- Emotion is information.
- Patterns across narratives show where structures support or harm.
- Meaning-making must be done with community, not about community.

This pillar shifts decision-making away from elite expertise toward **community-centered expertise**.

---

## **PILLAR 2 — RELATIONSHIPS ARE INFRASTRUCTURE**

In the ROS, relationships are not soft, extra, or optional.

They are:

- strategy,
- care infrastructure,
- networks of safety,
- pathways for navigation,
- and catalysts for systems change.

### **Strong relational ecosystems enable:**

- smoother navigation
- earlier help-seeking
- cross-unit collaboration
- shared understanding
- trust-based communication
- faster problem-solving
- collective learning

This pillar recognizes staff relational labor as legitimate institutional infrastructure.

---

## **PILLAR 3 — IDENTITY SHAPES EXPERIENCE**

Belonging at UConn differs significantly by:

- race,
- gender identity,
- sexuality,

- disability,
- socioeconomic background,
- nationality,
- first-gen status,
- commuter/regional identity,
- graduate or professional program,
- Campus Change experience.

The ROS incorporates identity awareness at every stage:

- assessment
- facilitation
- design
- research
- prototype development
- reporting
- collaboration

Identity is not an afterthought — it is a primary lens for understanding belonging.

---

#### **PILLAR 4 — COLLABORATION IS THE METHOD**

The ROS replaces “fix-it” culture with:

- co-design,
- shared insight,
- collaborative sensemaking,
- relational leadership,
- and network weaving.

No one unit “owns” belonging.

Belonging is a shared responsibility and a shared outcome.

This pillar allows the network to function with fluidity rather than rigidity.

---

### **III. CORE COMPONENTS OF THE ROS**

The Relational Operating System consists of 10 integrated components:

1. **Beliefs**
2. **Mindsets**
3. **Relational Practices**
4. **Storywork Practices**
5. **Identity-Aware Practices**
6. **Embodied/Somatic Practices**
7. **Collaborative Design Methods**
8. **Network Weaving Methods**
9. **Sensemaking Frameworks**
10. **Roles Within the ROS**

Each is described in detail below.

---

### **IV. BELIEFS THAT UNDERLIE THE ROS**

The ROS is animated by a set of guiding beliefs:

1. **People thrive when they feel seen.**
2. **Belonging is relational, emotional, and structural.**
3. **Students' well-being is a collective responsibility.**
4. **Stories reveal what numbers alone cannot.**
5. **Identity shapes institutional experience.**
6. **Collaboration is required for systems change.**
7. **Everyone has wisdom; no one has the full picture.**
8. **Repair is necessary for community resilience.**

**9. Emotional presence is a form of leadership.**

**10. Change happens at the pace of trust.**

These beliefs are woven throughout every practice, decision, and collaboration.

---

## **V. MINDSETS THAT SUPPORT THE ROS**

The ROS requires specific mindsets:

### **Curiosity over certainty**

We ask before we assume.

### **Invitation over expectation**

People choose how they participate.

### **Humility over hierarchy**

Expertise is distributed.

### **Care over efficiency**

We slow down for connection.

### **Reflection over reaction**

We make meaning together.

### **Transparency over secrecy**

Clarity is a form of care.

### **Possibility over perfection**

Prototypes are enough.

### **Presence over productivity**

We value how we are with one another.

---

## **VI. RELATIONAL PRACTICES WITHIN THE ROS**

Relational practices are the everyday, embodied tools that build connection and community.

These include:

### **1. Arrivals**

Checking in with:

- breath,
- body,
- intention,
- identity,
- presence.

### **2. Round-based dialogue**

Everyone's voice is invited and equal.

### **3. Echoing & validation**

Reflecting someone's words so they feel heard.

### **4. Spacious pacing**

Allowing silence.

Not rushing.

Letting insight emerge.

### **5. Value statements**

Naming what we appreciate in one another.

### **6. Repair**

Returning to harm with care, accountability, and intention.

### **7. Co-regulation**

Using grounding together when emotions rise.

These practices create conditions for belonging in every meeting or gathering.

## **VII. STORYWORK PRACTICES**

Storywork is central to the ROS.

It includes:

- story circles
- testimonies
- interviews
- metaphors
- reflective logs
- vignettes
- pattern harvesting
- timeline mapping
- emotion tracking
- quote analysis

### **Ethical principles:**

- stories belong to the teller
- consent is continuous
- context matters
- stories must lead to action

This allows community voices to guide systems change.

---

## **VIII. IDENTITY-AWARE PRACTICES**

Identity-aware practice means:

- attending to who is in the room
- noticing who is not
- normalizing pronouns
- offering identity-based breakouts

- understanding microaggressions and systemic harm
- naming power dynamics
- accounting for identity-based emotional labor
- designing with, not for, marginalized communities

Identity shapes every component of belonging.  
This is built into the core of the ROS.

---

## **IX. EMBODIED & SOMATIC PRACTICES**

To create safety, presence, and grounding, the ROS integrates embodied practices such as:

- 5–4–3–2–1 grounding
- orientation
- collective breath
- sensory check-ins
- temperature shift
- guided visualization
- somatic pause

These practices support people in:

- navigating emotion
  - accessing clarity
  - staying regulated in difficult conversations
  - returning to connection
- 

## **X. COLLABORATIVE DESIGN METHODS**

The ROS uses collaborative design methods rooted in:

- Liberatory Design

- Human-Centered Design
- Improvement Science
- participatory research

This includes:

### **1. Challenge framing**

What are we trying to understand?  
Whose experience matters most?

