

Assurance Argument
University of Evansville - IN

1/27/2016



Assurance System

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Introduction

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Institutions of higher education in the United States are challenged today to demonstrate their value in ways unthinkable a generation ago, when the fundamental strength and contribution to the public good of American colleges and universities was largely taken as a matter of faith. Today we are called upon to document to an increasingly wary public and government – not to mention prospective students and parents – that students' lives will be transformed by the time they spend at our institutions.

At the University of Evansville, rather than being threatened by these challenges, we are inspired by them to more vigorously create and sustain a learning community that will nurture in our students the capacity to lead lives of meaning, significance, and accomplishment. We recognize that reaffirmation of accreditation is central to this process. Accordingly, we have cultivated an internal conversation that emphasizes reaccreditation as a driver of institutional improvement rather than an obligation to be periodically discharged.

That UE is a place of distinctive quality is unquestionable. Our faculty's commitment to students is apparent across the board, from anecdotal campus conversations to the National Survey of Student Engagement's systematic assessment. Our international character – evident in the curriculum, in study abroad participation, and in the large number of international students on campus – prepares students for a new world of challenges and opportunities. We are, moreover, committed to innovative curricular development that uses the classroom as the foundation for a range of remarkable experiential opportunities. Perhaps most important, UE exemplifies the integration of liberal learning and professional preparation with its four colleges and schools firmly grounded in the liberal arts.

Even as we celebrate our strengths, we recognize the need to use limited resources wisely, to address needs that have too long gone unmet, and to create a campus whose diversity is as apparent in everyday interactions as it is in our philosophical commitments and public statements. We must also deal more successfully with a conundrum that is faced by virtually all institutions of our size, quality, and resource base: How do we manage the workload of a faculty, staff, and administration that is asked, seemingly every year, to do more with less? We are working hard to meet this challenge, including consideration of new ways of assessing and affirming contributions to the institution, especially among our faculty. We recognize, as well, that institutional excellence is best served by shaping the decision-making and strategic planning processes of the University as systematic, evidenced-based, and inclusive – something that has been fully implemented this year.

We submit this report, then, confident that its preparation and content serve two key goals. One goal, of course, is to satisfy the Higher Learning Commission that UE is fully deserving of reaffirmation of accreditation. The more important goal is to ensure that we continue to serve our students with the same energy, commitment to quality, and impact that has characterized the University of Evansville for more than 150 years.

Thomas A. Kazee, President, University of Evansville



1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

1.A.1.

The University's Mission Statements (the Mission of Learning (MOL); the Educational Objectives (EOs); and the statements of Identity, Vision, and Core Purpose) have been developed with participation of members of the University community and adopted by the Board of Trustees.

The [MOL](#) articulates the University's identity as a private, Methodist-affiliated, predominantly undergraduate, co-educational institution that integrates the liberal arts and sciences with professional programs. Growing out of the University's history and ties to Evansville and the broader international community, the MOL affirms UE's commitment to helping a multicultural world free itself from ignorance and prejudice. Through it, the University embraces its obligation to the public good by preparing women and men for a life of service and leadership.

Revision of the MOL was central to the 2001 strategic planning discussions. Reflecting the University's tradition of shared governance, the current statement was developed by an *ad hoc* faculty committee, adopted by the Faculty Senate, and [approved by the Board of Trustees](#) (BOT) on February 15, 2002.

[The Educational Objectives](#) focus the MOL through the lens of contemporary educational best practices. Organic in nature, the EOs are revised as needed to align with the institution's strategic vision and academic goals and objectives; the most recent revision was adopted by the faculty in 2011. The Board is informed of any changes through regular standing committee reports by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Strategic Plan, "Transforming Tomorrow," was approved by the [Board in February 2011](#), reaffirming the Core Purpose and endorsing the Identity and Vision statements. The Identity statement defines the University in terms of its commitment and traditions, while the Vision statement articulates its long-term goals. [The Core Purpose](#) serves as the bridge between these [two statements](#). Taken together, these three statements represent UE's long-term identity and define the enduring

character of the University.

1.A.2.

The MOL serves as a blueprint for building a campus community that values and fosters critical inquiry and freedom from ignorance and prejudice. At the same time, it provides the foundation for academic programs and support services.

The [EOs](#) provide guidance for the growth and development of academic programs and student support services, reflective of present-day realities and the University's best understanding of future challenges and opportunities.

Academic Programs

Consistent with our mission, 96 of the 101 academic programs that award degrees, majors, and minors are [undergraduate programs](#). Mindful of capacity, the University awards a few select graduate degrees to address the needs and demands of the surrounding community. All academic programs are required to develop [assessment plans with program level outcomes linked to the EOs](#).

[Enduring Foundations](#), our General Education Program, embodies the institution's commitment to the liberal arts and sciences as a basis for intellectual and personal growth. It connects to objectives that aim to improve practical and intellectual skills and develop personal and social responsibility. Its completion is required of nearly all students seeking baccalaureate degrees.

Student Support Services

Support services for students are housed in two functional areas of the University, the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) and the Office of Student Affairs (OSA).

In fulfillment of UE's MOL and EOs, the [OAA manages a wide range of services for students](#). Chief among these are the services provided by the Center for Academic Advising, the Writing Center, the University Libraries, and the Offices of Education Abroad and Harlaxton College Programs. Details regarding the services appear in the argument for Core Component 3D.

The OSA provides a broad array of services that foster leadership, service, and social responsibility. The breadth, depth, and gravity of the [support services](#) provided are reflected in the [OSA's mission statement](#). Three areas in particular highlight the intentional connection between the student support services and the mission. The Center for Student Engagement offers opportunities for student involvement in work for the public good. Religious Life programs are consistent with the University's affiliation with the United Methodist Church and commitment to diversity and intercultural competence, specifically [interfaith understanding](#) and appreciation through [interaction](#) and [engagement](#). [Career Development services](#) not only support our Core Purpose of helping students engage the world as productive citizens, but also provide practical training in the development of the professional presence necessary for career success. Details about other support services appear in the argument for Core Component 3D.

Both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs collaborate to provide services in support of the University's global vision and international focus. The Offices of Education Abroad and Harlaxton College Programs, part of Academic Affairs, provide services to help domestic students take part in study abroad opportunities provided by Harlaxton College, the British campus of the University of Evansville, and other organizations as well as staff to help University faculty develop short-term

[study abroad opportunities](#). Student Affairs, through the Office of Cultural Engagement and International Services, fosters meaningful interactions between domestic and international students as part of its focus. Further examples of institutional collaboration are documented in the University's [Quality Initiative: Developing Responsible Global Citizens](#).

Enrollment Profile

Various markers of the Enrollment Profile indicate that this institution attracts students who see the benefit of a UE education and contribute to its sense of identity. The University commits to a personalized education that is underscored by the low [student-to-faculty ratio](#). Standardized test scores and the high school GPAs of incoming freshmen indicate that UE is attracting talented and motivated [students](#). The vast majority of students are enrolled in [undergraduate programs](#). Our global perspective is reflected in increased [international enrollment](#) and the number of [students enrolled](#) at Harlaxton College or studying abroad at other locations. At its founding in 1854, the University was one of the few co-educational institutions in the country. Today the [male-to-female ratio](#) is consistent with its historical identity as a co-educational institution.

Through careful study and through the 2010-11 strategic planning and the 2013-14 prioritization processes, the University reaffirmed its commitment to providing students the opportunity to compete at the highest level of [intercollegiate athletics](#), consistent with the [central mission of learning](#). Roughly 10 percent of the incoming freshmen are [student-athletes](#). The Athletics Academic and Student Support program helps student-athletes find success in the classroom as they pursue success in their chosen sport. The UE student-athlete cohort won the Missouri Valley Conference Academic Award for the highest annual aggregate GPA in 2011-12 and 2012-13, finishing 2nd three times in the last five years. Over the most recent five-year history, the [Athletic Department GPA](#) has risen from 3.17 to 3.27, with 49% of the student-athlete population making the University Dean's List (3.50 GPA) during the 2013-14 academic year.

1.A.3.

The 2011 Strategic Plan affirms the Mission and outlines seven Core Goals that guide planning and budgeting priorities. The President bears the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the Core Goals and the preparation of the yearly budget. In 2013-14, when faced with difficult budget decisions in light of projected enrollment challenges, the institution embarked upon a prioritization process (explained more fully in Core Component 5A). The experience gained in this process influenced a recently implemented systematic evaluation and planning process that further supports the Core Goals of the Strategic Plan. The ways in which the Mission helps guide the planning and budgeting process are documented in the argument for Component 5C, subcomponent 2.

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

1.B.1.

UE's Mission is articulated through the Mission of Learning (MOL); the Educational Objectives (EOs); and the statements on Identity, Vision, and Core Purpose, as discussed in Component 1A. All these statements are made available to the public via the University's [website](#).

The University Catalog, available in print, as well as online for public download, contains the [MOL and the EOs](#).

The Strategic Plan, which affirms the University Mission and contains Core Goals that provide direction for the institution, is available to the public on the UE [website](#).

To make the Mission Statement more accessible, the Office of Marketing and Communications developed the IMPACT acronym to highlight six compelling components of the UE identity and mission: **I**nternational, **M**eaningful, **P**ersonal, **A**ccountable, **C**onnected, **T**ransformational. IMPACT is used in many [forms of communication](#) (both [internal](#) and external) using various media (including [print](#), traditional broadcast, and digital online).

In September 2015 the University took a further step in making its mission publicly known through the [UE Guarantee](#). As President Kazee stated in announcing the UE Guarantee, "This commitment is part of the UE's ongoing mission to provide its students with an affordable, high quality education that will prepare graduates for lives of meaning and accomplishment." Starting with the freshman class entering in Fall 2016, the UE Guarantee assures that students will graduate in four years (or the fifth year will be paid for by the University), engage with talented and dedicated professors, receive a scholarship, have access to at least one internship, and have the chance to study abroad.

1.B.2./1.B.3.

The Mission Statements reflect ongoing discussion within the campus community. The EOs were updated before the completion of the 2013-15 University Catalog, coinciding with [faculty discussions](#) about the general education program and assessment. The development of the 2011 Strategic Plan actively [engaged faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, and students](#). (explained in 5.C.3.)

Taken together, the Mission Statements truly emphasize “a mission of learning,” focusing on undergraduate education that involves “active learning,” “individual attention,” and “life-transforming educational experiences” so UE's students have the “vision and wisdom to lead and to serve.” While the primary focus of the institution is undergraduate education, the statements also express the value the University places on “[talented and motivated faculty](#)” and the scholarship they produce.

Through its Mission Statement, UE establishes the nature of its educational programs and services by stating its commitments to (a) liberal arts and sciences; (b) the integration of liberal education and professional programs; (c) optimal learning through individual attention; (d) an international and global vision; (e) a holistic view of the student that includes mind, body, and spirit; and (f) preparation of students for personal and professional service and leadership in their communities. Because the University is “committed to the liberal arts and sciences as a basis for intellectual and personal growth,” the Mission Statement repeatedly articulates our commitment to the student’s lifelong development, extending to meaningful connections with alumni, including [connections between alumni and current students](#).

To help define the scope of the University’s educational programs and services, the EOs outline the range of knowledge and intellectual skills that UE believes are important in helping to develop citizens who will be “informed, ethical, and productive.” They also acknowledge the importance of gaining a depth of knowledge in one or more academic disciplines. While the University maintains a small number of select graduate-level programs, the Mission Statement emphasizes undergraduate education.

The University values the surrounding community as a vital constituent and states its commitment to providing a range of continuing education programs for the Evansville community, including Adult Education degree programs, non-credit courses, and public lectures by outside speakers.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

1.C.1.

The University articulates its role and responsibility within a diverse and multicultural society through its mission and planning documents, as well as through the mission and planning documents of the divisions within the institution. [The Mission of Learning](#) (MOL) directly tackles the important role that the institution can play in addressing the challenges of a multicultural society that strives to understand and celebrate diversity.

