UT Self-Study for the Higher Learning Commission: Discussion and Feedback

Graduate Council

September 20, 2011

The HLC Study: Shaping UT's Tomorrow

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO
1872

Institutional Overview

1. Institutional profile

2. Major changes since 2002 reaccreditation

3. Response to 2001 – 2002 site team observations and 2005 focused visit

4. Accreditation history

5. Self-study process

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 1: Mission and Integrity

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Criterion 1a

The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments

Summary:

- Strong, clear and concise mission, vision and values statements that enjoy broad understanding and support from faculty, staff and students.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 1b

In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

Summary:
- Commitment to student diversity and to raise standards and reduce academic support services creates tension
- Commitment to increase non-student diversity by 5%

Challenges/Recommendations:
- Use national searches to recruit for administrative and leadership positions
- Find innovative ways to balance higher college admission standards and our historic open-enrollment status

Criterion 1c

Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

Summary:

- Mission is publicly displayed and accessible
- Widespread deliberation on issue of student centeredness

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 1d

The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

Summary:
- Highly qualified leadership team
- Development of two strategic plans
- Effective communication challenged in its public, explicit modes, though present and at work in implicit modes.

Challenges:
- Principle of shared governance continues to evolve and remains central challenge
- Succession planning

Criterion 1e

The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

Summary:

- Mission-document based commitments are carried forward

- Projected financial conditions have potential to challenge how commitments are realized

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO 1872

Criterion 2: Preparing for the Future

The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 2a

The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

Summary:
- Planning processes informed by active engagement at multiple levels.
- Important to maintain relevance through innovation and change

Challenges:
- Ability to rapidly invest in emerging education technologies, maintain globalization programs, and maintain physical plant.

Recommendations:
- Continuously scan environment to anticipate impact of changes on educational programs and learning environment
- Assess return on investment in community economic development initiatives

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 2b

The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

Summary:
- Operating budget increased steadily since merger
- Resources accrued through savings from integration of operations reallocated in support of instruction and academic and student activities
- Fiscally positioned to maintain/strengthen quality of education programs

Challenges:
- Reductions in staff in student service areas
- Reductions in state support

Recommendations
- Ensure student services resources optimally aligned in support of the learning environment and student success
- Adoption of performance-based budget and resource allocation model

Criterion 2c

The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Summary:
- Assessment processes inform continuous improvement.
- Students satisfied overall , yet opportunities exist for improvement
- University continues to explore methods to better measure and assess student satisfaction at unit and institutional level

Challenges and Recommendations:
- Excellent data processes; however, timely implementation of improvement plans is at times inadequate
- Explore ways to measure and assess student satisfaction
- Invest in programs that improve student academic success retention and graduation rates.

Criterion 2d

All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

Summary:
- Clear evidence that UT plans for the future and allocates resources based on mission.
- Can better create connections between budgeting and strategic planning processes
- Continued history of systematically aligning planning to mission
- Directions 2007 and 2011 provide evidence of commitment to and prioritization of educational quality and student learning.

The organization provides evidence of student and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 3a

The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Summary: **Issues and Challenges**

- Evolution of UAC strengthened UT's position related to assessment

- Lapse in systematic process of program review is being addressed through development of undergrad and grad program review.

- Dedicated resources for assessment at institution and college level needed to ensure continued comprehensive assessment activity

- Institutional use of assessment data at program and unit level is clear; use at institutional level is not clear

- Overarching general education learning outcomes are clear; comprehensive assessment of outcomes is work in progress.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 3b

The organization values and supports effective teaching.

Summary:
- Significant support for teaching
- Commitment to innovative teaching practices
- Continual revision of curricula to meet emerging needs

Challenges:
- Decreases in state funding constrain hiring new faculty
- Promotion and tenure rewards scholarly production more highly than effective teaching; culture slow to change

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO 1872

Criterion 3c

The organization creates effective learning environments.

Summary:

- Well-developed system of academic advising
- Effective learning environment respects diversity of students
- Comprehensive number of academic support services and diverse array of academic enrichment initiatives
- New technologies that enhance learning environment

Challenges:

- Need systematic approach to documenting changes in academic support and student-service areas
- Scarcity of quality assurance measures outside of individual program or college accreditations

Criterion 3d

The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Summary:
- Impressive array of facilities to support learning and teaching
- Many collaborative agreements and programs which extend resources for teaching and learning beyond the campus.
- Enhancements in technology, including technology rich buildings and classrooms, support teaching and learning at all levels

Challenges:
- Ensure adequate staffing levels to support currently available teaching and learning resources

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 4: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 4a

The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty and staff, that it values a life of learning.