### **2. Empathy and insight gathering**

Listening deeply to lived experience.

### **3. Systems mapping**

Seeing processes, gaps, relationships, and structures clearly.

### **4. Divergent ideation**

Generating many possibilities.

### **5. Prototyping**

Testing small, low-risk ideas.

### **6. Learning loops**

Reflecting and adjusting based on insight.

This iterative approach enables meaningful, grounded change.

---

## **XI. NETWORK WEAVING METHODS**

Network weaving strengthens relationships across:

- Storrs & regionals
- academic & student affairs
- students & staff
- identity groups
- roles and levels

It includes:

- connection calls
- story exchanges
- triads and pairings
- cross-unit collaboration
- community mapping
- needs/offers harvesting
- collaborative partnership building

Belonging grows in networks, not silos.

---

## **XII. SENSEMAKING FRAMEWORKS**

Relational sensemaking helps groups reflect on patterns and insight.

It includes:

- “What did we hear?”
- “What does it mean?”
- “What surprised us?”
- “Where is identity showing up?”
- “What opportunities are emerging?”
- “What structural patterns can we see?”

Sensemaking supports better decisions, clearer priorities, and collective alignment.

---

### **XIII. ROLES WITHIN THE RELATIONAL OPERATING SYSTEM**

The ROS is sustained by multiple roles:

#### **1. Connector**

Builds relationships, makes introductions, reduces isolation.

#### **2. Facilitator**

Guides conversations with care and presence.

#### **3. Storyworker**

Gathers and synthesizes lived experience.

#### **4. Coordinator**

Supports logistics and follow-through.

#### **5. Designer**

Co-creates solutions with community.

#### **6. Architect**

Mentors student researchers and designers.

#### **7. Vision Holder**

Keeps values and purpose at the center.

#### **8. Guardian of space**

Protects emotional safety and identity integrity.

These roles rotate, overlap, and emerge based on context.

---

## **XIV. HOW THE RELATIONAL OPERATING SYSTEM SUPPORTS SYSTEMS CHANGE**

The ROS enables systems change through:

### **1. Insight → Action Loops**

Listening

→ meaning-making

→ co-design

→ prototyping

→ learning

→ iteration

→ scaling or shifting

### **2. Collaborative ownership**

Change is collective, not departmental.

### **3. Trust-based connection**

Relationship is the pathway to alignment.

### **4. Identity-aware design**

Solutions are shaped with communities most affected.

### **5. Distributed leadership**

Students, staff, and faculty lead together.

### **6. Story + data triangulation**

Numbers + lived experience + stakeholder insight = clearer change pathways.

### **7. Small tests of change**

Prototypes reduce risk and increase learning.

---

## IV. STORYWORK PRACTICES

*Lived experience as evidence, truth-telling, and systems illumination.*

Storywork is one of the foundational pillars of the Well-Being Collective. It is the practice of gathering, honoring, interpreting, and applying lived experience to strengthen belonging and improve systems.

Storywork centers:

- identity
- emotion
- context
- lived reality
- systemic patterns
- community wisdom

This section outlines the W-BC's full storywork methodology.

---

### 1. What Is Storywork?

Storywork is:

- a method of inquiry
- a way of meaning-making
- a relational practice
- a culturally rooted approach
- an ethical commitment
- a form of evidence
- a path to systems change

Storywork differs from traditional qualitative research. It is more relational, embodied, and community-guided.

It asks:

## **What is the story the system is producing, and what is the story community members are living?**

And it bridges the two.

---

### **2. Principles of Ethical Storywork**

Storywork in the Well-Being Collective is guided by seven core principles:

#### **1. Stories belong to the teller.**

Students retain agency over what they share, how it's used, and where it goes.

#### **2. Consent is ongoing.**

People may revise, remove, or reframe their stories at any time.

#### **3. Context matters.**

A story cannot be lifted from its cultural, identity, or systemic roots.

#### **4. Stories reveal systems.**

Narratives show us structural truths that metrics cannot.

#### **5. No extraction.**

We do not gather stories without grounding, care, or intention.

#### **6. Emotional safety is prioritized.**

Trauma-informed pacing, optional participation, and choice in modalities.

#### **7. Stories lead to action.**

Insight → prototype → change → reflection → new insight.

---

### **3. Forms of Storywork Used in W-BC**

W-BC uses multiple story-gathering methods to meet communities where they are:

- **Story Circles**

Group-based, round-style dialogue with shared agreements and deep listening.

- **Semi-Structured Interviews**

Usually student-led (WeLAB), identity-aware, flexible, and emotionally tuned.

- **Vignettes & Micro-Stories**

Short descriptions of belonging or disconnection moments.

- **Photo-Voice & Multimedia Storywork**

Image-based storytelling that captures emotion and environment.

- **Timeline Mapping**

Students map moments of belonging/disconnection across their UConn journey.

- **Community Testimonies**

Panel-style stories shared during Forums.

- **Reflections & Logs**

Written, audio, or visual reflections gathered over time.