But the view that UE takes, and that it expects its students and alumni to take, is broader than the region from which a majority of our students are drawn. The [MOL](#) speaks to the University's role in a global society and addresses the need to educate students to understand and appreciate diversity. The specific ways that components of the University address diversity are detailed in 1.C.2.

[The Strategic Plan](#) identifies Core Goals that focus attention on diversity at a variety of levels. Increasing international programs and engagement, along with the number of international students, are goals that reflect the institution's ongoing commitment to international perspectives and multicultural engagement. The Strategic Plan commits to increasing attention to diversity in all aspects of institutional operations, from a commitment to social responsibility that includes increasing representational diversity among the student, faculty, and staff populations to affirming our commitment to supplier diversity. Four out of seven Strategic Plan Core Goals and associated Action Steps address [diversity and multicultural engagement](#).

The Educational Objectives "reflect the mission and character of the University of Evansville as well as nationally-recognized best practices for a liberal education that equip students to compete and thrive in an increasingly complex global society." Specifically, several objectives focus on [diversity and intercultural development](#).

Because of UE's educational commitment to diversity and intercultural development, the recently implemented *Enduring Foundations* General Education Program includes requirements related to diversity and cultural competence. Students are required to develop knowledge, analytical skills, and attitudes related to both [international](#) and [domestic diversity](#). AAC&U's VALUE rubrics help frame student learning outcomes that represent important abilities for living in a multicultural society, such as cross-cultural knowledge and understanding, articulation of cultural self-awareness, development of cultural competence, and exploration of questions from multiple perspectives.

1.C.2.

Several steps have been taken to achieve Strategic Plan Core Goal V: Model and teaching social

responsibility in the local and global community, with a special focus on diversity challenges. In 2006 UE developed an institutional diversity position framework with the creation of the Office of Diversity Initiatives (ODI) and hired the [first Diversity and Equity Officer](#) (DEO). The [current director](#) began on August 26, 2013. As part of [Core Goal V](#), the University expanded the responsibilities of the position to include the advancement of diversity and equity on campus. The DEO provides the UE community with a staff member who is specifically charged with sharing her expertise on diversity-related matters. Reporting directly to the President, the DEO is a member of the President's Cabinet and is part of several campus committees.

Changes in structures and processes have been implemented to help achieve Core Goal V systematically. In May 2014 the Board of Trustees made a commitment to focus on diversity by making the [Diversity Committee a standing committee of the Board](#), with the DEO serving as the staff liaison. The Diversity Committee receives reports and reviews benchmarks from the DEO to provide guidance and support to the University of Evansville Inclusion Committee (UEIC) in developing a [statement of purpose, goals, actions, and outcomes](#) for diversity and inclusion on campus.

In October 2014, the Board reviewed [diversity benchmarks](#) established as the foundation for the UEIC to further develop a Diversity Plan. A component of the plan includes reporting data on the overall diversity of student [enrollment and diversity trends](#) among faculty, staff, and administrators. To increase awareness and advance diversity initiatives throughout the University, the DEO compiles an End-of-Year Report that outlines ODI programs and participation from the [2013-14](#) and [2014-15](#) academic years. These reports also suggest strategies to improve diversity and inclusion efforts on campus as well as goals for future years.

The ODI facilitates [diversity training opportunities](#) focused on cultural competency, multicultural recruitment/retention, managing intercultural conflict, and higher education best practices. It also provides [semi-annual campus-wide diversity and inclusion training](#) opportunities for faculty, staff, administrators, and students. To help in programming multicultural events on campus, the University developed a Diverse Learning Environments (DLE) [survey](#) that examines two validation constructs: student perceptions of academic validation in the classroom and general interpersonal validation. The DLE [survey](#) helps to examine the relationships between validation, student experiences, and educational outcomes.

In its processes for hiring new employees and procuring its services, UE recognizes an opportunity to model social responsibility as part of Core Goal V. A statement of nondiscrimination is included in postings for all open University positions. Affirmative action and hiring procedures are outlined in the [Adjunct Faculty](#), [Faculty](#), [Staff](#), and [Administrator](#) Manuals. The University implemented a [Supplier Diversity Policy](#) in 2011 that was approved by the Board, and which was reviewed and revised in 2013. The policy has been disseminated with information on how to access Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE) and Woman-Owned Business Enterprises (WBE) as part of the University Purchase Card training offered to all new employees on campus.

The Office of Student Affairs "plays a key role in the educational mission of the University by intentionally creating an environment of self-discovery," as stated in its mission statement. Departments within Student Affairs specifically address their roles in providing for an open and diverse learning environment through their mission and goals, and thus provide a basis for the processes and activities that focus attention on students with diverse backgrounds and in fostering better [awareness, appreciation, and support for diversity on campus](#). A complete list of the offices within Student Affairs appears in [3.D.1](#), and specific examples of the ways in which these offices address their roles can be found in the [supporting documents](#).

In connection with HLC accreditation, the University implemented a Quality Initiative (Developing Responsible Global Citizens) that focuses on internationalization and social responsibility. The Quality Initiative Proposal (QIP) called for increasing the numbers and diversity of international students, as well as fostering Harlaxton and study abroad. Numerous initiatives and activities across the University contribute to the overall goal of comprehensive internationalization and diversity. Complete descriptions of these initiatives, along with more specific information on the Harlaxton and study abroad programs, is chronicled in the [Quality Initiative Final Report](#) to HLC. HLC reviewers responded to the final report in October, stating that “the QIP was significant in scope and impact and supports UE in its role as a leader in international education.” Indeed, in January 2015, UE’s British Campus, Harlaxton College, was named the number one study abroad program by [BestCollegeReviews.org](#), citing specifically the immersion of students in British culture both [inside](#) and [outside](#) of the classroom. Approximately 50 percent of UE students study abroad, many at Harlaxton College, which became part of the University in 1971.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.D.1.

Since its founding in 1854, UE has understood its [role and responsibility](#) in serving the public good. The impetus for establishing Moores Hill College was, in fact, "to serve the needs of Moores Hill and its surrounding areas." The University lives out its mission today by providing "life-transforming educational experiences that prepare [our students] to engage the world as informed, ethical, and productive citizens."

Directions taken and decisions made by the institution reflect an understanding that its educational work serves the public good. The Strategic Plan recognizes the University's public obligation by defining UE's [commitment to social responsibility](#) and including a clear set of action steps for implementing and sustaining diversity and service initiatives and for determining the institution's [environmental impact](#). The Educational Objectives are "intended to establish a common core of knowledge and skills upon which our students will build as they address contemporary and enduring questions and pursue personal growth." Indeed, *Enduring Foundations* includes overlay requirements in the areas of [Global Diversity and Social Responsibility](#) that will help students graduate from the institution as citizens who have the knowledge, skills, vision and wisdom to lead and to serve. Diversity is so important to the public good, both in providing opportunities for higher education for diverse populations and in providing an education that prepares students to productively engage a diverse world, that the University created the [Office of Diversity Initiatives](#) in the summer of 2006 with input and support from the UE African American Alumni Association, the Board, and supporters from the Evansville community.

As a recognized leader in study abroad, UE serves partner higher education institutions that make the commitment to send students and faculty to participate in programs at Harlaxton College. Partners include both public universities (for example, Western Kentucky University and the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire) and private institutions (for example, Baker University and Texas Lutheran University). The University is committed to providing students and faculty of its [partner schools](#) an excellent international education experience at Harlaxton.

The sum total of the University volunteer commitment merited recognition with the 2009, 2012, 2013, and 2014 [President's Higher Education Community Service Honor](#), an honor that recognizes institutions of higher education that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in the community. More recently, the seriousness of purpose with which UE

engages in the public good was recognized in September 2014 by [Washington Monthly College Rankings](#). The University was ranked 51st out of 671 universities in the Master's Universities category for impact on the lives of its students and the public good. The ranking system "aims to identify institutions that are acting on behalf of the true public interest." The magazine scored the nation's colleges and universities in social mobility (recruiting and graduating low-income students), research (producing cutting-edge scholarship and students who go on to earn PhDs), and service (teaching and encouraging students to give back).

1.D.2.

The University's Charter states that the institution exists to "promote the general interests of education and to qualify men and women to engage in several employments and profession of society." In a later section of the [Charter](#), it states: "Donations, devises, and bequests received must be used to benefit the institution or in harmony with the objective of the University." The costs of the instruction, research, public service, and academic support represent nearly 70 percent of the [general budget of the institution](#).

UE is a non-profit organization with no parent company to support. It has a subsidiary campus operating in England – Harlaxton College – which is also a non-profit organization. The University supports its Harlaxton campus by collecting revenues generated by students attending that campus and then transferring a portion of that revenue to cover operating costs. Of the students attending Harlaxton, approximately 60 percent are UE students using this as a study abroad opportunity with the remainder being students from partner institutions. The [Harlaxton campus regularly has an excess of revenue](#), which is retained on the main campus to support its operations.

In the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, the mission is to "continuously inform, motivate, involve, and provide stewardship to the UE family in order to secure personal and financial support for the needs of UE, thereby helping the University better fulfill its core purpose." Motivated by educational purposes, the University [fundraising efforts](#) support student scholarship, faculty programs, stewardship events, community outreach, and bricks and mortar initiatives.

UE continually evaluates outcomes of educational programs and redirects funds to support mission-driven strategic goals and objectives. For example, although the EMBA in the Schroeder Family School of Business generated revenue for the University over three cohorts, the program was discontinued because review of the learning goals of the program through the School's AACSB accreditation process revealed that the EMBA was not achieving the stated learning goals of the [program](#).

1.D.3.

The University engages with external constituents and communities of interests through sustainability initiatives, institutional partnerships, educational and community outreach, cultural events and activities, and volunteer opportunities.

The institution believes its role in supporting the educational, sustainability, and social responsibility needs of the community is as important as its responsibilities for transforming the lives of its students. UE, in fact, was the first organization in Vanderburgh County to build its facilities in compliance with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards as issued by the U.S. Green Building Council. The institution now has four [LEED certified buildings](#) on campus and has completed the construction of a [state-of-the-art greenhouse](#). Other environmentally-driven initiatives include the restoration of a 1,100-acre natural prairie habitat made possible through a [National](#)

[Oceanic Atmospheric Administration grant](#) involving biology and environmental science students and faculty; and a collaboration between students, professional engineers, and civic leaders in Fairfield, Illinois, to reestablish a 12-acre lake and provide flood protection for residents of the city. The Fairfield project resulted in the University receiving a [National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying Award](#) (NCEES) for connecting professional practice to education. In 2014 UE, along with the City of Evansville and numerous community members, developed a plan to save a [historic house](#) built by William Wesley Peters, a protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright. The house will be renovated and placed on UE's campus in Spring 2016.

The University has engaged in a partnership with other higher education institutions, hospital systems, and the City of Evansville to create a [regional multi-purpose medical education and training facility](#) in the downtown area. This collaboration aims to “transform the delivery of the regions’ health care system by mobilizing and enriching the strengths and resources of the partners in health professions education, patient care, and research.” This intersection with the public good supports UE’s mission and enhances educational and experiential opportunities for our students in the health sciences.

The institution’s commitment to the public good is clearly demonstrated through educational and community outreach programs that actively engage students in experiential learning across all four academic colleges, as well as the [Institute for Global Enterprise Indiana](#) and its [GAP program](#) and the Center for Adult Education (CAE). Descriptions of these outreach programs are available in the [supporting documents](#).

