Criterion 4: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

The institution maintains a practice of regular program review. Following the last HLC site visit in 2012, the Office of Assessment, Accreditation and Program Review (OAAPR) was established as a reporting unit with the Provost's office to oversee formal academic program review. This brought the administrative efforts related to program review and assessment together and has served to improve internal communication and coordination of these activities. Providing additional administrative oversight for program review are a vice-provost and a new director position.

All academic programs participate in an institutional process of program review to ensure regular internal/external review. This was developed in 2011-12 and implemented in 2012-13 with the College of Law. An additional 44 programs were reviewed in 2013-14 and 15 reviews completed in 2014-15. For programs with external accreditation, program review is scheduled to occur at least 6 months prior to their scheduled accreditation visit. All programs are reviewed at least every seven years (Schedule for program review).

Institutional review process involves a self-study completed by the faculty in the program and at least one student, using a program review template. As the 2012 HLC report suggested, programs are required to include information from annual assessment reports in the self-study along with action items made as a result of the review of data.

An external team of reviewers knowledgeable and current in the program area is recruited. The team reviews the completed self-study and any corresponding materials prior to a site visit and meetings with program faculty. Following the campus visit, the team writes and submits an evaluative report including recommendations. The external review team is provided a guide for assessing the appropriateness of program design and efficiency, faculty expertise, continuous improvement efforts, and financial sustainability. Programs prepare a response to the external review report, including an action plan aligned with recommendations made that is submitted to the Director of Program Review and the Provost for review/further action as needed. By example, the action plan submitted by the Legal Specialties program contained specific action items of curricular and operational changes (e.g., examine every course to determine whether it is necessary and suitable for the desired outcomes and establish a schedule of ongoing curriculum review and ensure that there is dedicated administrative support for the program).

In addition to the institutional process facilitated by OAAPR, the College of Graduate Studies (COGS) and the Graduate Council (GC) provide formative feedback for all graduate programs. GC by-laws designate a Graduate Program Review Committee (GPRC) to collaborate with the UT program review process by reviewing the program self-studies and external review reports and providing recommendations to the GC, Provost and OAAPR.

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE)'s Chancellor's Council of Graduate Schools (CCGS) requires graduate programs undergo review every 7-10 years. UT's graduate dean is required to provide annual reports to the Chancellor and CCGS summarizing findings of graduate program review (annual CCGS/OBR reports).

2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

UT adheres to the State of Ohio's Transfer and Articulation policy for the evaluation of all credit that is transcribed and UT's Policy for Credit for Prior Learning (PN 3364-71-17). A course-for-course evaluation by the Prior Learning Specialist is provided to prevent students from taking

duplicate coursework. Transfer work is posted to the student's record only if a grade has been recorded on official transcripts.

Additionally, the prior learning assessment program follows a course-equivalency credit model for portfolio and credit by exam. Students are required to demonstrate and document their college-level learning toward course objectives and learning outcomes of UT courses. Credit cannot be obtained for courses outside of UT through these methods. UT faculty determine assessment methods that are most effective in demonstrating and documenting learning outcomes of each course.

College credit is granted only for documented, authenticated and demonstrated college-level learning outcomes and not for experience alone. Credit is awarded based on the method of prior learning demonstrated by the student. College-level learning is defined as demonstrated achievement of learning outcomes, theoretical and/or applied, that match the depth and breadth of the content of a college course or curriculum objectives. Since Fall 2007, 583 hours have been awarded as prior learning credit. Although there was a decrease in prior learning credit awarded Fall 2012 through Spring 2014, this past academic year saw the highest credit awarded (114 exam scores were sent to UT) since credit for prior learning started at UT.

 Transcripts of prior graduate education are evaluated by COGS admissions specialists and program faculty/administrators prior to offers of acceptance. Currently, credit for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning are not accepted for incoming graduate students.

3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

UT accepts undergraduate transfer credit from accredited institutions and adheres to Ohio's Transfer and Articulation policy, including Ohio Transfer Module and Transfer Assurance Guides set forth by the ODHE (https://www.utoledo.edu/catalog/catalog_statement.html). Students and advisers may assess course equivalencies through Transferology (https://www.transferology.com/). Course equivalencies are typically classified as "course for course" or, where a direct match is not

available or appropriate, as a departmental elective or a pseudo course (in instances where a departmental match is not identified). The course level is determined by the level of the UT course evaluation. UT's Registrar Office employs a full-time Director of Transfer Credit Evaluation to oversee the establishment of course equivalency tables and maintain Transferology accuracy.

UT also accepts credit as recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE). This includes standardized testing, as provided on a test score transcript; workforce training as provided on an ACE official transcript; or a Joint Service Transcript for military training and coursework. Credit is evaluated using the ACE national recommendation guide (http://www2.acenet.edu/credit/?fuseaction=browse.main) and/or Military Transfer Assurance Guides as established by the ODHE for military training and coursework (Ohio Transfer to Degree Guarantee at https://transfercredit.ohio.gov/ap/1)

Under ORC 3333.16, the ODHE is designated to manage, direct and promote all programs related to the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy. ODHE identified 40 Transfer Assurance Guidelines for common undergraduate majors. Each TAG outlines the general education and common courses guaranteed to transfer between Ohio public postsecondary institutions. UT has established an operational pipeline that supports the submission of courses six times per year (three per term) for the alignment of student learning outcomes to each TAG. Prior to 2015, the Provost's Office was responsible for the inputting of curricular information in ODHE CEMS system as part of the submission process. The Provost's Office worked directly with the department chair and faculty who aligned with course offerings with the required student learning outcomes in the TAG.   ODHE's review process approves, disapproves or puts courses in a pending category. At present, UT is ~80% compliant with TAG. For the October 2, 2015 submission period, the Provost's Office will submit nine (9) courses aligned with TAGS. Six of the nine courses have already been reviewed once by the ODHE; these six courses are being re-submitted with additional information. Notification of approval, disapproval or pending is expected by December in time for the next submission period in January 2016. The Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) embodies the general education curriculum currently under review by Faculty Senate. General education courses are submitted for ODHE approval in the OTM as