- **Sensemaking Sessions**

Participants collaboratively review and interpret stories.

Each method is used depending on context, identity needs, and emotional considerations.

---

#### **4. The Story Circle Structure**

A typical W-BC Story Circle includes:

##### **1. Opening Grounding**

Breath, sensory awareness, or identity arrival.

##### **2. Agreements Review**

Confidentiality, impact over intent, voice equity, optionality, and pacing.

##### **3. Prompting**

- “Tell us about a time you felt belonging.”
- “Tell us about a moment that made it hard to belong.”

- “When did identity impact your experience here?”
- “What support made a difference?”

#### **4. Rounds**

Each person speaks uninterrupted.

#### **5. Echoing & Validation**

Facilitators gently reflect key emotions and themes.

#### **6. Emotional Pause (if needed)**

Guardian may pause for grounding or co-regulation.

#### **7. Harvesting**

Quotes, themes, tensions, emotions, needs, offers.

#### **8. Closing**

Gratitudes, one-word exit, or a collective breath.

Story Circles are used in Forums, WeLAB cycles, mutual aid contexts, and community gatherings.

---

### **5. Story Capture Tools**

Storywork uses shared forms and templates to document:

- **Key moments**
- **Quotes (with consent)**
- **Identity layers**
- **Emotions named or expressed**
- **Barriers and bright spots**
- **Structural implications**
- **Emerging opportunities**

The core template includes:

| **Prompt** | **Story Notes** | **Quotes** | **Emotions** | **Identities Present** | **System Dynamics** |

This form is used in:

- WeLAB research cycles
- Forums
- Design sessions
- Interviews
- Reflection logs

---

## **6. Meaning-Making Rituals**

After stories are gathered, W-BC uses relational sensemaking processes.

Meaning-making rituals include:

### **A. Pattern Recognition**

What repeats across stories?

### **B. Identity-Aware Mapping**

How do patterns differ by:

- race
- gender identity
- disability
- nationality
- first-gen status
- campus

### **C. Emotional Resonance**

Which emotions show up repeatedly?

- fear

- confusion
- gratitude
- invisibility
- relief
- exhaustion
- pride
- joy

#### **D. Tensions & Contradictions**

Where do realities diverge?

#### **E. Structural Implications**

What do these stories reveal about:

- navigation
- advising
- classroom culture
- communication pathways
- student support
- access

#### **F. Opportunities**

Where do communities see potential for change?

#### **G. Prototyping Questions**

- What small test could we run?
- Who should we bring into conversation?
- What would it look like to respond?

Meaning-making turns story into system insight.

## 7. Story + Data Integration

The ROS uses a **triangulation model**:

### 1. Lived Experience (stories)

### 2. Institutional Signals (data)

### 3. Stakeholder Context (staff/faculty insight)

This integration prevents:

- overreliance on one data point
- deficit narratives
- misinterpretation
- identity-neutral conclusions

Example:

**Signal:** Low retention for Campus Change students.

**Stories:** “I felt invisible after I left my regional campus.”

**Context:** Advisors overwhelmed at transition points.

**Integration:**

→ Opportunity for clearer navigation pathways and relational handoff.

---

## 8. Emotional Debriefing Practices

After story sessions, facilitators use structured debriefs:

### • Name emotional residue

“What is staying with you?”

### • Identity check-in

“What identities felt active as you listened or shared?”

### • Boundary check

“What do you need to ground before leaving?”

### • Gratitudes

“Who or what supported you today?”

- **Support reminders**

Clear communication about resources or follow-up practices.

This protects community well-being and accountability.

---

## **9. Storywork for Systems Change**

Stories prompt specific design actions:

### **1. Opportunity Surfacing**

Which needs appear across communities?

### **2. Prototype Ideas**

Small tests that respond directly to story patterns.

### **3. Policy Review**

Which policies create friction or harm?

### **4. Community Handoffs**

Smoothen transitions between units.

### **5. Network Activation**

Connecting individuals or units who can collaborate.

Storywork is **never** collected for its own sake.

It always leads to learning, design, collaboration, or action.

---

## **10. Story Integrity Review**

Before sharing stories:

- students review their contributions
- context and identity are preserved
- anonymity (if desired) is honored
- emotional nuance is maintained
- structural implications are clear

- no harmful reduction or simplification

Story integrity protects the authenticity and humanity of the narrative.

---

## VIII. NETWORK WEAVING PRACTICES

*Strengthening relational ecosystems across roles, campuses, and identities.*

Network weaving is a strategic, relational practice that strengthens the “social infrastructure” of belonging.

Belonging grows in networks, not silos — so the Well-Being Collective intentionally nurtures relationships, connections, and collaboration across UConn.

Network weaving includes:

- building relationships
  - identifying isolated nodes
  - activating pathways of care
  - strengthening cross-unit visibility
  - connecting identity-specific communities
  - supporting regional campuses
  - mapping needs and assets
  - enabling smoother navigation
-

## **1. Principles of Network Weaving**

### **1. Curiosity**

Know people, not just roles.

### **2. Neutral Connector Stance**

Hold no agenda other than connection.

### **3. Transparency**

Let people know why you are connecting them.

### **4. Trust Building**

Slow, consistent, relational presence.