Summary, **Challenges and Recommendations**

- Institutional history of providing support for life of learning
- New construction and renovation of laboratory, teaching, and performance space; however, continued shortage of MC instructional lab space
- Inconsistent support for faculty development across University; need internal support across all disciplines
- Difficult to obtain data on faculty research, scholarly and creative activities; create repository to gather and store data
- Emphasize importance of interdisciplinary work; develop policies and procedures to reward this

Criterion 4b

The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

Summary:

- Importance of breadth of knowledge and skills demonstrated by rigor and balance in required elements of common curriculum and wide range of optional learning activities

- Current improvement processes include review and revision of core curriculum, proposed redevelopment of writing across curriculum to communication across curriculum

- Creation of COIL fostering development of additional learning opportunities (e.g., enhanced information literacy curriculum, learning communities to provide opportunities for interdisciplinary, challenge-based curriculum

Criterion 4c

The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

Summary, Challenges, and Recommendations:

- Students learn skills needed to live and work in today's society through diverse, international aspects of university community and through curricular and co-curricular activities; Directions 2011 underscores these opportunities

- Strong base from which to develop these opportunities; continued development of relationships with current and new partner organizations is needed

- Improved and better documented processes to assess curricula for relevance to societal changes

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 4d

The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Summary:
- Policies, administrative oversight, education, and interventions demonstrate commitment to teach about and monitor responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge
- Harmonized policies strengthens research integrity education and compliance programs

Recommendations:
- Assure regulatory units/committees have support for increased responsibility that comes with expected increased research activity
- Ascertain that faculty members and TAs receive adequate training and support to prevent and identify student academic dishonesty

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 5: Engagement and Service

As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituents and serves them in ways both value.

Criterion 5a

The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

Summary:

- History of addressing community needs by attending to and providing educational programs for diverse populations
- Mechanisms such as advisory committees allow assessment of constituent needs and ensure needs/challenges are met
- Community partnerships are vital

Challenges/Recommendations:

- Better articulate relationship between economic development initiatives and student learning
- Consider and assess contributions to student learning outcomes and plans for sustainability in non-college outreach and engagement program proposals

Criterion 5b

The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

Summary:

- Outreach initiatives carefully weighed to assure capacity exists
- Communication pathways enable effective connections
- Engagement activities are integral in the co-curriculum
- Planning processes recognize ongoing engagement and service as important and lasting functions

Challenges/Recommendations:

- Constituencies do not always fully understand and appreciate breadth and depth of activities; Create comprehensive/professional campaign to elevate visibility
- Assess communication vehicles used to promote activities

Criterion 5c

The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

Summary:

- Numerous collaborations demonstrate responsiveness and proactive outreach

- Community leaders attest to usefulness of engagement programs

- Workforce development opportunities cover many disciplines - available locally, regionally, nationally and internationally

Challenges and Recommendations:

- Lack central repository to catalog and communicate outreach and engagement activities; establish outreach office and database supported by appropriate and sustaining resources

THE UNIVERSITY OF
UT TOLEDO
1872

Criterion 5d

Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

Summary, Challenges and Recommendations:

- Formal and informal documentation of the value internal and external constituents place on engagement interactions exists

- Engagement activities integral in co-curricular life on campus however, difficult to demonstrate in other than anecdotal ways; need comprehensive process to systematically elicit feedback.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Special Emphasis

A newly merged institution looks to its future.

- Discover additional ways we can advance the merger through strategic planning and deeper and broader systemic integration

- Examine three key areas that encompass the five criteria and that are foundational to positioning the University for the 21st century and for making two institutions into one institution

Proposal submitted and approved February 2010

Merging Cultures

The University's key stakeholders, faculty, staff, administrators, and students want to build a more homogeneous university community

- How does the university move towards a shared identify that embraces its mission and strategic plan?
- How do the cultures of a traditional research university and a medical campus [sic] translate into one stronger institution?

Teaching and Learning Synergies

The merging of two faculties into one faculty senate was a key step in blending the institutions, yet addressing teaching and learning across and within campuses has only begun.

- How does the university community move beyond conversations into greater interdisciplinary teaching and learning that advances the University's commitment to excellence?

- What is the balance between quality undergraduate teaching and research for a 21st century research university?

- How do the efforts in advancing teaching and learning support the directions set forth by the University System of Ohio?

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOLEDO
1872

Economic Viability

State initiatives are shaping the University's economic role within the region and beyond.

- How does the University balance its responsibilities to the USO with its own mission and vision?

- How does the University maximize its intellectual capital as it streamlines resources, services, facilities and personnel?

- How does the University foster an entrepreneurial environment that translates into new ways of teaching and learning as the institution educates Ohio's 21st century workforce?

Where are the drafts? How do I send comments?

Drafts are posted on the UT Self Study website at:
www.utoledo.edu/accreditation

Link to send feedback is located on the website
utselfstudyfeedback@utoledo.edu

Deadline is **Wednesday, September 21st**

**YOUR FEEDBACK IS CRITICAL
TO THE COMPLETION OF THE SELF-STUDY!**