UE is engaged in outreach activities and programs that enhance those supported by academic programming. Through the [Center for Career Development](#), the University engages in collaborative outreach activities with local, regional, and state economic, educational, and institutional peer partners to promote a wide variety of activities including career consortiums, economic development partnerships, and outreach to local middle and high school students. The [Office of Veterans Affairs](#) hosts a multitude of outreach activities specifically geared toward veterans and their families, including a women veterans conference, veterans fairs, book discussions, a philanthropic comedy show, and a 5K road race that recruited support from across the city and the three colleges in Evansville. Initiatives sponsored by the [Office of Religious Life](#) through interfaith initiatives, such as the Interfaith Holocaust Remembrance Service, are aimed at promoting better relationships among individuals of all faiths.

Faculty and staff enjoy a rich tradition of volunteerism with the Evansville community. Members of the UE community serve as a resource for many non-profit, for-profit, and educational boards locally, regionally, and nationally. Numerous leaders on campus, both academic and administrative, serve as volunteers on [external boards](#) providing knowledge, advice, and counsel in their specific area of expertise. In addition, for many years the University has supported the broader community through [donations of time and money to the United Way of Southwestern Indiana](#). These contributions include participation in its annual campaign and commitment of volunteers to the Day of Caring service to the community. United Way of Southwestern Indiana works to advance the common good by focusing on education, income, and health by supporting more than 60 programs in the area.

Students at the University are equally engaged in volunteerism. The Office of Student Affairs participates in Days of Service and dedicates three days a year to serving the local community, intentionally connecting students with local service agencies to educate them on the needs within the community. University-recognized social fraternities and sororities sponsor philanthropic events to raise money for charitable organizations on both a national and local level. Volunteerism is integrated into the student-athlete experience as well, and the top 20 [student-athletes](#) and overall team are recognized by UE for their contributions and service to the community. Connected through the Center

for Student Engagement, the University, in partnership with the University of Southern Indiana, provides a volunteer matching database for the schools and community to address volunteer needs within the community. The database is hosted on the Southwestern Indiana Non-profit Consortium ([SINC](#)) website as a visible sign of UE's commitment to serving the community.

The University's [events and academic calendars](#) also reveal a rich array of cultural events and activities on and off campus, including lectures, concerts, presentations, art exhibits, theatre performances, worship services, and athletic events, that are open to the public and enhance the cultural fabric of the Evansville community. Examples of these lectureships can be found in the [supporting documents](#).

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

Over the past 161 years, the mission of the institution has remained consistent: provide young women and men an education that is rooted in the liberal arts and sciences and integrated with opportunities for what we call today a professional education. That mission is clearly and publicly articulated in its current Mission of Learning, which also recognizes that the world of 2015 is vastly different from the world of 1854, most especially in international and intercultural interactions as well as the understanding, acceptance, and ultimately, the celebration of the diversity of humanity. It is in this world that the University expects its students to serve and to lead, and it realizes it can only reasonably expect these things of its students if it acts in responsible ways for the public good.

This mission to embrace diversity and to work for the public good has guided the institution's operations, and that work has been recognized and celebrated most notably through the President's Honor Roll for Community Service and by the *Washington Monthly* (see Component 1D, subcomponent 1). The University's HLC Quality Initiative: *Developing Responsible Global Citizens* builds upon its distinctive global identity and its commitment to global diversity. UE has found success in these initiatives, surpassing its goal of 350 international students in 2018-19 (currently 407 international students) and consistently ranks among the top master's degree-granting institutions in the Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange for percentage of students studying abroad.

Critical reflection upon the institution's mission and its actions and achievements not only helps to recognize its successes in the areas of international education and volunteer service, but also helps to identify challenges and steps needed for future growth.

1. While the IMPACT campaign addressed Strategic Plan Core Goal VI (to make the world better aware of the distinctive and transformative character of a UE education) by trying to make the mission more accessible and succinct, there is still room for improvement in developing a shared understanding of the University internally. That shared understanding of identity, values, and commitments can better inform the way UE makes itself known, which is crucial in supporting enrollment efforts and efforts to raise funds for institutional initiatives. Ultimately the University faces the challenges of so many private institutions that are grounded in the liberal arts and sciences, articulating the value of a UE education in the face of so many other options available to students seeking higher education.
2. The 2005 HLC visit observed the following: "Interviews and the Self-Study indicated that discussions about cultural competence primarily utilize examples derived from international experiences or from the World Cultures sequence in the general education program. There were not many examples noted of cultural competence relating to racial or ethnic issues in the United States. This is an issue that deserves a review." Positive decisions have been made and positive actions stemming from the University's mission have been taken to address this and other observations related to diversity in the last HLC visit. Efforts have been focused on administrative and governing board structures as well as revisions made to the general education program and the University Educational Objectives. Currently, the data show

increases in the overall diversity of student enrollment. Employee trends show a decrease in administrators and staff over the 2004-09 period, but a slight increase over 2009-14. All faculty ethnicities showed a decrease from 2004-09, except African American and Asian/Pacific Islander. From 2009-14, there has been a consistent increase in the number of Asian /Pacific Islander faculty members. Even so, the percentage of students coming from domestic minority backgrounds has not progressed much beyond the 10 percent of the 2005 freshman class reported in the last HLC Self-Study. Recent efforts to find ways to improve the campus climate will be critical in helping to increase representational diversity on campus. Most recently, in October 2015 the Board approved a new, aggressive financial aid strategy that targets, among others, under-represented minority students.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

The University upholds the principles of integrity and ethical behavior in all aspects of operations. In 2008, the Board of Trustees adopted a [Code of Conduct](#) (COC) applicable to all employees, volunteers, vendors, and Board members (University Community Members). The COC affirms UE's commitment to integrity and ethical behavior and addresses acceptable behavior with respect to confidentiality, conflicts of interest, acceptance of gifts, financial accuracy, use of institutional resources, and other areas. All new employees are required to sign a [statement](#) agreeing to read and abide by the COC. By signing [annual employment contracts](#), [faculty](#) and [administrators](#) accept University policies as contained in the [Faculty](#) and [Administrator](#) Manuals, including the COC.

Board members are provided with access to several documents addressing integrity and ethical behavior, including the [University Bylaws](#), [Code of Conduct](#), [Duties and Responsibilities of a Trustee](#), [Corporate Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees](#), and [The Ideal Trustee](#) for the University of Evansville. The Bylaws prescribe the organization and function of the governing board and establish an audit committee for the purpose of overseeing the integrity of the institution's financial statements, compliance with legal requirements, the COC process, and internal controls regarding finance and accounting established by management and the Board. According to policy, trustees, senior administrators, and key employees are required to submit a [Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement](#) annually. These [statements](#) are summarized and documented by the Secretary of the Board and reviewed by the chairs of the Audit Committee and the Committee on Trustees.

UE's external audit firm issues a [management letter](#) to the Board in conjunction with the annual financial statement audit. The letter addresses the auditor's judgments about the quality of the University's accounting principles and internal control over financial reporting. In addition, the Office of Fiscal Affairs and Administration must sign a [representation letter](#) confirming responsibility for fair presentation of the financial statements, adopting sound accounting policies, establishing and maintaining effective internal control over financial reporting, operations, and compliance, and preventing and detecting fraud. In addition, a committee of trustees and senior leadership oversees financial and operating outcomes. The Harlaxton College's trustees also provide an annual Trustees Report acknowledging responsibility for the fair presentation of Harlaxton's [financial statements](#), which are also independently audited.

Individuals utilizing University purchase cards are required to undergo training and must sign a [statement of ethical and responsible use](#) before receiving access to the purchase card.

The [Faculty Bylaws](#) establish the principles, structures, and procedures that guide faculty in its oversight of educational policy and practices. They also affirm the University's adherence to the AAUP guidelines "in all matters pertaining to academic freedom, tenure, and professional ethics, and to assure academic due process." Committees of the Faculty Senate oversee policies related to promotion, tenure, sabbatical leave, faculty workload, and appeals related to the welfare of individual and faculty groups. In addition, the Bylaws provide for a [Faculty Ombudsperson](#) charged to receive and investigate complaints and to work toward equitable solutions.

Student responsibilities both inside and outside the classroom are communicated through the [Academic Honor Code](#) (AHC) and the [Student Handbook](#). The AHC was created by students and faculty to promote ethical behavior with respect to work submitted for course credit. It is distributed at orientation, and faculty discuss the code in each course and must include it in each syllabus. An Honor Council composed of students and faculty follows through on charges of AHC violations. In addition, the Student Handbook describes rights, responsibilities, and policies that promote ethical behavior within the residential community. The University has established policies to protect the privacy of students' education records (FERPA in [student](#), [faculty](#), and [administrator](#) manuals) and secure other confidential information (Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act in [student](#), [faculty](#), and [administrator](#) manuals). Offices that are custodians of student records must implement the policies by appropriate means.

UE provides employment opportunities to qualified individuals on the basis of merit and without discrimination of any kind. Employment and workplace policies are outlined in the [Faculty](#), [Adjunct Faculty](#), [Administrator](#), and [Staff](#) manuals. These policies are consistent with federal employment guidelines. Information regarding the offices and persons charged with following through on charges of policy or code violations is also available in the above-mentioned manuals. Employees of Harlaxton also have employment policies (parts [one](#) and [two](#)) that describe expectations of fair and ethical behavior and treatment.

To protect the well-being of students, employees, and the public, UE requires potential new hires in all areas (staff, administration, faculty, and adjunct faculty) to undergo a [criminal background screening](#). Background screenings are conducted for all part-time and full-time positions. [Sexual misconduct](#) and Title IX training is also required of all employees to [deter incidents of sexual misconduct](#) and to help promote the creation of a safe environment for working, teaching, and learning. Training is accomplished through online modules or group sessions. The University also has a [Title IX Coordinator](#) available to address complaints as necessary.

The [Acceptable Use Policy](#) documents ethical behavior concerning UE computing resources and applies to all users with access to those resources. In addition, the [Software Code of Ethics](#) addresses [appropriate behaviors](#) regarding copyrighted [computer software](#).

The University subscribes to a [Campus Conduct Hotline](#) (CCH) offered by Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators, Inc. (EIIA.) Via periodic promotion, University community members are encouraged to use the hotline anonymously to report unethical behaviors observed or experienced. Unethical behaviors are defined in the campus [COC](#). Calls to the CCH are summarized in a [report](#) by EIIA. That summary is then provided to the Assistant Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and the Chairman of the Audit Committee for further consideration. Since the hotline's 2007 implementation, there has been only one reported incident of unethical behavior. In 2013, UE developed a tool called "Make an IMPACT - Share Your Ideas," now referred to as "[AceAnswers](#)," to give campus community members the additional opportunity to share suggestions, provide positive or negative feedback, or report any [questionable practices](#). This tool is available on WebAdvisor, along with a link displaying information about the CCH.

For those constituencies unable to access AceAnswers or CCH, complaints would be directed to the appropriate VP and/or President's Office, whose staff would investigate the matter and maintain documentation on the resolution.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

In keeping with the value it places on truth and transparency, UE provides students (both prospective and current), their families, and the general public clear, complete, and current information related to control, accreditation relationships, costs to students, academic programs, requirements, faculty, and staff. Policies ensure that the information shared or provided through publications and messaging is consistent with the identity and mission.

UE is a private, non-profit institution. The [history](#), control of the University by its [trustees](#), and its [accreditation relationship with HLC](#) are described on the UE website and in the University [Catalog](#), which is available online or in print by request. A special email address is provided online for anyone interested in submitting information to the [Board](#). Additionally, the senior administrative team is identified [online](#) with email addresses and phone/office contact [information](#). UE's specialty accreditation relationships for the institution and its specialty programs are available to the public on the [website](#) and in the [catalog](#).

Cost of Attendance, including room and board, are made available to prospective and current students, their families and to the general public on the University's website through the "[Tuition and Aid](#)" link, and through the required [Student Consumer Information disclosures](#), also under "Tuition and Aid." Information related to enrollment, retention, graduation, diversity demographics and other information is also provided on the websites. Both online sources are updated annually. The catalog, updated every two years, also contains information about [costs](#). UE shares information about costs by participation in a voluntary accountability system called [U-CAN](#), the University and College Accountability Network, administered by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU). Using this system, the public can review and compare costs of attendance at UE with costs at the other 630 institutions in the system. The U-CAN system also has information related to financial aid and provides a link to UE's net price calculator for estimating the net cost to the student.