### **5. Equity Awareness**

Noticing:

- whose labor is expected
- who is isolated
- who is always asked to show up
- who is never asked
- who carries identity-based burdens

### **6. Reciprocity**

Relationships should support all partners.

### **7. Optionality**

No forced networking.

---

## **2. Core Network Weaver Roles**

### **Connector**

Introduces people who may benefit from knowing one another.

### **Bridge Builder**

Connects communities separated by structure, role, or identity.

## **Coordinator**

Keeps communication flowing across teams and campuses.

## **Host**

Organizes relational gatherings, connection calls, and forums.

## **Sensemaker**

Interprets relational patterns and shares insight with the network.

## **Guardian of Values**

Ensures relationships are rooted in care, identity-awareness, and reciprocity.

---

### **3. Network Weaving Tools**

#### **A. Triads**

Small groups of three:

- one student
- one staff member
- one faculty member

Used to reduce silos, strengthen belonging, and build shared understanding.

#### **B. The Map—Gather—Connect Model**

**Map** the people and relationships

**Gather** them around shared purpose

**Connect** them through meaningful collaboration

#### **C. Needs & Offers Harvest**

Each person/group identifies:

- what they need
- what they can offer
- who they can connect with

#### **D. Annual Network Map**

Captures:

- relationship density
- clusters
- isolated nodes
- emerging communities
- potential collaborations

#### **E. Collaboration Readiness Scale**

- trust
  - clarity
  - alignment
  - capacity
- 

#### **4. Network Activation Practices**

- warm introductions
- follow-up support
- shared project incubation
- collaborative design sessions
- relational data sharing
- care-based communication rounds
- skill-sharing circles

Network weaving is a slow, human-centered, relational practice — and it is transformative.

---

## IX. MUTUAL AID PRACTICES

*Solidarity-based community care as an organizing principle.*

Mutual aid is woven into the W-BC because belonging is not only emotional — it is material, logistical, and structural.

Mutual aid:

- supports students facing food insecurity
- strengthens peer networks
- builds community trust
- reduces isolation
- lowers barriers
- connects identity-based groups
- supports transition and navigation

Mutual aid is **not charity**, **not service**, and **not transactional**.

It is:

- solidarity
- shared responsibility
- community organizing
- practical support
- collective liberation

---

### 1. Principles of Mutual Aid in W-BC

#### 1. “We take care of us.”

Students, staff, and faculty collaborate — not from pity, but partnership.

#### 2. Non-hierarchical.

Everyone contributes what they can.

#### 3. Needs are valid.

Material, emotional, cultural, relational needs all matter.

#### **4. Consent and agency.**

People choose how to give and receive support.

#### **5. No shame.**

Needs are normal.

#### **6. Honor the emotional reality of asking for help.**

Mutual aid must move slowly, relationally, and carefully.

---

## **2. Mutual Aid Methods Used in W-BC**

### **A. Needs Mapping**

Identifies:

- unmet needs
- systemic frictions
- emotional burdens
- identity-specific barriers

### **B. Offers Inventory**

Every person or unit lists what they can contribute:

- time
- skills
- connections
- resources
- space
- care

### **C. Relational Matching**

Pairs needs and offers with:

- consent

- clarity
- boundaries
- relational grounding

#### **D. Mutual Aid Circles**

Small groups for:

- food support
- transition support
- identity-based affirming spaces
- student-to-student care

#### **E. Crisis Micro-Networks**

Quick-response systems for:

- students experiencing acute disconnection
- navigation emergencies
- immediate needs

---

### **3. Mutual Aid Coordinator & Organizer Roles**

From your earlier write-up (beautifully aligned with W-BC):

#### **Mutual Aid Organizer**

- visioning
- political analysis
- systems alignment
- values and long-term direction
- community engagement
- structural change focus

#### **Mutual Aid Coordinator**

- logistics

- matching processes
- infrastructure maintenance
- communication
- organizing volunteers

### **Visioning Role**

This can be:

- a strategist
- a dreamer
- an identity-holder
- a systems thinker

They ensure:

- alignment
- clarity
- imagination
- relational purpose

These roles **overlap** and rotate depending on need and capacity.

---

## **X. EMBODIED PRACTICES**

*Supporting nervous system regulation, emotional safety, and presence.*

Embodied practices help participants:

- regulate
- arrive
- stay grounded
- process emotion
- return to center
- protect identity safety

W-BC integrates them intentionally.

---

### **1. Core Embodied Practices**

#### **A. Arriving Breath (Single or Three-Breath Sequence)**

- slow inhale
- slow exhale
- group pacing

#### **B. Sensory Orientation**

5–4–3–2–1 grounding:

- five things you see
- four things you hear
- three things you feel
- two things you smell
- one thing you taste or imagine

#### **C. Temperature Shift**

Cold water, cool air, or tactile temperature shifts to reset the amygdala.

#### **D. Body Scan**

Slow check-in through:

- shoulders
- jaw
- chest
- stomach
- hands
- feet

### **E. Micro-Movements**

Gentle stretching, shaking, opening palms, loosening posture.

---

## **2. Embodied Practices for Difficult Conversations**

- pace slowing
- co-regulation
- emotional naming
- grounding before responding
- pause practices
- sensory support (fidgets, objects, textures)
- optional breaks
- naming tension with care

These help hold identity-based and emotional conversations safely.