approved by Faculty Senate. UT reports each term to ODHE Higher Education Information (HEI) the number of students who complete the OTM. With Fall 2016, a Faculty Liaison position was created to work closely with Faculty Senate, University Teaching Center, Provost's Office and colleges and departments. Historically, the Provost's Office submits between 10 to 15 courses during a reporting period with an acceptance rate of ~1/3. The Faculty panels who review submissions most commonly request utilization of Bloom's taxonomy, alignment between student learning and assessment and incorporation of assignments and grading into the class calendar. The University, like other Ohio four-year schools, only recently begun to submit for Career-Technical Assurance Guidelines (CTAG) due to no/few program offerings in these areas. In 2015, ODHE initiated Military Transfer Assurance Guidelines (MTAG) in which UT participates, as these MTAGs are made available. Approximately twelve MTAGS are available to UT. All MTAGS are included in the Degree Audit rules.

Graduate students applying for graduate transfer credits follow the procedure of COGS. In addition, content expert graduate faculty and administrators of the degree program review course syllabi and transfer credit requests for congruence with specific program requirements (need examples of what actually reviewed/approved; graduate policy).

4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all of its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

The institution maintains and exercises authority over prerequisites. Faculty curriculum committees of each college, department and/or program determine courses and prerequisites. Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee reviews/recommends new and modified undergraduate course proposals and Faculty Senate members have final approval. GC Curriculum Committee reviews/recommends new and modified graduate course proposals and GC members have final approval. For programs with external accreditation, establishment/modification of prerequisites

aligns with accreditation guidelines if applicable. ([Minutes from Senate Curriculum Committee and Graduate Council Committee)](#)

Additional processes ensuring the institution maintains authority over prerequisites include advisors of students signing plans of study that implement sequencing informed by prerequisites. The electronic registration system (Banner) can be set to block students from registering for courses for which they have not taken required prerequisites.

Program faculty set the rigor and content of each course. College-level faculty curriculum committees, departments and/or programs determine course objectives and student learning outcomes that are approved by the governing bodies. The course resources and assessment measures vary depending upon course level. The department chair assigns course faculty that are content experts. [(copies of syllabi of different levels/copies of syllabi that are cross listed courses)](#)

The ODHE defines and establishes the definition of a credit hour (https://www.ohiohighered.org/calendar-conversion/definition). In addition to the ODHE definition, accredited programs have curricular expectations from their accrediting standards. [(definition of credit hour; copies of syllabi that show rigor)](#)

There are institutional mechanisms to ensure that [expectations for student learning](#) exist and policies that address expectations for student learning. The [Academic Honesty/Dishonesty Policy](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct Policy](#) are described at student orientations and published in the undergraduate and graduate student [catalogs](#) and on the [UT website](#).

Expectations for student learning are provided in the program student learning outcomes and are based upon the rigor of the courses. These are communicated to the student in a variety of ways depending upon the program (e.g., website, program handbook). At the course level, each course outlines the student learning expectations through the course syllabi. In 2015, a university-wide [syllabus template](#) was made available to faculty that includes: description of the course,

meeting times, student learning outcomes, assessment strategies and grade scales. An audit indicated a majority of faculty is using the new template or a modification of it.

UT maintains access to learning resources. UT has a variety of virtual and physical learning resources including the Mulford and Carlson Libraries, Learning Enhancement Center, The Writing Center, Academic Enrichment Center, Student Disability Services, and Lloyd Jacobs Interprofessional Immersive Simulation Center. Additional resources include the UT Virtual lab (i.e., computer software), wireless residence halls and buildings, online/blended learning support help desk, facility labs, and meeting rooms for studying. Departments that administer these learning resources survey students and/or student usage to ensure scheduling aligns with student needs. Enhanced college specific resources include the McQuade Court Room in the Paralegal Studies program, state of the art rehabilitation labs in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, and various computer labs throughout the university.

UT faculty possesses the credentials required by the ODHE Guidelines and Procedures for instructors of higher education (see Criterion 3.C.2). The Provost's Office maintains faculty cv's and transcripts and verifies these are current and accurate at the time of hiring. The Provost approves departmental requests for hires based on equivalent experience.

UT maintains/exercises authority over the quality of the dual credit program and assures its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum. As a public university, UT is required to participate in Ohio's College Credit Plus Program as outlined in Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3365 (http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3365) and corresponding Rules 3333-1-65.1 through 3333.1.65.10 governing this program. (ORC and Rules)

According to the Code, high school teachers must meet qualification requirements to be the instructor as set forth in guidelines established by the chancellor of ODHE. The high school teacher's qualifications are reviewed by the department and then reviewed and verified by the provost's office, which maintains a file on each teacher with their vita, transcript showing master's degree and discipline of study (18 credit hours minimum in the area they are teaching

if the master's degree is on another discipline), syllabus, and provost's letter approving the appointment. The dual credit course offered in the secondary school follows the same course syllabus and learning outcomes, use the same textbook and materials and assessments as the college course delivered on campus.   Currently, UT has 10 qualified high school faculty teaching 9 college credit plus courses at three high schools (Transcripts of the high school faculty, Letters from the provost offering them to teach)

Once a high school teacher is approved, a UT faculty mentor is assigned. In addition to conducting at least one observation of each College Credit Plus course taught by the high school teacher during a school year, he/she must agree to additional UT guidelines:

- Meeting with the mentee at their high school at the beginning of the semester to introduce himself, review timelines, deadlines for grades and reporting, the goals for the course and approval of the syllabus to meet The University of Toledo's and Ohio Transfer Model requirements. The review of the syllabus ensures that the student learning outcomes are of the same rigor as the courses that are taught by the university faculty.
- Scheduling of a semester observation visit at the high school during the mentee's class;
- Conducting a mid-semester review to ensure all things are tracking according to agreed upon schedules and requirements;
- Submitting grades in a timely manner to ensure a completed transcript for the high school student; and
- Staying in contact and being accessible and available to assist where necessary during the semester.