The University Catalog is the authoritative source for information about [programs](#), [requirements](#), and personnel. The catalog is reviewed and updated every two years and includes overviews of the General Education program, degree programs, and major requirements. [Faculty members](#) and their highest degrees are listed. [Departmental websites](#) provide additional details about degree programs, course offerings, and faculty and staff. Some academic departments feature [faculty biographies](#) while others feature specialty videos of faculty members explaining their research. Faculty information includes specializations, degrees, research interest, and publications. The sites also include departmental news highlighting innovative projects, research, and opportunities for student involvement and interaction. Information regarding programs, requirements, faculty, and staff is accessible to the public through the University's website or in print by request.

To ensure accurate and consistent delivery of institutional information to the public, the University provides instructions through its [Brand-Building Framework](#), developed by the Office of Marketing and Communication (OMC) and designed to provide a framework for delivering the promise of the

Mission Statement. The information serves as a means to unite and deliver the UE story and to ensure that the Mission Statement is a living document, both now and in the future.

UE also reviews the preparation of all recruitment materials provided to prospective students and their families. The primary recruitment elements are created internally by the OMC and disseminated to prospective students by the Office of Enrollment Services (OES). The primary recruitment materials - the Road Piece (for both [domestic](#) and [international](#) students) and the [Viewbook](#) - include lists of academic programs offered by the institution, annual tuition and fees, as well as average costs of housing and meals. Recruitment publications are prepared and updated regularly in coordination with other offices on campus to target particular student interests. [Information specific to honors students](#), for example, is distributed to complement the information on the Honors Program website. The OMC provides assistance in creating, writing, and implementing recruitment materials and recruitment marketing, thus ensuring that all publications present consistent and accurate information and adhere to the Mission of the University. All recruitment materials are reviewed and approved by the appropriate college, office, or division.

Admission counselors provide a significant, personal source of information to prospective students and their families. [Counselors are trained](#) by the OES, in collaboration with academic units, to present information about UE consistently and accurately.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

2.C.1.

The UE Board of Trustees is committed to deliberating and acting in the best interest of the institution. The [standing committees](#) of the Board (Academic Affairs, Athletics, Audit, Diversity, Compensation, Enrollment Advancement, Finance, International Engagement, Institutional Advancement, Investment, and Student Affairs) reflect priorities that preserve and enhance the institution. They meet during regular meetings of the Board, with additional meetings scheduled as needed throughout the year.

In addition to the standing committees, the Bylaws mandate an [Executive Committee](#) and a [Committee on Trustees](#). The Executive Committee meets approximately three times per year between regularly scheduled meetings of the Board. The Committee on Trustees is responsible for ensuring the continued strength and effectiveness of the Board, for nominating new trustees, and ensuring adherence to the Bylaws.

The identities of the standing committees reflect priorities identified in the Strategic Plan. As an example, the [International Engagement Committee](#) was formerly known as the [Harlaxton Committee](#), but was changed to reflect a broader scope as outlined in the strategic plan. For several years, Board schedules included meetings of the Diversity Discussion Group. This special committee was informally added to address issues related to campus diversity. In 2014, the Board agreed that this group should be formally added to the Bylaws and named the Diversity Committee.

The Board meets in October, February, and May to conduct University business in the city of Evansville. At these [meetings](#), standing and any special committees make [reports to the Board](#). Items requiring action are discussed and voted on by the Board. In addition to these reports, the Board discusses matters of strategic importance to the direction of the University in plenary sessions, such as the approval of the [Strategic Plan in 2011](#) and the approval of the [Prioritization recommendations in 2014](#). As a result of its deliberations, the Board authorized a \$2.5 million allocation from the endowment to fund critical initiatives in the Strategic Plan.

In February 2012, a consultant from the Association of Governing Boards facilitated a [half-day workshop](#) intended to enhance Board participation. As a result, the Board identified a [list of priorities](#).

A number of those items have been addressed, including adding an hour-long discussion session on the first day of meetings in addition to the time set aside in the Board agenda. The first strategic discussion occurred on [May 3, 2012](#).

In addition to the formalized committee structure, members of the Board serve on [special committees](#), [task forces](#), or [working groups](#) as needed. Board appointments to these groups are, in most cases, extended and/or approved by the University President and the Chairman of the Board. Since the appointment of such [committees](#) is driven by specific [institutional goals](#) and [objectives](#), the Board member is engaged in the work of the group only until such goals and objectives are achieved.

As a result of the Prioritization process of 2013-14, Board members are also involved in the [Prioritization Oversight Committee](#) and the [Program Innovations Committee](#). The purpose of the Prioritization Oversight Committee is to insure that the strategic mission of the University is not negatively impacted by the changes implemented. The committee consists of three board members, three vice presidents, and two faculty members.

2.C.2.

The Board is open to the interests and concerns of UE's internal and external constituencies, as reflected in its policies and practices. [Constituencies](#) include students, faculty, administrators, parents, alumni, the Evansville community, and the United Methodist Church. Student, alumni, and United Methodist representatives make up eight of the 39 elected Trustees and are voting members of the Board. These alumni and student members are selected by their respective constituencies, and the United Methodist representatives are identified by the University President and bishop in the state of Indiana. The [demographics](#) of the Board reflect a strong alumni base and strong connections with the Evansville community. Of the 39 board members, 30 are UE alumni, and 18 reside in Evansville, Indiana, or in nearby Newburgh, Indiana.

The standard practices and general actions of the Board also welcome input from constituencies. During the Board's annual meeting, the Faculty Senate Chair reports on the [Faculty Morale Survey](#) to the Academic Affairs Committee to enable the Board to keep in touch with [faculty employment](#) conditions. As a result of a letter to the Board by the Faculty Senate addressing concerns over recommendations from the Prioritization process in the summer of 2014, the Board initiated an [ad hoc committee of faculty](#) and Board members, with a one-year duration, to discuss matters of concern.

In addition to the three student-elected trustees, the Board's [Student Affairs Committee invites comment](#) from student representatives. It has been the practice of the [Committee chair to meet regularly](#) with student leaders during the school year.

Given community expectations regarding athletics at the University, external constituents were chosen to be members of the [Division I Athletics Assessment Committee](#). The Alumni Board of Directors, Parents Council, and UE African American Alumni Association meet with the [Board in February](#). Members of all [groups](#) attend a [luncheon](#) and receive updates on their proceedings. The culture of the institution is such that Board members are actively connected with the life of the University. During the [February 2015](#) and [October 2015](#) Board Meetings, Trustees visited UE classes. Board members participate in "[adopting](#)" [students in the theatre program](#), meet with students and professionals in student services, and attend social functions such as the [Fridays @ Five receptions](#) and the end of the year party at the May House. Trustees who live nearby attend lectures, [concerts](#), [theatre productions](#), art exhibits, [athletic events](#), and worship services at Neu Chapel. In so doing they make themselves available to constituents at the University and have first-hand knowledge of the quality of the campus experience.

2.C.3.

The Board has [long-established principles, policies, and procedures](#) that maintain vigilance against the possibility of undue influence or conflict of interest, as discussed in 2A.

Board members, many of whom are major donors, must submit a [Conflict of Interest Statement](#) for review by the Secretary of the Board. When the Board votes to take action, members with conflicts of interest [abstain](#). The University discloses any and all [business transactions with companies](#) and corporations affiliated with Board members in its [IRS 990 filings](#). Each year the VP for Fiscal Affairs prepares an Audit Report based on a [checklist](#) that includes review of the COC and IRS Form 990. The Audit Report is reviewed by the Audit Committee of the Board and is voted on for approval by the Committee and the Board. In February 2014 the Board adopted a [Gift Acceptance Policy](#) that further addresses undue influence from external parties.

2.C.4.

The Board respects the day-to-day management of University affairs by the administration and the management of academic affairs by the faculty. As explained in the [New Trustee Orientation Handbook](#), senior leadership of the University (the President, the Vice Presidents, the Athletics Director, the Executive Director of International Programs, and the Diversity and Equity Officer) is responsible for the standing committees of the Board. In accordance with the Bylaws, the President, the VP for Academic Affairs, the VP for Fiscal Affairs, and administration of the University are given direction to conduct the day-to-day [management of the institution](#). In addition, the Bylaws assign the President and the VPFA with responsibility to secure and to allocate the [resources of the University](#).

The principles of shared governance by the Board, administration, and faculty are described in both the Faculty and Administrator Manuals. The UE Faculty Senate, as described in the Faculty Bylaws, is the legislative body of the University in matters not reserved by Charter to the President or the Board. In particular, Faculty Bylaws identify [educational policy](#) as the responsibility of the Faculty. As described in the Faculty and Administrator Manuals, certain academic matters require Board approval, including [promotion and tenure of faculty](#), [grants of sabbatical leave](#), [approval of candidates for degrees](#), the [creation of new academic degrees](#), and adding programs and courses of study. Approval by the Board reflects a shared governance model that involves recommendations by the President and the Faculty Senate (referred to as the University Senate in the Charter.) While Board members entrust the management to [administrators](#) and the academic matters to [faculty](#), they actively engage when reviewing reports from the University leadership team and [ask questions](#) to ensure that multiple and long-range perspectives have been considered.

The Board takes its fiduciary responsibilities seriously. The University holds an institutional membership with the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB). An [AGB membership](#) includes a bi-monthly publication, "Trusteeship," which is sent to members of the Board. This publication outlines relevant issues and policies in higher education, best practices, and the Board's role in the matters discussed. In addition, the AGB makes available facilitators and consultants. When a new chair of the Board assumes the office or when a new University President is hired, the President of the University and the Chair of the Board attend a conference sponsored by AGB on matters impacting colleges and universities and how the two can work together to face those challenges.

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

The commitment of the University to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is founded on the value placed on learning as expressed in the [Mission of Learning](#). This commitment is in harmony with Wesleyan heritage through the University's [United Methodist Church affiliation](#) that encourages open dialogue and teaching critical thinking skills.

UE demonstrates the value it places on freedom of expression and pursuing truth in teaching and learning by instituting policies that value the judgment of faculty and students, by protecting their academic rights, by celebrating their accomplishments, and by providing support and funds to support scholarly research and creative expression. UE protects freedom of expression and intellectual inquiry as explained in the policies detailed in the [Faculty Manual](#) and in the [Student Handbook](#). In matters regarding academic freedom and tenure of faculty, the University adheres to [AAUP guidelines](#). In matters regarding [freedom of expression by students](#), the editorial boards of student publications and broadcast media are free to operate without censorship from faculty and administration.

Faculty and students are provided definite avenues for addressing concerns with respect to possible infringement of academic freedoms. The [Faculty Appeals Committee](#) of the Faculty Senate serves "as the elected faculty hearing committee as specified in the 'Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure' (1982)." The [Office of Student Ombudsman](#) protects students by ensuring that they are given due process in matters involving freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth.

Faculty are integral participants on [committees](#) that make decisions regarding [outside speakers](#) invited to campus to address a wide range of topics from different perspectives. For example, the Patricia H. Snyder Concert and Lecture series included Barbara Pierce Bush and Jenna (Bush) Hager in October 2014 as well as Sheryll WuDunn in September 2012, both speaking on social responsibility and making a difference in the lives of others. All lecture series are free and open to the public.

Similarly with respect to students, the Center for Student Engagement, through its association with the National Society for Leadership and Success, hosts [outside speakers](#) in web format who address a wide range of topics for the campus community. Past speakers have included Arianna Huffington in March 2015 and Carly Fiorina in March 2014. Students through the Student Activities Board also sponsor [speakers](#) who discuss topics that are particularly relevant to contemporary issues, such as same-sex marriage with Zach Wahls. Many of the lectures are open to the public.