---

## **3. Closing Rituals**

To “close the body” and mark transition:

- one-word closings
- gratitude rounds
- breath together

- hand on heart / grounding touch
  - movement-based closure
  - “what I’m carrying forward” statements
-

## **XI. PRACTICAL TOOLS & TEMPLATES**

Below are ready-to-use tools that staff, faculty, and students can integrate immediately.

---

### **Tool 1: Belonging Reflection Card**

Short reflection prompts:

- What made me feel seen today?
  - What made me feel unseen?
  - Where did I find support?
  - What was confusing?
  - What would help next time?
- 

### **Tool 2: Identity Impact Scan**

| Identity Group | Experience | Barriers | Support Needed |

---

### **Tool 3: Navigation Map Template**

| Step | Challenge | Who Helps? | Gap | Opportunity |

---

### **Tool 4: Emotional Heat Map**

Plot:

- stress points
  - confusion moments
  - relief moments
  - belonging moments
-

### **Tool 5: Prototype Canvas**

| Idea | Purpose | Community | Scope | Risks | Indicators |

---

### **Tool 6: Learning Loop Log**

| What We Tried | What Happened | What We Learned | What We're Changing |

---

### **Tool 7: Network Map Template**

| Person/Unit | Relationship Strength | Frequency | Need/Offer | Notes |

---

### **Tool 8: Meeting Agenda (Relational Version)**

1. Arrival
  2. Agreements
  3. Purpose
  4. Reflection Round
  5. Content/Work
  6. Harvest
  7. Next Steps
  8. Closing
-

## SECTION 5 — ASSESSMENT, GROWTH & INSTITUTIONALIZATION

*How we learn, grow, measure, and sustain belonging through relational and identity-aware assessment.*

Belonging work is relational and human — but it is also measurable, reportable, and scalable when approached with integrity.

Traditional institutional assessment relies heavily on:

- large, infrequent surveys
- metrics without context
- numbers without lived experience
- data that obscures identity patterns

The Well-Being Collective offers a different approach: one rooted in **relational data**, **qualitative meaning-making**, **identity-centered interpretation**, and **collaborative learning cycles**.

This section outlines the W-BC approach to:

1. Collecting evidence
  2. Understanding belonging
  3. Supporting prototypes
  4. Evaluating relational and systems-change practices
  5. Strengthening network health
  6. Building collaborative learning infrastructure
  7. Aligning institutional systems
  8. Ensuring long-term sustainability
-

## **I. PURPOSE OF W-BC ASSESSMENT**

Assessment in the Well-Being Collective is not about:

- proving value
- justifying existence
- compliance
- formal evaluation

Instead, it is about:

### **1. Illuminating belonging patterns across identities**

Who is thriving?

Who is not?

Why?

### **2. Understanding lived experience deeply**

Story + emotion + identity context = meaningful insight.

### **3. Strengthening relational ecosystems**

Identifying:

- where relationships are strong
- where navigation breaks
- where communities feel invisible
- where relational labor is heavy

### **4. Supporting collaborative design**

Assessment informs:

- prototypes
- systems redesign
- cross-unit interventions

## 5. Building institutional learning capacity

The goal is a university that:

- listens
- adapts
- collaborates
- prototypes
- reflects
- iterates

Assessment is a tool for transformation, not accountability.

---

## II. THE W-BC LOGIC MODEL (OVERVIEW)

*(The visual version appears earlier in your uploaded file; this is the narrative expansion.)*

### Inputs

- student stories
- staff/faculty insight
- relational networks
- qualitative community data
- WeLAB research
- forums
- connection calls
- mutual aid mapping
- relational leadership
- embodied practice
- network weaving
- design tools

- backbone support (WIT)

### **Activities**

- forums
- co-design sprints
- relational gatherings
- student-led research
- cultural partnerships
- network weaving
- identity-centered listening
- collaborative sensemaking
- prototype testing
- training and consultation
- navigation redesign efforts

### **Outputs**

- belonging indicators
- identity-specific insights
- prototype reports
- network maps
- system recommendations
- assessment dashboards
- relational quality metrics

### **Outcomes**

#### **Short-Term:**

- increased clarity
- stronger relationships
- grounded sensemaking

- visibility of barriers

**Mid-Term:**

- improved navigation
- identity safety
- strengthened networks
- collaborative redesign efforts

**Long-Term:**

- thriving across identities
- relational institutional culture
- reduced structural inequity
- sustained systems-change capacity

This logic model drives the assessment strategy.

---

### III. ASSESSMENT METHODS

The Well-Being Collective uses **six integrated assessment methods**:

---

#### 1. Belonging Indicators (Six-Dimensional Model)

The core W-BC belonging dimensions:

1. Visibility
2. Connection
3. Support
4. Navigation
5. Participation
6. Agency

Each dimension is assessed using:

- storywork
- micro-surveys
- relational quality measures
- network mapping
- student reflection logs

The Indicators allow us to see:

- identity differences
  - context differences
  - structural patterns
  - community strengths
-

## 2. Relational Quality Assessment

Derived from **Appendix S** — measures:

- trust
- emotional safety
- recognition
- connection
- reciprocity
- identity affirmation
- co-creation

Used in:

- connection calls
- retreats
- design sprints
- faculty development
- advising interventions
- identity-focused spaces

This is crucial for measuring *how people feel in community spaces*.