In addition, as of Fall 2015, UT is required to provide 3 hours of professional development to all high school teachers instructing a College Credit Plus course as an adjunct. This professional development is scheduled for April 27, 2016 (ALT conference flyer).
UT has a unique dual credit arrangement with Toledo Public Schools (TPS). Toledo Early College is a program designed to accelerate students into UT courses, beginning with the freshman school year. Students take two years of English, up to four years of mathematics and science and two years of social studies in high school. All other courses, including electives and foreign languages, are taken at UT. Students can earn up to sixty college credits during their high

school experience. College-level courses and required textbooks are provided at no cost to students. College courses qualify for dual credits, allowing them to be counted for high school and college credits. Students will earn credits that will be recorded officially and permanently on TPS and UT transcripts.

5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

UT supports and encourages external accreditation. 139 undergraduate programs and graduate/professional programs maintain external accreditation awarded by over 40 different accrediting bodies. The "List of Individual Program Accreditations" is maintained by OAAPR.

6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admissions rates to advance degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and AmeriCorps).

Success of graduates in each undergraduate and graduate program is evaluated in a variety of direct and indirect methods. Programs are asked to identify in their Assessment Plans the types of measures they utilize. Measures related to the success of their graduates include peer-reviewed publications, external or licensure exams, internship or practicum evaluations, job placement, exit interviews, and graduation or alumni surveys. In their annual Assessment Reports, programs describe at least two of these measures and the process by which the assessment data is examined by the program. Program completion records are also maintained in colleges and data stored with the Registrar.

Historically, UT colleges and programs have not conducted surveys of their graduates or alumni, or maintained data on their graduates. External forces such as accrediting bodies, however, have recently required the collecting and storing of this type of data. UT is able to document evidence

of the success of its graduates from many graduate and undergraduate programs in all colleges and across both campuses, but going forward, standardized questions will be asked by colleges and departments of their graduates and this data will be included in annual reports for easy access to this information.   The Director of the Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services, in partnership with The Office of Provost, Institutional Research, and the Registrar, piloted a First Destination survey that included summer and fall 2015 graduates. The pilot survey will be emailed to undergraduates on November 30, 2015 and include questions pertaining to the students' immediate plans after graduation (employment, grad school, military, other), employer and wage information if applicable and if the student participated in experiential learning and/or extracurricular activities. Pilot results will be shared with the individual colleges and university leadership and a determination was made as to how to formalize the survey going forward. This effort is being undertaken to help the institution as a whole develop new strategies to monitor and track graduates in terms of employment.

Some academic program graduates must take a licensure exam before they can receive permission to practice in Ohio or another state. License examination passage rates are often posted on department websites. These include:

- Within the College of Health Sciences,
    1. Speech-Language Pathology had 100% of their students obtain passing scores on the Praxis Exam in 2012, 2013, and 2014. All students who have graduated from the master's program are employed in the field of speech-language pathology.
    2. All students in Occupational Therapy passed the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) exam between 2011 and 2013.
    3. In Recreation Therapy, pass rates for students at the University have been better than national pass rates for the past three years (2012: 74.8% UT, 74.3% National; 2013: 77.8% UT, 75.1% National; 2014: 89.7% UT, 76.1% National).
    4. For Physical Therapy, there has been a first time pass rate of 87.5%, 81.5%, and 89.3% for graduates of the program for 2013, 2014, and 2015 respectively. Thus far, the ultimate pass rates are 100%, 96.3%, and 92.9% for the past three years. One hundred percent of their graduates have been employed within six months of passing the National Physical Therapy Exam (NPTE).

5. Over the past 3 years, graduates of the Athletic Training program have posted a 95% first time pass rate on the Board of Certification (BOC) exam, and a total pass rate of 100%. An overwhelming number of students have gone on to pursue graduate degrees in athletic training or have been accepted into another professional healthcare program.

- The College of Law has reported passage rates for the Ohio Bar Exam for 2012, 2013, and 2014 of 79.3%, 84.6%, and 86.4% respectively, and passage rates for the Michigan Bar Exam for those same years of 71.4%, 70.0%, and 84.6% respectively.

- Within the College of Medicine and Life Sciences,
  1. The Physician Assistant Program (PA) has had a 100% board pass rate on the PA National Certifying Examination for every student who has graduated from the program. They have had a 99% board pass rate for first time takers until last year when they had an unexpected 87% board pass rate for first time takers. Of six students who did not pass first time, four successfully passed on the second round. The PA Program has had 2 students out of their 462 graduates apply to medical school and successfully become a doctor. All other graduates are practicing physician assistants.
  2. Historically, our medical students have high passing rates for the *United States Medical Licensing Examination* (*USMLE*) that surpass national rates on both knowledge-based exams:

Step 1 Exam	*Step 2 Exam*
<u>2012</u> - 96% UT, 95% National	<u>2012 - 2013</u> - 99% UT, 98% National
<u>2013</u>- 97% UT, 96% National	<u>2013 - 2014</u> - 99% UT, 97% National
<u>2014</u>- 97% UT, 96% National	<u>2014 - 2015</u> - 98% UT, 95% National

- College of Nursing first time passing rates for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN) for Baccalaureate in the Science of Nursing graduates were 85.3%, 71.7%, and 83.1% for 2012, 2013, and 2014 respectively. First time passing rates for the NCLEX-RN for Master of Science in Nursing graduates were 79.3%, 87.1%, and 87.5% for 2012, 2013, and 2014 respectively.

- The College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences' Doctor of Pharmacy graduates pass the state licensure exam at a rate of 94% on the first attempt. Their ultimate passing

rates for the North American Pharmacist Licensure Exam were 94.4%, 96.0%, and 94.0% respectively for 2011, 2012, and 2013.