The Department of Religious Life and its [Interfaith Initiatives](#) on campus and in the Evansville community provide [opportunities](#) to have dialog among diverse religious, spiritual, and faith traditions. The work of Interfaith Initiatives collaborates with students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and various offices on campus. For example, the Interfaith Initiatives included the Faith and Faculty Forum sponsored jointly with the Office of Academic Affairs and invited faculty from different faith traditions to share reflections about their faith and engage in informal interfaith dialog. [Interfaith Initiatives are open to the public.](#)

UE not only provides the committee with funds for outside speakers, but also provides support for making the community aware of these opportunities to hear a diversity of views. Funding comes from endowments or special operating budgets of a college or the University. The Office of Marketing and Communications provides [logistics support](#) as well as [support for public announcements, press releases, and advertising](#).

In addition, the University provides funds for [faculty scholarship and creative expression](#) and for student-faculty collaboration in a wide range of disciplines and topics. Faculty support is available internally through application to the [ART and ARSAF funds](#) and the [Global Scholar Program](#). The Office of Development and the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs help faculty pursue projects related to scholarship and creative expression, either for themselves, their students, or both. The [Eykamp Center for Teaching Excellence](#) (ECTE) helps faculty develop a better understanding of teaching and learning. The ECTE provides grants for educational research and other activities related to [enhancement of teaching and learning](#). UE also provides funds for active collaboration between faculty and students in research and scholarship through [UExplore](#) and provides funds for students to attend and present at academic conferences and workshops through the [Student Government Association budget](#). Class travel funds are available through the Office of Academic Affairs, and deans maintain a modest travel budget to assist faculty with costs for academic conferences.

UE celebrates scholarly and creative works by faculty through the online newsletter AceNotes, the [Library's Faculty Scholarship Display](#), and reports on sabbaticals at [Fall Conference](#).

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1.

The University recognizes that the rights of academic freedom carry important responsibilities that must be respected by faculty, staff, and students. As part of their education, students learn that the policies related to these responsibilities ensure adherence to the standards for ethical practice set by the academy and overseen by UE.

Scholarly practice of faculty is reviewed through regularly conducted performance evaluations and promotion and tenure track reviews. The institution provides clear guidelines for the ethical use of [materials under copyright](#) and provides clear guidelines for the [ethical use of software](#) in teaching and in scholarly activity. [Research of human and animal subjects](#) conducted or overseen by faculty must adhere to policies that are clearly outlined in the Faculty Manual.

Some programs offered by UE are accredited by professional organizations. Standards for scholarly practice and research established by these professions are met through participation in the organization's accrediting process. A [list of certifications](#) are available on the UE website. Evidence of accomplishment in meeting these guidelines is available within accreditation documents.

The Institutional Research Board (IRB), with membership jointly appointed by the Chair of Faculty Senate, the Senior VPAA, and the University President, is the administrative committee charged with overseeing and approving proposals for all scholarly research using human subjects. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) oversees and approves proposals for all research using non-human animals. Both the IRB and the IACUC [outline responsible and ethical research](#) through a set of guidelines, sample language, [templates](#) for anonymous surveys and research proposals, and ongoing feedback on proposals. Along with the oversight of the IRB, the IACUC, and sponsoring faculty, the Undergraduate Research Committee provides support, resources, and faculty oversight of student research. The focus of the program is to facilitate faculty and student involvement in research and creative projects. Further information is available on the [program website](#). [Reference librarians](#) also provide support to students conducting research within the library.

2.E.2.

When students apply for admission to the University, they pledge to adhere to the Honor Code governing the ethical use of information. This includes the [Special Student Admission Application](#) and the [Transfer](#), Second Degree, and Re-entry Application. All new students recite the Pledge of Honor during [Academic Convocation](#) at the beginning of each year, and the Pledge of Honor and

Honor Code are posted within the student handbook, faculty manual, and University Catalog. All students attending Harlaxton College, including those from partner colleges, also agree to adhere to the Honor Code. Drop and Add and Transfer of Credit forms from the Office of the Registrar include a section where a student confirms adherence to the Pledge of Honor. A statement regarding the Honor Code is required in the syllabi of all UE courses (including Harlaxton courses and dual credit courses). This is covered by instructors at the start of the course. To help faculty, a [syllabus template](#) is made available that includes suggested wording regarding the code.

Academic and student support services provide guidance about the responsible use of information for students. The Library conducts sessions on how to utilize library research methodology ([Research Assistance Program - RAP](#)). This service is promoted through individual [classroom announcements](#). The Writing Center provides resources for students regarding proper research and citation. Information on resources provided is available on their [website](#). The Office of Technology Services provides a Software Policy as well as an [Acceptable Use Policy](#) for Information Technology on the Office of Technology Services website. Policies regarding copyright infringement of software as well as digital music and intellectual and creative property are available in Student Consumer Information provided under Tuition and Aid (sent to students annually and resides on the [Tuition and Aid webpage](#)).

2.E.3.

The institution informs students about academic honesty and addresses cases of dishonesty. Alleged violations to the Honor Code are reported to the Dean of Students and cases are coordinated through that office. Honor Council hearings, when requested, are organized by the Dean of Students. The Honor Council is composed of students and faculty members and is chaired by a faculty member, with the Dean of Students serving as an *ex officio* non-voting member of each hearing panel. Records of Honor Cases are maintained through the Office of the Dean of Students.

The University invests in technology to assist faculty in guarding against academic dishonesty. Integrated within the Blackboard course management system, faculty may utilize [Turnitin.com](#) to monitor assignments for plagiarism.

Academic integrity and the maintenance of appropriate standards of scholarship and teaching are outlined under the [Academic Freedom Section of the Faculty Manual](#).

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

The University upholds the principles of integrity and ethical behavior in all aspects of its operation. It follows established policies of fair and ethical behavior on the part of the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students. As a proactive measure to ensure institutional integrity, the Board adopted a Code of Conduct in 2008 that applies to all members of the UE community. In addition, multiple documents exist at all levels of the institution that address integrity and ethical behavior. University community members are encouraged to use the campus conduct hotline to report unethical behaviors and can provide feedback, share suggestions, or report questionable practices through AceAnswers, an online tool developed in 2013 and available on WebAdvisor.

The Bylaws and committee structure of the Board ensure that it acts in the best interest of the institution. The Board considers both its internal and external constituents during its decision making process, while remaining independent from the undue influence of external parties. The Board takes its fiduciary responsibilities seriously and delegates the day-to-day management of the institution to the administration. It expects the faculty to oversee academic matters and upholds the principles of shared governance by the Board, administration, and faculty.

UE presents itself clearly to students and the public by providing straightforward and complete information regarding the costs, programs, requirements, accreditation relationships, and control of the institution on its website and in its printed materials. To ensure accurate and consistent delivery of such information, the University provides a Brand-Building Framework recently developed by the Office of Marketing and Communications. This framework ensures clarity of communication and the delivery of consistent and accurate information.

The University is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Established policies appear in the Faculty Manual and Student Handbook, and appropriate avenues exist for addressing any concerns with respect to infringement of academic freedoms. Students receive guidance on the Honor Code and the responsible use of information, and the institution enforces its policies on academic honesty and integrity. The Institutional Research Board and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee approve and oversee all scholarly research on human and non-human subjects, and the Undergraduate Research Committee provides faculty oversight of student research.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

Student learning outcomes are articulated through course syllabi, program assessment plans, and the University Educational objectives, made public on UE's website and through its Course Catalog. The University's policies ensure (a) that the Institution articulates student learning outcomes that are appropriate to the degree being earned, (b) that courses and programs are current, and (c) that the learning outcomes are consistent regardless of mode of delivery or location.

Individual Faculty and Syllabi

At the course level, the Faculty Manual requires each faculty member to prepare a syllabus that includes "course learning objectives that are stated as measurable syllabi outcomes and are consistent with the educational objectives of the department and University." In addition syllabi must state how they meet [UE's credit hour policies](#) to ensure that expected levels of student achievement are consistent. Each [syllabus](#) is to be filed with the faculty member's department chair and dean. [When new courses are proposed](#), the proposal needs to include a syllabus that is submitted to the department chair, school or department curriculum committee (as appropriate), dean, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (SVPAA), and finally to the Faculty Senate [Curriculum Committee](#) for review. A [syllabus template](#) is shared by Academic Affairs and the Curriculum Committee on the Acelink intranet site as well as the Faculty Senate website.

Faculty are motivated to keep courses current through their syllabi and in the development of their courses. Faculty who are presenting themselves for [tenure and promotion](#) undergo peer evaluation showing that their syllabi are current with respect to content and pedagogy. Faculty are also offered release time for [curricular experimentation](#). Currency is also encouraged through research and professional development requirements of the faculty teaching in accredited programs. (See discussion in Section 3B5).

Program Level Student Outcomes, Appropriateness, and Currency

At the program level, required levels of student performance on learning outcomes are reviewed internally and externally for currency and appropriateness to the undergraduate or graduate degree program. The Academic Assessment Committee (AAC) conducts internal program reviews of student learning outcomes and provides [feedback](#) regarding the relationship of those outcomes to UE educational objectives. The AAC also provides feedback regarding a program's improvement plans based on identified strengths and weaknesses to help maintain appropriateness, promote currency, and advance the quality of the curriculum. Certificate programs at the University are not transcribed and do not submit assessment plans.

External review of programs happens through external advisory boards, through accreditation of professional programs, and through [regular outside review of programs](#) that do not have specialty accreditation. External advisory boards (used by both professional programs such as [business](#) and [engineering](#) and programs in the [natural sciences](#)) provide opportunities to interact with outside constituencies (alumni, employers, graduate schools, and industry partners) for guidance on the currency of programs.

The [Council for Accelerated Programs \(CAP\)](#) has a standards review process whereby the Center for Adult Education submits a [self-study](#). A CAP representative will be on campus for a two-day review process in January 2016.

Accrediting bodies for [Business](#), Engineering, Computer Science, Education, Nursing, Athletic Training, and [Physical Therapy](#) provide specific guidance on student outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs (in the case of the Doctorate in Physical Therapy), as well as guidance on the currency of the curriculum related to content and methodology. Two examples in Business and Computer Science are highlighted:

Business and several other programs use the ETS Major Field Test (MFT) to demonstrate levels of knowledge appropriate to an undergraduate degree. As part of its AACSB Accreditation, SOBA's [Assurance of Learning report](#) shows that Business students have continued to exceed the goal of achievement in the 75th percentile on the MFT for all years the test was administered – 2010 (90%), 2012 (90%), and 2013 (88%).

ABET accreditation requires attention to both student learning outcomes and the curriculum that supports the student learning outcomes that are appropriate to baccalaureate degrees. For example, in computer science, currency is addressed in [ABET Criterion 5](#): “The technical and professional requirements must include at least one year of [up-to-date](#) coverage of fundamental and advanced topics in the computing discipline associated with the program.”

Regular outside reviews of programs in the Arts and Sciences and programs in the College of Education and Health Sciences that do not undergo formal accreditation provide opportunities for faculty from peer institutions to review faculty and curricula for currency and appropriateness. British Studies courses at Harlaxton do not result in a degree or certificate and thus do not submit reports to the Assessment Committee; however, an internal process of [continuous review by British Studies faculty](#) helps to assure appropriateness and currency.

