

Introduction

I am pleased to welcome the Higher Learning Commission evaluation team to the University of Toledo for its mid-cycle comprehensive visit on April 11-12, 2016. I became its 17th President on July 1, 2015 and was officially installed on September 19, 2015 at a wonderful, campus-wide inauguration ceremony. The University and I have been very busy since then!



I am enthusiastic about the University's potential to enhance its already strong academic programs and to meet the higher education challenges of the 21st Century. My goals are to improve retention and graduation rates, enhance research funding, elevate the University's academic standing, and increase philanthropic support. During the months ahead we will continue to look for ways to ensure this institution is providing our students with the best education, our patients with the best care and our employees with opportunities to benefit the community and the world for the better.

We have initiated a strategic enrollment process to enhancement enrollment. And, hired a vice provost for retention to better convey to prospective students how joining UT can prepare them for success. We are in the midst of a facilities master plan to ensure we have the technology, resources and facilities to meet the needs of the University we are aspiring to be in the years ahead. We have recently begun the creation of a strategic diversity plan to help us continue to enhance inclusion and respect at The University of Toledo and in the broader community.

We are engaged in searches for key University leaders — a provost, a chief enrollment officer and a chief financial officer. And later this calendar year, we will be initiating an institutional strategic planning process. Success of these efforts will depend on input and active engagement with students, faculty, staff, alumni and supporters.

I've had amazing interactions with alumni and donors across the country. I have met hundreds of alumni who can feel the change in the air at UT and want to be involved. I look forward to continuing to work collectively to increase The University of Toledo's academic standing and reputation locally, regionally and on the national stage. This is an exciting time to be at the University of Toledo and we look forward to sharing what is happening with the HLC evaluation team.

Our responses to the University's 2012 HLC report's items for the institution's attention are included within the assurance argument and are outlined here:

1. *Shared governance*: Criterion 1 A has an update on leadership changes contributing to the now positive working relationship for shared governance.
2. *Enrollment management, student academic success, retention and graduation*: Criterion 4C discusses retention and graduation; criterion 5C discusses the strategic enrollment planning processes.
3. *Professional development for university non-academic personnel*: Discussed in criterion 5A.

4. *Permanent position of Vice Provost of Assessment and Faculty Development:* Discussed in criterion 4B.
5. *Assessment of student learning:* Discussed in Criterion 4B.
6. *The Core Curriculum:* Discussed in criterion 3B.
7. *Academic program review:* Discussed in criterion 4A.
8. *UT faculty degrees:* These merger-related issues were identified and corrected during the 2012 HLC visit. Current faculty qualifications are discussed in criterion 3C.
9. *Faculty development opportunities:* Discussed in criterion 3C.
10. *Libraries:* Discussed in criterion 5C.
11. *"internship opportunities may be less accessible to students in the College of Languages, Literature and Social Sciences...while the University is to be strongly commended for the experiential and service-learning opportunities many students get at UT, the institution is encouraged to provide even broader access to these opportunities for students in all colleges and majors whenever feasible."* Discussed in criterion 4.

The University and I welcome you to campus and look forward to our time together and focusing on what is being done and planned to move the University of Toledo forward.

Sincerely,
Sharon L. Gaber
President
University of Toledo