---

## 3. Story as Evidence (Appendix E)

Includes:

- story circles
- interviews
- vignettes
- collaborative analysis sessions
- identity clustering
- emotional patterning

Stories reveal:

- nuance
- emotional truth
- barriers
- bright spots
- identity dynamics

Story-based assessment is continuous, not episodic.

---

#### **4. Three-Part Belonging Inquiry Model (Appendix P)**

A synthesis of:

##### **A. Signals (Quantitative)**

- retention
- GPA
- utilization
- climate measures
- disaggregated dashboards
- SPACE, WISHES, and local departmental data

##### **B. Context (Stakeholder Insight)**

- advisors
- faculty
- staff
- cultural centers
- student support units

##### **C. Meaning (Lived Experience)**

- storywork
- quotes

- identity patterns

This model avoids deficit framing and centers identity-aware interpretation.

---

## **5. Network Health Assessment**

Measures the strength of UConn's relational ecosystem:

- number of cross-unit collaborations
- isolation of roles/groups
- tie strength across identity groups
- new partnerships
- connection frequency
- relational labor distribution
- student–staff–faculty triads

Network health is a belonging indicator.

---

## **6. Prototype Evaluation (From Appendix Q)**

After co-design, prototypes are evaluated on:

- desirability
- identity alignment
- feasibility
- emotional impact
- clarity
- relational feel
- equity of experience
- navigation improvement
- relational quality metrics
- learning loop outcomes

The goal is **not** to judge success —  
but to understand:

- What did we learn?
  - Should we adapt?
  - Should this scale?
-

## IV. GROWTH PATHWAYS FOR W-BC

Growth for the Well-Being Collective is not linear. It is relational, iterative, and community-guided.

There are **five growth pathways**:

---

### 1. Relational Capacity Growth

- More staff, faculty, and students using relational practices
  - Embodied facilitation training
  - Increased identity-aware approaches
  - Strengthened capacity for repair, co-regulation, and collaboration
- 

### 2. Network Growth

- More connections across campuses
  - Decreased isolation of units
  - Stronger cross-role collaborations
  - Increased regional–Storrs communication
  - Enhanced identity-specific networks
- 

### 3. Practice Growth

- More units using W-BC tools
  - Broader integration of design sprints
  - Expanded storywork practices
  - Adoption of relational quality measures
  - Use of reflection logs and belonging indicators
-

#### **4. Prototype & Systems Growth**

- Unit-level prototypes
  - Cross-campus prototypes
  - Scaled interventions for navigation
  - Redesigned advising flows
  - Improved faculty relational pedagogy
  - Redesign of student organization support pathways
- 

#### **5. Institutional Alignment Growth**

- Integration with ODI, CETL, SHaW, SLE, advising, and academic units
- Alignment with strategic plans
- Inclusion in institutional reporting
- Support from leadership
- Resource allocation for relational infrastructure

This is how W-BC “scales” without becoming bureaucratic.

---

## **V. INSTITUTIONALIZATION WITHOUT LOSING THE ETHOS**

Institutionalization is not assimilation.

It is the creation of **relational infrastructure** that supports the work without undermining it.

This requires the integration of:

### **1. Relational Ethos**

- care
- identity awareness
- collaboration
- transparency
- learning

### **2. Relational Practices**

- check-ins
- pacing
- grounding
- voice equity
- repair

### **3. Relational Structures**

- shared governance
- cross-campus collaboration
- autonomy in identity-centered practices
- community voice in decision-making

### **4. Relational Accountability**

- narrative insight
- story patterns
- community feedback

Institutionalization must follow — not preempt — community wisdom.

---

## **VI. THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINING W-BC**

Leadership responsibilities include:

### **1. Holding space for relational culture**

Leaders model the practices.

### **2. Protecting the ethos**

Avoid forcing the work into metrics alone.

### **3. Supporting relational labor**

Recognizing emotional and identity-based work.

### **4. Aligning structures**

Creating pathways for collaboration.

### **5. Resourcing community work**

Supporting WIT, WeLAB, and identity-centered communities.

### **6. Being accountable to community insight**

Leaders listen deeply and respond with care.

---

## VII. HOW BELONGING ASSESSMENT INFORMS SYSTEMS CHANGE

Assessment is directly linked to:

- prototype development
- advising redesign
- transition support
- communication clarity
- collaboration between units
- identity safety practices
- faculty development
- policy review
- navigation support

Without assessment, redesign efforts risk:

- missing nuance
- repeating harm
- ignoring identity-specific needs
- reinforcing existing inequities

Assessment guides institutional alignment.

---

## VIII. W-BC REPORTING & LEARNING STRUCTURES

W-BC uses consistent reporting templates that ensure clarity, transparency, and actionability.

### 1. “What We Heard” Summaries

(top patterns from stories)

### 2. “What This Means” Analysis

identity-aware interpretation

### 3. “Where We See Opportunity”

core design insights

### 4. “What We Tried & What We Learned”

prototype reflections

### 5. “Next Steps Together”

collaboration roadmap

### 6. “What We Need to Move Forward”

structural support requests

These reports are shared:

- within WIT
- across departments
- with leadership
- with community partners
- with WeLAB teams

## **IX. LONG-TERM INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

UConn will know this work is succeeding when:

### **1. Identity-Safe Belonging Improves**

Across all belonging dimensions.