Consistency among Modes of Delivery

The processes regarding the review of syllabi, faculty, and programs help to ensure consistency among courses delivered at UE in a traditional face-to-face mode, as a dual-credit course, at our Harlaxton study abroad campus, in compressed format, or online. For courses that are already part of the Catalog, instructors wishing to deliver the course online must submit the syllabus to the Office of

Academic Affairs. Instructors wishing to teach face-to-face courses over the summer (five- or ten-week) must submit syllabi to their department chair for approval. The UE [syllabus template](#) is shared with high school instructors who teach dual-credit courses. Department chairs [review dual-credit syllabi](#) for consistency with student learning outcomes. Syllabi for all courses offered at Harlaxton College (either by UE faculty, partner college faculty, or British faculty teaching at Harlaxton) are reviewed by a process overseen by the Harlaxton College Principal who makes recommendations to the Director of International Programs and the SVPAA for appropriate academic level, content, and for consistency with the most up-to-date version of the UE Catalog. In the case of study abroad courses outside of Harlaxton, the courses must also meet the credit hour policy and are reviewed by the Director of Education Abroad. UE is diligent with respect to *Enduring Foundations* courses that are delivered in different modes and different locations. All courses (including dual-credit) that have been approved for *Enduring Foundations* by the General Education Subcommittee must be assessed for the associated student learning outcomes.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Argument

3.B.1/3.B.2.

Enduring Foundations provides students with a foundation in the liberal arts and sciences and supports the University's international focus and commitment to social responsibility. The program is framed in terms of achievement of student learning outcomes, clearly identifying the variety of ways that students will develop knowledge and skills, exercise creativity and innovation, engage big questions, and learn to make a difference in their world. The *Enduring Foundations* program courses make up approximately one-third of nearly every undergraduate degree at UE. A complete description of the program and its requirements appears in the 2015-2017 [University Catalog](#) and through the General Education [rubrics](#) and guidance on [outcomes](#) for general education course proposals.

Enduring Foundations was developed using an intentional process that involved faculty and administration, resulting in learning outcomes and assessment practices that combine institutional tradition and mission with national best practices. The process began with a faculty proposal providing a framework for campus-wide discussions that included a recommendation to make use of the [AAC&U LEAP initiative](#). Several models were proposed in writing and presented at faculty meetings, after which the faculty voted to proceed with the development of [one model](#). Faculty committees were tasked to recommend plans for the [implementation](#) of the general education model, which faculty then voted to [approve](#). The program features 11 outcomes areas and four overlays. The outcome areas are aligned with disciplines in the humanities, foreign languages, social sciences, fine and performing arts, natural sciences, mathematics, health, and a capstone (see 3.B.3. below). The overlay requirements include Writing Across the Curriculum and requirements in diversity and social responsibility. The overlay outcomes grew out of the 2011 Strategic Plan and recognize that these issues cut across disciplinary boundaries. (See 3.B.4. for a more detailed description.) As a result of the process, *Enduring Foundation* [outcomes](#) and offerings are directly linked to key aspects of [UE's](#)

[mission and educational objectives.](#)

Two undergraduate degree programs (the BS/BA in Individualized Study and the Associates Degree in Physical Therapist Assistance) do not require *Enduring Foundations* program but employ their own general education program appropriate to the degree being offered. For the BS/BA in Individualized Study offered through the Center for Adult Education (CAE) adult learners who have earned more than 60 credits but have not yet earned a degree have the opportunity to design their own program in consultation with CAE advisors to complete a non-traditional undergraduate degree at UE. These students must meet a [general education program appropriate to the degree](#) being offered. The [Associates Degree in Physical Therapist Assistance](#) requires courses that fulfill the outcomes of critical reading and thinking, scientific literacy, quantitative literacy, and understanding the core concepts of society, human behavior, and civic knowledge.

3.B.3.

In establishing its educational objectives, the University has identified the knowledge and skills that serve as foundations for "addressing contemporary and enduring questions" that students will face in changing environments beyond graduation. Students are engaged in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information and in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work through participation in *Enduring Foundations*, through requirements in their degree program, through opportunities such as the Honors Program that is available to all undergraduate students, or a combination of these avenues.

Because *Enduring Foundations* was developed to be integrated with undergraduate disciplines, nearly all programs (with the exceptions listed in 3.B.1. and 3.B.2.) engage students in communication, critical inquiry, or creative work through the capstone outcome area related to the discipline of their choice. The capstone integrates skills gained in the discipline and in general education, including emphasis on collecting, analyzing, and communicating information both orally and in writing. The [Capstone](#) experience requires synthesis and integration of broad learning, and it engages students in reflection in the context of lifelong learning. The [Global Diversity](#) overlay includes the requirement to ask complex questions about diverse cultures and seek answers that include multiple perspectives. The [Writing Across the Curriculum overlay](#) engages students in developing skills in written communication in the freshman sequence, in disciplinary courses, and in general education offerings.

The [BS in Organizational Leadership](#) (OL) requires each student to complete [five project-based leadership practicum courses](#) in which students analyze real-world problems and design solutions and outcome measurements through integration with prior and concurrent course work. In a similar manner, the CAE's [Master of Science in Public Service Administration](#) (PSA) requires [PSA 507 and 543](#), which require students to integrate knowledge from previous courses to research, develop, and present a [grant proposal](#) addressing identified needs of local community agencies.

The Associates Degree in Physical Therapist Assistance includes content and practical learning experiences designed to engage students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information. Students are expected to gather relevant information regarding patients and to assess that information as they make informed decisions regarding patient care. Additionally, information must be disseminated in multiple forms to the supervising physical therapist, the patient and family, and other members of the health care team. As students complete [clinical internships](#), they are exposed to the dynamic and ever-changing health care environment, and they are asked to adapt their behaviors appropriately and effectively.

Graduate students in the College of Education and Health Sciences have extensive opportunities to

engage in inquiry and critical thinking skills. Throughout the curriculum of the Doctorate in Physical Therapy (DPT), [inquiry and critical thinking skills](#) are emphasized formally through the five-course [Scientific Inquiry](#) sequence. From an introduction to the principles of evidence-based practice, through research design and statistics, to independent critical appraisal of published research, this series provides a strong background for graduates in [evidence-based practice](#).

The capstone course in the Master of Health Services Administration program focuses on analyzing data from various health care organizations and developing evidence-based recommendations for these organizations. Students review literature and conduct an in-depth Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis. [See [HSA 507](#) and [HSA 590](#)] In the [Masters in Athletic Training Program](#) (starting summer 2015) students will complete a research course and will be required to complete a project or case report.

3.B.4.

Enduring Foundations reflects the University's commitment to diversity and the public good through overlay outcomes such as knowledge, self-awareness, and curiosity related to [domestic](#) and [international](#) diversity. The program also requires that students demonstrate linguistic and cultural competence in a [foreign language](#). The Social Responsibility overlay, specifically the [Civic Engagement](#) option, focuses on helping students understand societal contexts and structures and to develop their ability to be informed by the views of others. The [Social Responsibility](#) requirement can be met through SR100, a co-curricular offering from the Office of Student Affairs and its Center for Student Engagement.

UE's Office of Diversity Initiatives and the Office of Student Affairs offer several educational opportunities for campus and engage students in combating roadblocks to welcoming and celebrating diversity. A more complete description is offered in 1.C.2.

UE emphasizes the availability of study abroad opportunities for all students, as promised through the *UE Guarantee* discussed in Criterion One. The University has personnel, offices, policies, and procedures that facilitate high participation rates, and consistently ranks highly on a [national level in student participation](#). (See also the discussion in 1.C.2.)

3.B.5.

UE values and supports faculty and student work in scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge. Both implicitly and explicitly the University applies Boyer's model of scholarship that includes the scholarships of discovery, integration, application or engagement, and teaching and learning.

Students engage in scholarly and creative work through several avenues. A majority do so through the capstone requirement in the general education program. For example, the [capstone for Sociology](#) majors (SOC 450) requires students to complete and present an original research project. Other students take advantage of the [UExplore program](#) that helps to fund student-initiated and faculty-student [collaborative research](#). Faculty collaboration sometimes includes an international component, such as working on an archaeological investigation in [Jezreel, Israel](#). Students in the [Honors Program](#) are required to complete an [Honors Project](#) that either grows out of a [capstone course or is independent of course requirements](#). [GAP](#) (formerly known as the Global Assistance Program) connects businesses with teams of UE students who, under supervision from faculty and program administrators, provide consulting services to clients with real-world needs. [Examples include feasibility studies, global market research, and evaluation of human resource issues](#). Students apply or

are nominated to be part of GAP and benefit greatly in develop [skills necessary for creative problem solving](#) such as cross-disciplinary teamwork, a global mindset, and thriving in ambiguity.

Students in the [Nursing Program](#) and School of Public Health (SPH) write formal research papers as part of degree requirements. DPT students in [PT 452](#) complete Critical Appraisals related to specific diagnoses and treatment interventions. There are some students in both the Physical Therapy Programs and SPH who assist in faculty directed research projects through the Dunigan Movement Analysis Laboratory.

Student research and scholarship are made public through a variety of opportunities, from peer-reviewed journals, to the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, to discipline-specific conferences (such as [UE's MESCON](#), and through public presentations on campus to clients, the public (such as the [January 2016 meeting of AAC&U](#) in Washington, DC, faculty, and other students (such as the [Honors Program Presentations](#)).

Student creative work grows out of programs in the visual arts, music, theatre, and creative writing. Visual art majors display their work in the Melvin Peterson Gallery. [Music students and faculty](#) perform approximately 90 recitals and concerts in Wheeler Concert Hall, Neu Chapel, or the Victory Theatre in downtown Evansville. Theatre students present typically three plays and one musical each year in Shanklin Theatre. The May Studio Theatre is home to experimental plays directed by theatre students. Creative writing majors present their work at public readings at the Senior Coffee Hour and publish their work in national publications such as [Measure](#) and the [Evansville Review](#).

The University values faculty scholarship, creative work, and professional activity and recognizes that such work translates into a richer educational experiences for its students. During the annual or triennial performance evaluation of faculty, evidence of scholarship, creative work, and professional achievement must count a [minimum of 20%](#) of the evaluation. Similarly, documentation and evidence of scholarly contribution must be presented for [tenure and promotion](#).

Faculty scholarship and creative work are celebrated with a display at the University Libraries where an opening reception is hosted (see examples for [2011-2012](#), [2012-2013](#), [2013-2014](#)). Examples of faculty scholarship are found in accreditation reports for programs in [DPT](#), School of Education, the Schroeder Family School of Business Administration (SOBA), and others as explained below.

Various units on campus apply different standards for faculty scholarship, sometimes dependent on accreditation requirements. For example, in SOBA, tenure-track faculty are required to meet a minimum standard of three peer-reviewed journal articles in a five-year period to meet the intellectual contribution portion of the tenure portfolio. For all tenured SOBA faculty, a minimum standard of two peer-reviewed journal articles over a five-year period is enforced. [Faculty in SOBA are expected to count scholarship as 40% of their evaluation](#). As another example, [faculty in the School of Education meet NCATE \(National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education\) Standard 5](#) regarding Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development.

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Argument

3.C.1.

The University has 176 full-time faculty (for AY2014-2015) who carry out their duties in the classroom and take an active role in overseeing the curriculum, instructional staff, and assessment of student learning. A student-to-faculty ratio of 13.4:1, an [average teaching load of 18-21](#) credit hours per year for full-time faculty, and appropriate [release time](#) for administrative duties provide for sufficient numbers of faculty for classroom, administrative, and service roles. Programs with specialty accreditation meet the standards for adequate instructional staffing levels required by the accrediting bodies. Programs without specialty accreditation undergo periodic [program review](#), and peer-reviewers are asked to make observations about faculty workload.

The [Curriculum Committee](#) (CC) and the [Admissions and Standards Committee](#) (ASC) of the Faculty Senate oversee curriculum and expectations for student performance. Both [CC](#) and [ASC](#) are fully staffed with faculty members representing each of the academic units. [Requirements for academic credentials](#) of instructional staff are established by the faculty via the [Faculty Professional Affairs](#) Committee. Although the [Academic Assessment Committee](#) is appointed by administration, the committee is chaired by a faculty Director of Assessment, and the majority of the [members](#) is full-time faculty representing a broad cross-section of the University.