- Clearly, the fact that the UT School Psychology within the College of Social Justice and Human Service has had 100% of their students in the past three years (2013 to 2015) obtain passing Ohio and national scores on the Praxis Exam is evidence that the institution accurately represents this program as meeting standards for employment as a School Psychologist.

Additional colleges/programs are surveying graduates either at the time they leave UT or at a designated time after graduation (i.e., 6 months post-graduation). These surveys provide data on post-graduation plans, current employment, participation in internships or fellowships, and obtainment of an advanced degree. Some colleges, e.g. College of Communication and the Arts and College of Education, maintain a spreadsheet with alumni information, including each student's name, undergraduate major, advanced degree if applicable, and place of employment if known. Examples are provided below:

- The College of Adult and Lifelong Learning (CALL) used a survey for AY2014-2015 in each semester of the Senior Capstone course, with a follow-up six months post-graduation. Spring of 2015, 29 students asked about current employment plans after graduation had: 27.6% seeking full-time paid employment, 24.1% continuing or advancing within their current employment, 31.0% going part-time or full-time to a graduate or professional school, 6.9% in the military, 6.9% volunteering, and one student seeking personal fulfillment. According to the Office of Institutional Research, 15.5% of graduates from CALL enrolled in UT's College of Graduate Studies and 31.7% earned a UT graduate or professional degree as of Spring.
- The College of Business and Innovation administers placement surveys to graduating students, obtains feedback from employers regarding their new hires, and uses social media (LinkedIn) to research student placements. For May 2015, there was an 88% placement rate for undergraduates seeking positions within three months of graduation, with 7% going on to graduate school. Students who had not received a position are offered placement services in the Business Career Program Office after graduation to

assist them in securing a position. Placement rates were 95% for the Master of Business Administration graduates and 100% for the Master of Science in Accountacy graduates.

- College of Education found 90.0%, 82.7%, and 86.8% of their tracked graduates from teacher licensure programs were in teaching positions in Ohio public schools in their prepared or an unidentified field during 2012, 2013, and 2014 respectively, and 3.1% in 2012, 5.8% in 2013, and 0% in 2014, were in a field other than that in which they prepared. 4.6% in 2012, 9.1% in 2013, and 9.4% in 2014, were teaching in private or out-of-state schools.

- College of Engineering tracks undergraduate student employment via exit interviews, surveys in capstone courses, records of students seeking assistance from the Engineering Career Development Center, and questionnaires at commencement. Graduate student job placement comes from faculty advisers and records of students seeking assistance from the Engineering Career Development Center. Engineering Science Baccalaureate Degree graduates seeking employment (less than 10% go to graduate school) had virtually 100% placement six months after graduation. Typically 60% to 70% of the students have offers during the semester prior to graduation. A large percentage of the Engineering Technology Baccalaureate Degree students are already employed while attending school. At the master's level, ~80% of those seeking employment are employed within three months of graduation (nearly 75% of graduates are international students who work through work permit authorizations from homeland security).

- College of Languages, Literature and Social Sciences (LLSS) used an exit survey and found for spring 2015 graduates (current return rate of 26%) that 52% will be attending graduate or professional schools, and 3% will join the U.S. military. Eighteen percent have employment in local, national, and international businesses and organizations such as the Toledo Public Schools, City of Boston, Yale-New Haven Hospital, U.S. National Park Service, U.S. Government Accountability Office, and Deloitte Financial Consulting in China, and 27% are currently seeking employment. Forty-six percent of the graduates in LLSS had completed an internship or field experience, with 100% national externship placement for the past two years for Clinical Psychology Ph.D. students. One of the LLSS students is currently in Paraguay in the Peace Corps and one is in AmeriCorps.

College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics has not routinely collected or maintained data on the success of graduates in the past; it is working on a plan to collect and maintain such data, and recognize this will be critical to understand as its programs move forward.

4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

The evidence of student learning provided by our assessment system enables the academic community to make decisions regarding the achievement of our student in the mastery of the educational and developmental goals of our institution. The University has been mindful of the guidance for enhancing our assessment of student learning offered in the 2012 accreditation visit. This advice has been beneficial to our campus-wide initiatives to advance our ability to measure and improve student learning. Evidence of UT's commitment to using data driven decisions to improve student learning is found in the appointment of a University Assessment Director, the work of the University Assessment Committee and its University Assessment Plan

The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning in its undergraduate, graduate and general education program. The articulation of student learning outcomes provides the foundation for assessment of students' achievement in each program. Proposals for new programs require the inclusion of student learning outcomes and these outcomes are carried forward in the development of assessment plans as well as future reports submitted to the UAC.

To monitor articulation of student learning outcomes as well as to accommodate changes a program may need to make, all academic degree and certificate programs submit Program Assessment Plans at five-year intervals or as needed (amendments to plans) to the UAC. Each plan lists student learning outcomes, defined measures for assessing these outcomes, and examples of how faculty utilize assessment results to recommend improvement.

Documentation of course-level student learning goals is maintained within the course and program by means of articulation of student learning goals in the individual course syllabi. Proposals for new courses require identification of student learning outcomes. Formal documentation of course-level assessment is collected by OAAPR for general education courses to assist Faculty Senate in assessing the overall general education curriculum.

Processes for assessment of student learning are overseen by the Provost's office. Following the last HLC site visit, OAAPR was established as a unit reporting to the Provost's office (see Criterion 4.A.1). The institution has experienced much progress in terms of improved documentation of its assessment processes, including the measures used and actions informed by analysis of the data, thus promoting and advancing discussions of the assessment of student learning and achievement across the institution.

OAAPR coordinates assessment processes. The University Assessment Director, a full-time professional staff member, is supervised by the Vice-provost for Assessment and Faculty Development, collaborates with the UAC, Faculty Senate, and individual programs and departments to manage annual assessment processes and provide assessment training and resources. Responsibilities of the University Assessment Director are to serve as an ex officio UAC member and to provide leadership, direction, and guidance to ensure achievement of committee goals and objectives. The Director also collaborates with the Vice-provost for Retention and Undergraduate Studies and serves as a member of the University Retention Committee ensuring various data reports and summaries are shared appropriately for discussion and analysis.