### **2. Navigation Is Clear & Equitable**

Fewer students fall through gaps.

### **3. Relational Leadership Grows**

Across staff and faculty.

### **4. Networks Strengthen**

More ties, more collaboration, fewer silos.

### **5. Relational Culture Expands**

More meetings open with grounding and check-ins.

### **6. Student-Led Research Informs Decisions**

WeLAB becomes a core part of planning.

### **7. Structural Barriers Decrease**

Process redesign reduces friction.

### **8. Community Joy Increases**

More cultural, creative, and identity-affirming spaces thrive.

---

## SECTION 6 — STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2025–2026

*A relational roadmap for strengthening belonging, well-being, and systems alignment at UConn.*

The Well-Being Collective's strategic priorities are rooted in identity awareness, relational practice, collaborative design, and systems alignment. They reflect two years of community insight, forums, qualitative data, WeLAB cycles, regional campus conversations, staff/faculty interviews, and institutional learning sessions.

These priorities guide W-BC's work for AY 2025–2026 while allowing flexibility for emerging needs and community guidance.

They are organized into **five interdependent strategic areas**, each with goals, objectives, key actions, and relational indicators of success.

---

## **STRATEGIC AREA 1 — Strengthen the Relational Ecosystem Across UConn**

Belonging grows in relationships — not programs.

This priority focuses on strengthening relational infrastructure across campuses, roles, and identity groups.

### **GOAL 1.1 — Expand Relational Capacity Building Across Staff, Faculty & Students**

#### **Objectives**

- Provide training in relational facilitation, grounding practices, identity-aware approaches, and trauma-informed planning.
- Equip staff and faculty with tools to support belonging in advising, classroom, and frontline interactions.
- Build a network of relational practitioners across campuses.

#### **Key Actions**

- Launch monthly Relational Practice Workshops.
- Offer “Belonging by Design” sessions with cultural centers and CETL.
- Develop faculty-facing relational micro-practices (scripts, prompts, classroom rituals).
- Create a Relational Toolkit Mini-Series for staff working in advising, engagement, and student support.

#### **Indicators of Progress**

- Increased use of relational openings in meetings and classes.
- More cross-unit collaboration initiated through relational connection.
- Increased student reports of feeling “seen and supported.”

---

### **GOAL 1.2 — Strengthen Cross-Campus & Cross-Role Networks**

#### **Objectives**

- Reduce isolation among faculty, staff, and students.
- Increase ties across regional campuses and Storrs.
- Build intentional pathways for shared learning and collaboration.

## **Key Actions**

- Launch the “W-BC Connection Call” series (monthly).
- Create cross-campus triads (student–staff–faculty).
- Host quarterly multi-campus relational convenings.
- Support woven projects with cultural centers, ISSS, RecWell, and advising hubs.

## **Indicators of Progress**

- Denser and more interconnected network map (Appendix O).
  - More collaborations across divisions, identity groups, and campuses.
  - Staff report less “role isolation.”
- 

## **STRATEGIC AREA 2 — Support Identity-Centered Belonging**

Identity shapes belonging.

W-BC strengthens support for identity-specific communities while uplifting their leadership and relational knowledge.

### **GOAL 2.1 — Deepen Identity-Centered Listening & Storywork**

#### **Objectives**

- Expand Forum Series (Black, Latino/a/x, LGBTQ+, Disabled, International, Asian/Asian American, Middle Eastern, Indigenous, Campus Change, First-Gen).
- Strengthen storywork and ethical narrative practices.
- Identify identity-specific structural barriers and bright spots.

#### **Key Actions**

- Host 10–12 Forums across AY25–26.
- Support affinity gatherings at regionals.
- Conduct identity-aware belonging inquiries with WeLAB.
- Partner with ODI, cultural centers, and faculty experts.

### **Indicators of Progress**

- Richer identity-specific insight patterns.
  - Shared language across units about identity-aware belonging.
  - Visible institutional action in response to identity-specific needs.
- 

## **GOAL 2.2 — Strengthen Support for Regional Campus Belonging**

### **Objectives**

- Uplift regional campuses' relational strengths as a model.
- Support smoother transitions to Storrs for Campus Change students.
- Expand belonging practices tailored to commuter and transfer identities.

### **Key Actions**

- Host Regional–Storrs Transition Design Sprint.
- Build regional–Storrs relational pathways (triads, peer connectors).
- Document regional belonging practices in the Toolkit.
- Support regional student organizations and peer support circles.

### **Indicators of Progress**

- Campus Change students report clearer pathways and stronger connection.
  - Regional campus insights integrated into university-wide planning.
  - Fewer students report “being lost” after transitioning to Storrs.
-

## **STRATEGIC AREA 3 — Strengthen Navigation, Support Pathways & Communication Clarity**

Students repeatedly describe navigation as a central belonging barrier. This strategic area focuses on structural redesign through relational, co-designed improvements.