Faculty's long-term commitment to the University helps ensure a measure of continuity in carrying out responsibilities for curriculum, instructional staff, and assessment. Of the 176 full-time faculty, 60% are tenured, 25% are tenure-eligible, and 15% are non-tenure eligible. The [median length of employment](#) for current tenured or tenure-eligible faculty is 11.0 years. Faculty Senators and Faculty Senate committee members serve for staggered [three-year terms](#).

3.C.2.

To ensure that all instructors are appropriately qualified, the University has a policy that all instructors have a terminal degree or a degree one level above those awarded by the programs in which they teach. [Exceptions to this policy](#) are defined and approved by relevant faculty committees. The Office of Academic Affairs maintains current CVs and transcripts for all full-time faculty and adjunct faculty on both the UE and Harlaxton campuses. The Center for Adult Education maintains current CVs and transcripts for instructors teaching dual-credit courses. Harlaxton College maintains current CVs and transcripts for all program faculty not included in the SVPAA records. Harlaxton partner-school visiting faculty credentials are reviewed during the [visiting faculty selection process](#) and are kept at Harlaxton. These files document compliance with the policy described above and will be available for review at the time of the Comprehensive Evaluation by the HLC Peer Review team.

3.C.3.

To ensure that instructors are meeting expectations in teaching, scholarly and professional activities, and service, faculty are evaluated regularly and have resources made available for use in their professional development. The IDEA form is used by faculty to evaluate a majority of their courses each semester and the results are shared with the department chair as part of the faculty member's performance evaluation and/or tenure/promotion review. The [faculty manual](#) requires that non-tenured faculty be evaluated annually, and tenured faculty must be evaluated at least once every [three years](#). This policy is followed in all [four colleges and schools](#) and at [Harlaxton College](#). Faculty evaluations are kept on file in the office of the relevant dean or other supervisor, and each supervisor writes an annual report summarizing evaluation activity.

The faculty evaluation process is also the time for faculty members and their department chair to discuss goals related to continuous improvement in the [three areas of evaluation](#). To help faculty in continuing development in the areas of teaching and scholarly and professional activity, the University makes available to faculty several key resources: time, a network of peers, and financial support, as discussed in the next section.

3.C.4.

Professional development is supported through operating funds in each college as well as a variety of other resources, including start-up funds for new hires and UExplore undergraduate research funds.

As a way to enhance the quality of its faculty, UE offers a paid [sabbatical leave](#) for [tenured faculty](#) who have served at least six years. Individuals engaging in productive research and/or creative activity, or those pursuing a structured study within their discipline designed to enhance teaching effectiveness, may apply for a semester or year-long leave. Faculty submit proposals that are evaluated by the department chair, dean, and the SVPAA, and requires [approval by the Board](#).

The Eykamp Center for Teaching Excellence ([ECTE](#)) promotes development and dissemination of practices associated with excellent teaching, creating a network of peers. The ECTE presents an ongoing and diverse series of [professional development opportunities](#) relevant to new faculty as well as faculty well into their career.

The Institution, including [Harlaxton](#), provides financial assistance for faculty to attend conferences and to engage in other [professional development](#). It also provides internal funding for [professional development](#) through the [ART](#) and [ARSAF grants](#). Together, these [programs disseminate](#) up to [\\$25,000 per year](#). The [Global Scholars program](#) provides [professional development opportunities](#) connected with the international component of our mission. The program funds [five fellowships](#) per

academic year. The [Ridgway Endowment](#) for Faculty Excellence was created in 2013 to provide funds for travel, research, and curricular innovation. The [Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs](#) assists faculty and staff with the process of applying for federal and state funding in support of scholarly and creative activities including: basic or applied research, fellowships, curriculum development, community outreach, international exchange, sabbatical support, and faculty-guided student research. Requests (either [greater than \\$5000](#) or [less than \\$5000](#)) concerning funding from corporate or private foundations are directed to UE's Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations. [Specific endowments](#) also help provide development funds. During 2014-15, approximately \$1 million was spent on [faculty sabbaticals and faculty development activities](#). The [number of faculty participating in sabbaticals](#) has improved since the 2005 HLC visit, especially from math and the natural sciences.

3.C.5.

To emphasize the importance of faculty-student interaction, instructional faculty are expected to post and maintain sufficient office hours to provide availability to students; the [faculty manual](#) suggests a minimum of 10 hours per week and allows for a mix of face-to-face time and electronic availability. Adjuncts are required to state how and when they will be available for consultation outside of class time, although they are not held to the 10-hour standard. Statements regarding office hours are [required on all syllabi](#). To further emphasize the importance of faculty-student interaction, "[Maintaining suitable and regular office hours](#)" is an expectation in the evaluation of effectiveness of teaching, academic advising, and program development for tenure and promotion of faculty members. Results from the 2014 National Survey for Student Engagement (NSEE) show that [first-year students](#) and [seniors](#) at UE report significantly higher levels of engagement with faculty outside of the classroom relative to Carnegie Peers.

3.C.6.

Because of the University's undergraduate focus, the faculty (uniquely qualified by their disciplinary expertise) take on the role of academic advising for degree-seeking students in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Education and Health Science, Engineering and Computer Science, and in the School of Business Administration, and they take on the primary role in providing one-on-one tutoring with students outside of class. Degree-seeking students in the Center for Adult Education (CAE) are assigned to the CAE Director. New faculty are required to attend training for their [academic advising](#) roles during their orientation. Non-degree-seeking students in programs like ESL are advised by the Center for Academic Advising (CAA) until they matriculate into an [undergraduate program](#). (See also 3C4 regarding qualifications of faculty in regard to teaching duties such as advising.) The [qualification](#), training, and support of [academic advising staff](#) are assured by rigorous selection criteria and ongoing training and supervision through the CAA and through the Office of Academic Affairs. Advising decisions often have to be made in conjunction with input from the Office of Financial Aid. [Financial aid advisors](#) participate in ongoing and intensive training, and their work is regularly audited by the DOE and state agencies. All faculty and staff are invited to attend the [Fall Conference](#) that provides development opportunities for the campus community.

Students receive help in writing, and research through well-qualified staff. The qualification, training, and support of [Writing Center](#) staff are assured by rigorous selection criteria and ongoing training and supervision by center administrators. Faculty-rank librarians have terminal degrees and participate in the credentialing, evaluation, and development processes outlined as for faculty. [Library staff](#) are selected, trained, and supported by faculty-rank librarians.

A variety of programs provide supplemental instruction and tutoring for students in areas such as

foreign language, math, chemistry, and engineering. The CAA provides support for undergraduate students who staff supplemental instruction sessions, in collaboration with departments who identify the well-qualified upper-level students. The Department of Foreign Languages works with the Fulbright Program to select Foreign Language Teaching Assistants ([FLTA](#)), well-qualified international students who possess a bachelor's degree. FLTAs are supervised and supported by Foreign Language professors.

To meet the particular needs of adult learners, the adult education administrators apply [rigorous criteria for the selection of its staff](#), and provide ongoing supervision, training, and support for their continued development.

The Office of Student Affairs oversees professional staff, administrative support staff, and student staff who provide a range of services that are described in 3D1. Professional support staff are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development through participation in internal and external professional development opportunities and involvement in [national organizations](#) that provide standards of practice. We maintain a compilation of résumés for [Student Affairs](#) and [Academic Support](#) personnel, and [Performance Appraisals](#) and [Self-Appraisals](#) are done annually to ensure ongoing quality. All personnel are hired based on a set of qualifications defined through the use of a [Position Analysis Questionnaire](#).

Administrative support staff who have direct contact with students receive ongoing supervision and are trained to properly support students; they are included in department professional development activities, as appropriate.

Student staff are utilized for several functions that support their peers. They receive close training and support in carrying out their responsibilities. An example of key student staff are Resident Assistants and Head Residents, paraprofessional staff that offer direct peer support within Residence Life. These positions receive [extensive training and ongoing supervision](#) covering issues including community development, building administration, crisis management and emergency response, sexual misconduct issues, policy enforcement, diversity awareness, and how to be a resource referral. Monthly workshops provide training follow-up and specific skill enhancement.

This assurance of the qualification, training, and support extends to the Harlaxton College Student Development staff and Harlaxton College Residence Assistants.

As with faculty, [administrators](#) and [staff](#) undergo yearly evaluations in keeping with University policies. In dialog with their immediate supervisor, [administrators](#) and [staff](#) set goals for the coming year and review goals from the previous year. To aid in the development of staff, [tuition remission](#) is available for staff to obtain a first or second bachelor's or a first graduate degree at the University [at no cost](#). Training in the use of information technology is available through the [Office of Technology Services](#). Staff and administrators are provided with funding, when available, to [attend conferences and workshops](#).

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Argument

3.D.1.

The University creates an environment that nurtures student learning by being attentive to the whole student: mind, body, and spirit. The array of services we offer honors the diversity of our student population, which includes international students, veterans, adult learners, and NCAA Division I athletes.

UE provides [academic support services](#) personalized for the needs of individual students, including academic advising, monitoring of progress, and assistance in specific classes. These services include information literacy programming, support for veterans, professional aid for students with disabilities, and assistance for students who have not yet declared a major field of study.

The Office of Diversity Initiatives offers opportunities for students to be a part of a campus that fosters and celebrates multicultural diversity in a welcoming environment. The [Diversity and Equity Officer](#) assists students with leading and coordinating efforts in all aspects of diversity, inclusion, multicultural education, cultural understanding, and civil and human rights.

The [Department of Athletics support services](#) enhance the student experience by tailoring the academic services and multicultural support and opportunities described above to the specific needs of student-athletes.

The Office of Student Affairs/Dean of Students coordinates the offices offering primary resources for students related to academic and social issues. Within the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), direct support is provided to students in the following areas: student orientation, attendance issues, cancellations and withdrawals, administration of the Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct, crisis management, and problem resolution.

The [Center for Career Development](#) partners with academic programs, alumni, and employers to deliver high quality career development services to prospective and current students and alumni in an end-to-end career support delivery model. Support services include career counseling, co-

op/internship placement, and support for application to advanced study and other programs.

The [Office of Residence Life](#) creates a living environment that supports the day-to-day experience of students living on campus. Services include direct support as well as referrals to other offices and services as needed. Direct support includes student group advising, community standards oversight, community and roommate mediation, and crisis and emergency assistance.

Multiple offices within Student Affairs support the personal wellness of students in their development as a whole person. These include the [Counseling Center](#), the [Office of Disability Services](#), the Crayton E. and Ellen Mann [Health Center](#), the [Student Fitness Center](#), and the [Office of Religious Life](#).

The Center for Student Engagement (CSE) offers multiple opportunities for students to develop their social, leadership, and social responsibility skills. CSE supports programming targeted at these goals, including the Social Responsibility Certificate, Greek Life, social and recreational events, and a range of [leadership development initiatives](#).

The Office of Cultural Engagement and International Services (CEIS) provides legal support to international students (immigration, tax, and other areas). [CEIS](#) also addresses the academic advisement, cultural adjustment, and community interaction needs of our international students.

The [Office of Safety and Security](#) monitors the campus 24 hours a day to promote a safe and secure environment. It partners with all components of the campus community to offer programs and procedures that support the activities of students, employees, and guests.

As much as possible, student support services at Harlaxton College strive to provide a seamless support network between the Evansville and Harlaxton campuses. [Harlaxton College](#) offers a number of additional support services that meet the unique needs of students studying abroad. These include the “Meet-A-Family” cultural exchange program; cultural, safety and travel orientations; class attendance monitoring; counseling and travel support.

Adult learners and students in graduate programs have access to all the programs described above.

3.D.2.