Following a consultative visit and a review of existing assessment processes by Barbara Walvoord, PhD, Concurrent Professor Emeriti, University of Notre Dame, in 2014, the Provost created the Faculty Assessment Representative position, a part-time faculty member was given the responsibility to assist in providing professional development and consultation for individual programs/departments. The University Assessment Director and Faculty Assessment Representative collaborate with other institutional offices to access data and generate reports and

with the UTC to promote effective assessment strategies in course design and curriculum development. (FAR reports, webpage, copies of job descriptions)

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) has been in existence for over a decade and continues to serve a major role in the institutional assessment process, responding to the need to broaden the scope of assessment initiatives at UT, to move beyond compliance and to provide more support for faculty and staff development. UAC works in collaboration with OAAPR to support and shape the assessment of student learning at all levels: the classroom, program, and institution.

UAC is composed of faculty, administrators, and representatives (membership list) from a variety of units across the institution. UAC was charged by the Provost's office for continued development of assessment processes and procedures. Through liaisons representing each college, academic support unit (Academic Support Services, International Programs, Student Engagement and Career Services, Registrar, Library, Online Learning, Enrollment Management), student affairs, and the general education curriculum, UAC monitors assessment activity at the program level, oversees the process of annual assessment reports, reviews them, and provides feedback. Annual assessment reports contain information related to the articulation of student learning outcomes, the measures used to assess students' achievement, actions based on review and analysis of the data, and recommendations for program improvement. An online database was developed and implemented in 2015 to make annual reporting processes more efficient. The new database accommodates data entry, report review, the provision of reviewer feedback, and provides multiple options for reporting in aggregate across programs and service units.

UAC collaborates with appropriate internal and external resources (e.g. nationally-known assessment experts including Dr. Barbara Walvoord, Dr. Marcia Ditmyer, Linda Suskie), to provide leadership for professional development of faculty, administration and staff regarding assessment processes and resources. The UAC website serves as a source for archiving assessment activity and resources available for those involved with assessment.

In addition, UAC reviews assessment data at a macro-level in order to highlight identified themes emerging from various data points across campus. As an example of this level of review, in fall 2015, UAC conducted a review of multiple data sources related to the general education program. The data reviewed included departmental general education reports and summary, data from Institutional Research related to general education courses, results of recent CLA and senior surveys that were developed to seek feedback on graduating student perceptions of how much their experiences at the institution contributed to development of specific skills aligned with the general education competencies. (charge, minutes)

While all colleges, service units and the provost's office are represented on UAC, assessment processes in individual colleges, units, and departments vary. In 2013, a survey of academic programs found 44% had an identified assessment coordinator and 52% had either a departmental or program assessment committee. These individuals or groups assumed responsibility for reviewing programs' assessment plans/reports and for making recommendations for improvement such as curriculum and instruction modifications, the introduction of new or revised measures, or faculty development. An internal survey (department survey, item 4 summary) created for this assurance argument was distributed to department chairs in spring 2015 (response rate 78%). The survey included the item "*Does your department have an assessment committee in place to plan student evaluation and review performance outcomes?*" Of the reporting departments, 67% had an assessment committee at the department level and 19% had a committee at the level of the program. The remaining departments described other means of assessment oversight, including department chairs and/or program directors.

Following the full site visit and a recommendation by HLC in 2012, a General Education Assessment Planning Committee was created in 2013 comprised of members of Faculty Senate and UAC, and individuals from OAAPR. Using the general education competencies (student learning outcomes) approved by Faculty Senate, this committee began to develop/implement an assessment process for the general education program. Consistent with the approach used for other academic programs, the committee first developed an assessment plan and then worked to implement it across departments contributing to general education. Faculty Senate members of this committee are UAC general education liaisons. A report on the achievement of general

education learning outcomes is developed and reviewed by members of the UAC along with other data regarding the program. (Gen ed assessment plan, Gen ed report, minutes, UAC review of gen ed)

The overarching University Assessment Plan was revised in 2015. The University Assessment Director, in collaboration with UAC, worked to update and enhance the existing university-wide plan last revised in 2008 and endorsed by the Provost. The plan outlines the role and expected practices of each institutional group involved in the process of ongoing student learning assessment, including the responsibility of each academic program and service unit to develop relevant student learning outcomes, corresponding and appropriate measures, mechanisms to analyze and report data, and to take action as indicated by their evidence of student achievement.

The effectiveness of the institution's assessment processes is evidenced by several documented outcomes:

- Overall improved quality and contents of the assessment reports submitted to the UAC. Earlier reports focused mainly on process while current reports articulate how programs are using data to make informed decisions regarding changes in some aspect of the program curriculum to improve students' achievement.
- Numbers of academic programs and service units submitting completed assessment reports increased, providing additional evidence the current structure is enhancing the focus on assessment across the institution. The UAC has had strong participation from academic and service units.
- The expanded role of UAC. Beginning in 2015, UAC is reviewing/analyzing not only data produced in academic program/service unit reports but also data generated by other sources across the institution.

2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

All UT graduate and undergraduate degree and certificate programs submit program assessment reports annually. Each report, now in electronic format, lists measurable student learning outcomes for the program. The report requires information about the measures used to assess these learning outcomes along with examples of how the program used the results from these measures to develop improvement strategies.

In a similar way, co-curricular programs offered by academic support/service units submit an annual assessment report. Here as well, units are required to articulate outcomes relevant to students' learning, defined measures, and examples of how results were used to improve activities within the unit.

In Fall 2014, the UAC requested all academic programs and service units to update their assessment plans. [Assessment reports](#) were submitted by all colleges and service units at the institution in November 2015. In some cases, individual programs or offices were still in the process of developing assessment plans that included identification of student learning outcomes and appropriate measures. The Faculty Assessment Representative (new position in 2014) met one-on-one as needed to facilitate this process. UAC monitors the submission and reviews the content of assessment plans, providing additional support as needed. Programs and service units are encouraged to focus on how data are used to inform changes -improvements to support improved student learning with an ultimate goal of improved student persistence and degree completion.