### **GOAL 3.1 — Improve Navigation Pathways for Key Student Populations**

#### **Objectives**

- Reduce confusion and emotional burden in accessing support.
- Clarify advising pathways.
- Support first-gen, international, disabled, and Campus Change navigation needs.

#### **Key Actions**

- Co-design advising flow maps with students, advisors, SHaW, ISSS, and DRC.
- Prototype identity-aware communication templates.
- Create “early-year belonging pathway maps” for first-gen and international students.
- Pilot new transition supports for Campus Change students.

#### **Indicators of Progress**

- Students report fewer “I didn’t know where to go” experiences.
- Greater clarity in advising pathways.
- Reduced emotional burden during transitions.

---

### **GOAL 3.2 — Improve Communication Quality Across Units**

#### **Objectives**

- Reduce repetitive emails.
- Increase clarity and tone alignment.
- Improve timing and identity-awareness in messaging.

## **Key Actions**

- Develop relational communication micro-guides.
- Co-create message templates with students (tone review).
- Build cross-unit communication calendars.
- Prototype “Welcome from the Network” series for early-year students.

## **Indicators of Progress**

- Higher student trust in institutional messaging.
  - Improved comprehension and usability of messages.
  - Reduced information overload.
- 

## **STRATEGIC AREA 4 — Expand Student-Led Research & Collaborative Inquiry**

WeLAB and W-BC place students at the center of systems-change work. This strategic area deepens and expands student-led research and collaborative inquiry.

### **GOAL 4.1 — Expand WeLAB Capacity & Projects**

#### **Objectives**

- Increase the number of student researchers.
- Expand the Architect mentor model.
- Support identity-centered research cycles.
- Integrate findings into institutional decision-making.

#### **Key Actions**

- Recruit 12–16 new Lab Partners annually.
- Train new Architects across units.
- Host WeLAB Summer Institute for student-led inquiry.
- Pair WeLAB findings with institutional planning cycles.

### **Indicators of Progress**

- More student-authored insights in reports.
  - Increased adoption of prototypes by university partners.
  - WeLAB becomes a core part of institutional planning.
- 

## **GOAL 4.2 — Strengthen Collaborative Learning Infrastructure**

### **Objectives**

- Build consistent structures for shared meaning-making.
- Create pathways for units to collaborate on systemic redesign.
- Make belonging insights more accessible.

### **Key Actions**

- Launch “Collaborative Learning Labs” for cross-unit teams.
- Host quarterly institutional sensemaking sessions.
- Build shared dashboards integrating story + data + context.
- Develop internal consultation pathways with WIT.

### **Indicators of Progress**

- Units show increased ability to interpret belonging data.
  - Cross-unit redesign projects become more common.
  - Clearer institutional learning cycles.
-

## **STRATEGIC AREA 5 — Strengthen Institutional Alignment, Recognition & Sustainability**

To sustain this work long-term, the institution must build relational and structural support for W-BC without losing its ethos.

### **GOAL 5.1 — Integrate W-BC with Institutional Planning & Strategy**

#### **Objectives**

- Align with SLE, ODI, CETL, regional campuses, advising leadership, and SHaW.
- Position W-BC within university-wide belonging and well-being goals.
- Create structures for ongoing relational and identity-centered insight-sharing.

#### **Key Actions**

- Attend leadership planning and advisory meetings.
- Integrate belonging indicators into institutional dashboards.
- Provide relational facilitation for campus-wide working groups.
- Support strategic planning around belonging and community.

#### **Indicators of Progress**

- Belonging becomes a shared institutional priority.
- W-BC's presence in institutional documents increases.
- Leaders seek W-BC guidance proactively.

---

### **GOAL 5.2 — Support and Recognize Relational Labor**

#### **Objectives**

- Validate staff/faculty relational labor.
- Develop recognition pathways.
- Identify and reduce disproportionate burden on marginalized staff.

## **Key Actions**

- Co-create relational labor recognition structures.
- Document examples of relational leadership across units.
- Develop guidelines for sharing relational workload.
- Support supervisors in identity-aware leadership.

## **Indicators of Progress**

- Staff feel recognized and supported.
  - Healthier distribution of relational labor.
  - Reduced burnout among high-burden positions.
- 

## **GOAL 5.3 — Build Structural Support for W-BC**

### **Objectives**

- Ensure WIT has stable resourcing.
- Create long-term staffing pathways.
- Build multi-year sustainability plans.

### **Key Actions**

- Secure cross-unit funding commitments.
- Develop WIT staffing model (coordinator, network weaver, analyst).
- Build support for WeLAB expansion.
- Establish recurring Forum funding.

### **Indicators of Progress**

- WIT has stable resourcing.
  - A sustainable staffing model is adopted.
  - W-BC becomes a recognized institutional structure while maintaining cultural autonomy.
-

## **CROSS-CUTTING THEMES FOR ALL PRIORITIES**

### **1. Identity Awareness**

Every strategic area must center identity-specific experiences.

### **2. Relational Ethos**

Pacing, presence, humility, grounding, collaboration.

### **3. Story + Data Integration**

Assessment must include emotion, story, and quantitative patterns.

### **4. Network Strengthening**

Cross-unit and cross-campus ties are essential.

### **5. Student Leadership**

Students are not consulted — they co-design the future.

### **6. Flexibility & Adaptability**

Strategic priorities evolve with community insight.

---