As recommended in the HLC 2012 Report, a comprehensive annual assessment report is also developed and submitted for the general education curriculum. Reports from the individual courses/departments comprising the general education program identify their specific course student learning outcomes that are in alignment with the institutions general education outcomes. The course then identifies the corresponding assessment strategies used to determine student achievement of the outcome and notes students' achievement. Finally, each course/department reports a summary of student strengths and weaknesses, department action items based on analysis of results, and recommendations for university action items. The set of

course/department reports is reported in aggregate as a [single assessment report for the general education curriculum](#) (2014).

3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

Each academic/service unit and general education program provides documentation in annual assessment reports to UAC of how it uses information gained from assessment to improve student learning. The UAC college/service unit liaison summarizes action items and notes trends as well as recommendation for university action items that emerge from the program/unit reports. [Program reports](#) describe actions that took place and include:

- Changes in the sequence of courses within a program
- The implementation of a new assessment for a program. For example, the College of Nursing responded to a recent trend in passage rates for a licensure exam by investing funds in the acquisition of a software package that allows formative practice exams to be integrated into the curriculum.
- Service or program expansion. The Learning Enhancement Center expanded its Supplemental Instruction (SI) program by hiring and training new tutors. DFW rates for the introductory psychology classes combined with data reflecting positive impact of the SI programs in existing content areas supported the expansion of SI into psychology.
- Revisions in pedagogy. For example, during review and analysis of data by the department of Biology faculty, the faculty noted the differences in students' performance on lower level test items when compared to performance on higher level items in its general education course. As a result, faculty agreed to increase examples of higher order problem solving in lectures and to create additional opportunities for active learning in the course.
- An example of a trend that emerged from review of the various college reports and suggestions for institutional action was the recommendation of a writing center on the Health Science Campus, similar to the writing center on the main campus. Plans to bring writing center experts to the health science campus are underway.

UAC is responsible for providing recommendations ([minutes](#)) to the Provost regarding institutional decisions related to budget and resource allocation based on various sources of data, including the reports generated through UAC, Institutional Research, OAAPR, and other related sources. These recommendations are communicated by means of the [UT Assessment Report](#), developed by the University Assessment Director and approved by UAC.

Recent recommendations included:

- Institutional Support for Writing/Communication Skills and the extension of Writing Center resources to the HSC
- Institutional initiatives related to information literacy
- Institutional initiatives related to technology/Online Learning, for example, tutorials for computer proficiency or for learning in the DL environment

4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

University assessment plans frame assessment at the institutional level and encourage faculty and staff to utilize assessment processes to nurture effective teaching and learning strategies, enhances faculty collaboration, and encourages individuals working at each level (course, program, and institution) to help inform decision-making based on evidence. The plan outlines a schedule of longitudinal reviews of assessment reporting for individual programs and service units aligned with program review and individual program accreditation review cycles.

Faculty and staff are participants in the overall UT assessment strategy; however, this is an area that continues to develop. A survey of academic programs and service units in 2012-2013 indicated that while faculty and staff members were involved in the process, UT has had room for improvement. [(executive summaries-academic and service)](#)

To address this issue, several initiatives were implemented to broaden faculty and staff participation in the assessment process:

1. The Faculty Assessment Representative provided workshops and met one-on-one with individual programs, faculty, and staff to provide support as they develop their assessment processes. Over 200 workshops and meetings were held in 2014-15 that include meetings with academic program directors and service units (FAR reports, website of resources from the office).

2. In conjunction with the UTC, OAAPR hosted the Course Design Institute to teach faculty how to develop student learning outcomes and to align relevant and appropriate course assignments, materials and teaching methods. Twenty-four faculty members participated during June and July 2014. The Provost's Office supported participation by means of summer stipends for participants. (List of CDI participants, website announcement for CDI)

3. OAAPR hosts an annual Assessment Day each spring to promote best practices in assessment and recognize individuals who contribute to the success of our institutional assessment process. Over 75 faculty and staff members participated in the 2015 event. (Assessment day flyers for both years)

4. OAAPR participates in New Faculty Orientation and encourages new faculty to reflect on the alignment of assessment strategies and student learning outcomes as well as the need to use the assessment information generated in their courses to revise their courses with an ultimate goal of improving students' achievement. Resources available to provide support for assessment at the course level are shared. (New Faculty Orientation agenda, website)

5. OAAPR, in collaboration with Faculty Senate, hosted a General Education Assessment Appreciation Event in fall 2015 for all faculty involved in teaching the general education curriculum to acknowledge individual faculty for their support in teaching and assessing the general education curriculum. Fifty-eight general education faculty members and Faculty Senate leaders attended the first annual event.

4C -- The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.

UT closely monitors the Fall-to-Fall retention rate of degree-seeking first-time, full-time students on an annual basis. Student persistence is measured by monitoring the percentage of students who return on a semester-to-semester basis and as the percentage of students who return after completing years 2 and 3 of their studies. Student completion rates are determined by monitoring the 4-, 5-, and 6-year completion rates of entering cohorts of degree-seeking first-time, full-time students.

Since the 2012 HLC visit, UT increased its focus on student retention, persistence and completion. We are committed to retention, student success and graduation from a holistic institutional standpoint. Data obtained prompted the institution to undertake a number of actions to improve retention and persistence. Two new positions, Assistant Provost for Student Success and Retention and Vice Provost for Retention and Undergraduate Studies were created to oversee student success and retention initiatives.

In fall 2015, the Recruitment and Retention Coordinating Council was split to form two independent committees, one focused on Recruitment and one focused on Retention. The Retention Coordinating Council will be led by the new Vice Provost for Retention and Undergraduate Studies.

In 2014, UT submitted the University Completion Plan to the State of Ohio. The purpose of the Plan is to advance course completion and graduation rates of the undergraduate student populations.

Completion Goals for 2014-2016 ([pages 8-9 University Completion Plan](#)) include increasing the number of students enrolling in College Credit Plus by 2%/year for the next five years; increase course success rate of students in introductory writing by 5 percentage points and success in introductory mathematics courses by 3 percentage points the next two years over Fall 2013/Spring 2014 completion rates; increase the number of associate/baccalaureate degrees awarded by 1 percentage point annually for the next two years; and increase the number of adults earning credit utilizing prior learning assessment by 2 percentage points for the next five years. In addition, the University is committed to increasing its first-year retention, first-time, full-time students) to 80% or greater by 2019. This goal is considered reasonable as first year retention rose from low numbers (2012) to 67% (2013), 70% (2014) and then to 71.9% for 2015 (based on the preliminary census report). This is the highest retention rate at the institution in over a decade.

2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

UT'S Office of Institutional Research regularly collects and reports information on student retention, persistence, and completion. Fall-to-Fall university retention rates of degree-seeking first-time, full-time students are determined after the fall census date. Retention rates are reported also per academic college ([Retention Census Report Fall 15](#)). [Academic Success Coaches](#) play an active role in monitoring Fall to Spring retention rates and conduct registration pushes using Starfish Connect, emails, and the Retention Communication Workgroup campaign "push for registration" to ensure students are meeting with their academic advisors prior to course registration. UT collects data on year two-to-three and year three-to-four persistence ([data from IR](#)). Student completion rates are determined by monitoring the 4-, 5-, and 6-year completion rates of entering cohorts of degree-seeking first-time, full-time students. This includes data by academic college and is broken down by gender and race ([Retention-Graduation Oct 5 15](#)).

These data are shared across UT for review, analysis and action. The Provost's Office, Vice Provost for Retention and Undergraduate Studies, the Assistant Provost for Student Success, the

Retention Coordinating Council, the college deans and department chairs are the primary reviewers.

To improve use of available institutional data and identify additional sources of information relevant to persistence and completion, a UT team attended the HLC Persistence and Completion Workshop in July 2015. Participation in the workshop led to an initiative to explore first year students' intent using Cooperative Institutional Research Program data– an effort to learn more about why students who are admitted with the intent of transferring choose to stay. As a follow up, the institution applied for membership in the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy.

3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

Information regarding retention, persistence and completion has been used to develop ways to help UT achieve the goals articulated in the University Completion Plan.

Goal of increasing enrollment in College Credit Plus: Increased communication and efforts to strengthen relationships with high schools resulted in increased participation from 738 students in Fall 2014 to 911 students in Fall 2015. This 24% increase exceeded the University Completion Plan goal of increasing by 2%/year. Participating high schools grew from 45 to 105 and cities represented grew from 20 to 50.

Goal of improving course success rate in introductory writing: Starfish CONNECT EARLY ALERT^{TM} an early alert warning and student tracking system that allows for targeted student outreach based on trigger alert flags, was used in a one semester pilot partnership between the Math and English Departments. This focused on ENGL1110 (English Composition I), MATH1200 (Math Modeling and Problem Solving) and MATH1320 (College Algebra). The following outcomes of this program's success provide evidence that the University uses information to provide strategic guidance in the development and implementation programs to enhance student learning:

- The goal of improving the DFW rate by five percentage points in ENGL1110 was met for the pilot semester (DFW rates)
- The goal of improving the DFW rate by three percentage points was surpassed in MATH 1200 (60.19% DFW rate to 44.59%) for the pilot semester
- The goal of improving the DFW rate by three percentage points was also surpassed in MATH 1320 (48.45% DFW rate to 41.23%) for the pilot semester

Based on these positive outcomes, use of the early alert system was expanded for Fall 2015 to include MATH1180, MATH1730 (select sections), MATH1850 (select sections), and ENGL1130.

Starfish is also utilized to raise system-generated flags for items which can impact student retention, including holds in Banner for missing transcripts and past due balance registration holds in Banner. Of the 1, 429 students who received flags on these two issues, all but one student remedied the issue.

Goal of increasing the number of associate/baccalaureate degrees awarded by 1 percentage point annually for the next two years: There had been an upward trend in degree completion, with a 13.5% increase in degrees awarded since 2009-2010. However, the past two years have seen a decline. Sixty one associate's degrees and 2,878 bachelor's degrees were awarded in 2013 - 2014 and 69 associate's degrees and 2800 bachelor's degrees in 2014-2015, a 2 percentage point decrease from the prior year. Increasing retention rates suggest that these numbers may improve over the next few years.

Goal of increasing the number of adults earning credit utilizing prior learning assessment by 2 percentage points/year: Award of PLA credit hours fell to a low in 2013 of 6 from 43 hours awarded in 2012. Changes made in response were to hire a new PLA specialist, the Board of Trustees approved a change in fee structure, and a process was introduced to systematize the PLA process for departments to provide more guidance and structure for faculty. As a result of these combined efforts, 122 PLA credit hours were awarded during 2014-15, exceeding the goal articulated in the University Completion Plan.

Additional retention, persistence and graduation strategies

As both qualitative and quantitative student retention and persistence data continue to be collected and analyzed, completion strategies continue to evolve. Specific efforts to attract well-prepared students are underway. The Freshman Class Profile for the past 5 years showed the average ACT, 50th % of ACT and high school GPA have increased.

To help support recruitment of well-prepared students, the Jesup Scott Honors College was formed in Fall 2012. A differentiated communication plan for honors students, Scholarship Days, personalized tours and 1:1 appointments have led to a tremendous increase in the number of Honors Program applicants from 562 Honors Program applicants in Fall 2013 to 3,497 for Fall 2015. Participation in the Honors Program overall also increased from 903 students in Fall 2011 to 1,296 in Fall 2015, a 43% increase.

Implemented in 2013-2014, the goal of the success coach program is to assist and empower students to develop skills, and implement individualized plans for academic and personal success. The Assistant Provost for Student Success and Retention oversees this initiative. As a result of the success coach initiative, and existing resources for students' success, first year retention rose from 67% (2013) to 70% (2014) and to 71.9% in 2015 (preliminary census report), the highest retention rate at the institution in over a decade. For two years, success coaches have been assigned to every student in the incoming cohort of first year students. Currently, every first and second year student has an assigned coach. Additional resources were made available in 2015 to increase numbers of success coaches, now at 20 coaches.

Responding to the variety of reasons associated with students who do not persist, an integrated retention communication plan and transactional communication campaigns have been created. Frequent email reminders to students regarding registration and re-admission are sent. Degree pathways that are opportunities, such as skill-building courses, seminars, or two-year Associate degrees, have been implemented for students who were not initially accepted into a professional or preferred program. A "retention fund" has been created for well-performing students with financial need. Since Summer 2012, 1,353 students have been assisted with over $1.2M in Tillitson and Tuition Assistance Grants. The Graduation Planning System will help

students to meet education goals by identifying courses that transfer, providing interactive roadmaps for defining personal plans, and helping students monitor their progress.

In response to data indicating lower retention and completion rates for first generation college students, the [Multicultural Emerging Scholars Program-Summer Bridge and Living Learning Community (MESP)](#) was initiated summer 2015. It is designed to strengthen a student's first academic year by providing a supportive environment and connecting them with other students who share their goals related to academic achievement and career development. Throughout the summer and academic year, MESP students receive direct support and instruction from a dedicated team of peer mentors, on-site advisors, graduate students, and MESP directors. To be eligible for the program, students are: admitted in the College Languages, Literature & Social Sciences or the College of Natural Science & Mathematics; have a high school grade point average between 2.25 and 3.20; and have an ACT Composite score between 15 and 20.

The [MESP Summer Bridge](#) component is a residential summer program. During summer 2015, 25 students spent six weeks living in the International House Residence Hall where they received enhanced instructions in Math and English and a survey course in human anthropology, and participated in academic and social enrichment activities. At the end of summer, all 25 students finished the program, earning an average of 7.36 college credits and finishing with a 3.15 average GPA. Continuing fall 2015 and spring 2016, 24 students will live in the same residence hall with the community of scholars established during the summer and continue to receive enhanced instruction and advising. The academic progress of this cohort continues to be monitored and plans to expand the program, pending continued positive outcomes, are already being discussed.

Several initiatives were implemented by the Division of Student Affairs in recent years to improve retention. The Senior Vice President for the Student Experience collaborated with the Director of Internal Audit and Chief Compliance Officer who is experienced in Six Sigma organizational process improvements (effectiveness and efficiency of operations, reliability of financial reporting, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, strategic planning), to redesign processes and implement best practices relating to student customer service initiatives.

These individuals presented the University's service transformations at the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators in 2012 and the Southwestern Ohio Council for Higher Education in 2013.

UT recognizes the reality that the student experience relies upon many services across the organization, including units outside the Senior Vice President's authority. To address this, UT created the Advising and Success Coach Program in August 2013. Success Coaches are intended to serve as personal and professional advisers. They are assigned to students during their freshman year and follow them throughout their academic career.

Another new initiative implemented is the "Ask Rocky" program offered by the Office for the Student Experience. Students needing quick answers to general questions can instant message, email, call, or visit in person to get the information they need.

Additional efforts to improve student retention include housing incentives, a new 2-year housing policy, the University Learning Collaborative, and the new Sexual Assault Education and Prevention Program (SAEPP). Highlights of recent initiatives can be accessed from the Student Affairs website by reviewing the 2014 annual report.

To improve student satisfaction, changes made to Rocket Solutions Central (RSC) were instrumental in creating a positive student experience. Changes since the last HLC visit include:

- Automation of continuing student scholarship application and appeal processes – fall 2013
- Implementing the proxy module in Banner to allow students flexibility in identifying authorized persons – summer 2013
- Integrated with success coaches to train and partner with them to reach out to at-risk students – summer 2013
- Automation of the financial aid summer application, making it available on line which reduces wait times at RSC – summer 2014
  (Automation of the summer financial aid (FA) application makes it easier for students to apply for FA for the summer semester and allows RSC to quickly respond to their needs)

- Created publications (print and online) to better educate parents and students about costs – ongoing (these are reviewed each year)
- Continually modified presentations and involvement in Rocket Launch to improve the message to students and parents – ongoing (there were major revisions this winter to these presentations to address financial literacy; this is reviewed each year)
- Web-based feedback form to solicit feedback from students and parents about delivery of services – summer 2015.
- Taking a leadership role in working with students on loan indebtedness and financial literacy - summer 2015 (implemented at 2015-2016 orientation).
- The RSC website was updated in 2015 and is updated annually throughout the year to better serve students.
- Use of staff ambassadors at the start of fall and spring semesters to assist new students with questions related to the Rocket Solutions services and to educate students on online processes. The assistance they provide has helped to decrease the wait lines at RSC during busy times.

In addition to creating new initiatives, existing support services have made changes based on data. For example the Learning Enhancement Center has expanded its Supplemental Instruction (SI) program to include the introductory psychology course based on its current DWF rates and the success of the SI program. And, in response to student and faculty feedback, staffing at the Writing Center, open to all university students and providing face-to-face and online tutoring for writers in all disciplines, was revised to include more faculty presence and oversight. On-site Center faculty have an expanded role in working with students on their writing assignments and supervising other tutors in the Center.

4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of the programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

UT utilizes Banner by Elucian as our student information system. Banner enables UT to collect, store, manage and apply real-time data in admissions, registration and enrollment and academic administration. In keeping with best practices, IPEDS definitions are used for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion.

As noted earlier, the institution has applied for membership in the HLC's Persistence and Completion Academy, with the goal to enhance our methods and to reflect additional approaches to using data to inform actions related to persistence and completion.