UE recognizes that directing entering students to courses appropriate to their academic needs and abilities will help increase their chances for academic success. The University maintains placement processes in a number of academic programs, including the [First-Year Seminar](#) (FYS 111 or FYS 112), [math, and foreign languages](#). Depending on results of the math and foreign language placement tests, students receive credit for courses with demonstrated proficiencies in math or foreign language, respectively. In a similar way, students in the RN to BSN program who successfully complete [NURS 351 receive credit](#) for required nursing and pharmacology courses, consistent with national practices for RN to BSN programs. The English-language skills of incoming international students are assessed, and students are directed to program tracks based on test results and other indicators of ability in this area. The [Major Discovery program](#) helps guide [undeclared incoming students](#) to a [major field of study appropriate for their goals](#), abilities, and academic situation. The program ensures that undeclared students have faculty advisors and includes an optional 1-credit course to guide the process of exploring majors and programs.

In collaboration with academic departments, the [Center for Academic Advising](#) (CAA) coordinates free individual tutoring and supplemental instruction ([SI](#)) sessions for [all students](#), including students

in [math](#) and [foreign languages](#). SI involves peer-facilitated study sessions led by students who have taken the course before and have done exceptionally well. It creates a collaborative learning environment where students can compare notes, hold discussions, and predict test questions.

Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) work with [UE Foreign Language](#) faculty to enrich conversational opportunities for students majoring or minoring in select foreign languages. FLTAs also contribute to classroom discussions about their native cultures and actively engage in the campus community by living in the International Connections residence hall, contributing to International Education Week, and helping with Linguapalooza, an outreach for high school students.

3.D.3.

The University has established policies to ensure quality academic advising. All degree-seeking students in the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Education and Health Sciences, the School of Business Administration, and the College of Engineering and Computer Science are assigned faculty advisors. The Director of the Center for Adult Education provides academic advising to its students by offering assistance with degree planning, course registration/withdrawal, graduation checklists, and other academic matters. [Non-degree-seeking students](#) in programs like ESL are advised by the CAA until they matriculate into an undergraduate program. Instructors, faculty advisors, advising staff, and (as needed) other support personnel are able to participate in the academic alert system that helps identify difficulties that students may be experiencing (see also 4C3).

More recently UE has invested in the [Colleague Student Planning Module](#), which empowers students to take ownership of their academic plan with an easy interface that helps them take into account pre-requisites and the semesters in which courses will be offered. Faculty advisors will be able to use the module to review and approve student plans and record discussions from advising sessions.

Beyond academic advising provided by faculty, UE also invests in resources to engage at-risk students and student-athletes. The CAA proactively meets twice a month with students who are considered at risk of being academically unsuccessful, including those who are on academic probation, the bottom 10% of the freshman class, student-athletes who are out of the classroom due to travel, and international students who have weak English-language skills.

The Athletics Department provides coaches [midterm and final grade reports](#) and any academic alerts of their student-athletes. For some student-athletes, the Athletics Department coordinates the [development of plans](#) that support their academic success in collaboration with CAA and coaches. [Missed class time](#) due to team competition is reviewed and approved each semester by the [Faculty Senate Athletics Committee](#).

Students who are studying at Harlaxton for a semester retain their academic advisors and have easy access to electronic communication either via email or internet video teleconferencing (Skype). In addition, the close living-learning environment fosters informal advising and mentoring between faculty and students.

3.D.4.

The University provides spaces appropriate to the specialized instruction of each academic program and updates these spaces as required to support student learning, as can be demonstrated in the [inventory of the spaces](#) and the [floor plans of the academic and non-academic buildings](#) on campus. The [College of Arts and Sciences](#) has adequate facilities for its programs in the Fine and Performing Arts and in the Natural and Social Sciences. The [College of Education and Health](#)

[Sciences](#) has adequate laboratories and learning spaces on campus in Graves Hall as well as through off-site clinical spaces for its programs.

Accreditation organizations provide valuable guidance regarding the adequacy of the infrastructure and resources needed to support effective teaching and learning in specific programs. For example, the programs in the College of Engineering and Computer Science (CECS) meet the standards for facilities required for accreditation. ABET requires programs to address [Criterion 7 \(Facilities\)](#) for accreditation. The 2014 ABET self-study reports from the [CE](#), [CoE](#), [EE](#), and [ME](#) programs comment that the current facilities and resources available to students both within CECS and throughout the University (including information technology and library resources) are adequate to attain student outcomes. Similarly the AACSB Peer Review team notes in its 2010 report on the Schroeder [School of Business Administration facilities](#): "The new facility housing the Schroeder School is of high quality and has state of the art technology". In contrast, the [National Association of Schools of Music](#) has continuously noted that the music practice facilities lack proper acoustical insulation to isolate sound, and they have expressed concern that the main performance space, Wheeler Concert Hall, is not adequate for large ensembles. In response, the University included a Performing Arts Center (PAC) as a possibility in its Master Facilities plan, and in 2013 the Department of Music and Friends of UE Music commissioned a [PAC Study](#) to explore options for improving spaces for music and theatre. In the meantime, the Department of Music is evaluating the feasibility of making greater use of city-owned venues such as the Victory Theatre as a short term solution.

While assessment by students and faculty confirms the success of the libraries in meeting and exceeding patron service needs, personnel resources at [UE Libraries](#) are relatively small in every category as compared with staffing at peer academic libraries in the Midwest (e.g., Bradley, Butler, Creighton, Drake, and Valparaiso). UE Libraries have unmet personnel needs, which constrain expansion of programs that serve students and faculty. Although access to services for research such as Interlibrary Loan (ILL) has increased 35% by students and faculty from 2013 to 2014 and access to all online databases has increased by 18% during the same time period, the collections budget and the operating budget of the libraries have been reduced each year for the past three years. However, the cost for maintaining database subscriptions has increased and the cost for services such as ILL has increased because of the greater demand, resulting in reductions in the purchase of print sources. In FY 2013/2014 per-student expenditure for library collections at UE was \$128.77 versus \$271.24 at peer Midwest libraries. Physical Plant issues of the Libraries have been addressed with a \$3 million renovation completed in December 2015.

The Eykamp Center for Teaching Excellence housed in Graves Hall offers a well-appointed room for faculty discussion and ongoing orientation. The room holds between 10 and 15 people, and it is equipped with a computer and TV monitor as well as a teaching development library that includes books, videos, and subscriptions. These materials, offering expertise on everything from technological pedagogies to student-centered learning and service-learning-in-the-disciplines, are available for browsing or checkout.

3.D.5.

Faculty and staff in various offices of instructional support help guide students in the effective and ethical use of research and information resources. (See also the discussion in Component 2E.)

The Pledge of Honor and the [Academic Honor Code](#) emphasize the importance of academic integrity in all student work and assignments. This forms the basis for instructors to discuss the effective use of research and information resources and to clarify [definitions of cheating and plagiarism in student work](#). For a detailed discussion, see 2.E.2. The FYS program is designed to provide UE students with

an introduction to the conventions of academic research and college-level discourse. Foundational to the course is guidance in the effective use of research sources and information. Each section meets the essential learning goals by encountering and using challenging texts as the basis for writing assignments and class discussion. Students in FYS 112 are required to complete a research paper that involves critical analysis of material from the class reading list as well as outside sources. Each section requires a style/writing manual as a resource for using and citing sources effectively. Faculty members are encouraged to schedule class sessions with librarians to provide instruction on a variety of information resources. In [proposing a syllabus](#) for the FYS program, faculty are required to explain how their course will help students achieve the writing goal of [using sources to support ideas](#).

The UE Libraries offers guidance and instruction to students to understand, evaluate, and effectively utilize [information resources](#) such as databases, books, and journals through the [Library Instruction Program \(LIP\)](#) and the [Research Assistance Program \(RAP\)](#). LIP formally works with self-selected classes around campus to cover broad research and information science concepts. RAP works with individuals to coach them in finding research materials.

[Writing Center](#) tutors provide students with constructive dialogue and guided feedback and serve as the primary site for campus-wide [supplemental writing instruction](#) - turning research into well-crafted academic papers.

Students receive further guidance in the effective use of research and information resources in the *Enduring Foundations* capstone course. The capstone course is defined as a culminating experience for students near the end of their college careers, and may be met by approved disciplinary offerings involving research projects, supervised professional practice, or juried performance or exhibition. [Criteria for assessment](#) include demonstration of sophisticated proficiency and understanding in the discipline and integration of knowledge and skills developed across a range of course work.

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3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

3.E.1.

The University fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment through the co-curricular programs designed by Student Affairs at the Evansville campus and the Student Development Office at Harlaxton. UE co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission of preparing women and men for lives of personal and professional service and leadership and also contribute to the educational experience of UE students.

[Student Affairs](#) plays a key role in the educational mission of the University by partnering with the rest of campus to foster character development and community engagement. It is dedicated to the philosophy that student development begins upon entry into the University, includes both in-class and out-of-class activities, and continues through graduation and commitment to a life plan. Each office within Student Affairs provides distinct programs and [services that support the University's mission](#) and set the stage for student learning and development. Student Affairs is intentional in [assessing the quality of programs](#) and services and the [achievement of student learning](#). Details of Student Affairs assessment efforts may be found in 4.B.2.

At UE, [student organizations](#) are the main co-curricular outlet by which student express themselves and provide opportunities for social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical growth. Students who engage in these opportunities gain a stronger sense of satisfaction and affinity and thus, are more likely to contribute to the institution as alumni post-graduation.

The University's strong and vibrant co-curricular community comprises over [150 student organizations](#) that contribute to the educational experience of the students. These student organizations are an example of how the [University of Evansville prepares men and women](#) for lives of personal and professional service and leadership. It also is a co-curricular mechanism for achieving educational goals of developing collaboration and leadership skills.

At the Harlaxton campus, students engage in a range of educational and extracurricular activities, leadership opportunities, cultural events, and travel while studying in the United Kingdom. The Harlaxton Student Development Office (SDO) has established [student learning outcomes](#) for its programming linked to University Educational Objectives. The SDO program goals include the development of students personally, professionally, and in areas of responsible global citizenship.

With its emphasis on the importance of serving the Evansville community, the student-athlete experience at University of Evansville also contributes to the student's educational experience as it

serves the University's mission of preparing women and men for lives of personal and professional service and leadership. Student-athletes have the opportunity to participate in team, Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), and University coordinated service projects. These have included 98 community organizations and over [3,900 hours completed by the student-athletes](#) during the 2013-14 academic year.

3.E.2.

The University contributes to students' educational experience by providing challenging and rewarding curricular opportunities, including the [Honors Program](#) (HP). The HP supports UE's claim that it selects and contributes to the educational experience of talented and motivated students by recruiting a significant (and increasing) number of top-quality students. The incoming students are strong academically, and the matriculation rate for UE honors students is three times higher than the University's overall rate (60% vs. 20%). [Honors Program](#) offers its students a good educational experience, with honors classes smaller than average and first-year retention high at 96%.

The Honors Program incorporates a significant emphasis on research, on- and off-campus community engagement, and service learning. Honors students are expected to engage in independent research, either as organized by their department or as an extra undertaking for which individuals sign up. This research is presented at the annual honors research presentations in early April (starting in 2014). The [research component](#) will be noted on transcripts as Honors 410 beginning in Academic Year 2015-16.

The [Honors Ace Mentors](#) (HAM) program connects honors students each year with local grade schools in low-income areas to provide extra tutoring to at-risk young students.

[Nerd Wars](#), a long-standing quiz competition featuring students and faculty, raises money for charity; a total of 130 students and faculty participated in February 2015, and the event raised \$776 for the HAM program.

The high percentage of UE students involved annually in organizations is evidence that the University fulfills its mission of preparing its women and men for lives of personal and professional service and leaderships. An average of 90% of UE students are engaged in at least one form of organization involvement annually. To measure students' acquisition of knowledge and leadership skills, the Center for Student Engagement assesses student learning with subpopulations of student leaders. All students attending the annual organization training are evaluated through an interactive quiz on policies and procedures. Students are quizzed on common misconceptions regarding policies and procedures until they obtain 100% effectiveness. Key student leaders are also evaluated through pre- and post-testing through self- and peer-assessment of the practices of exemplary leadership. Identified student leaders also complete personal reflections of goal setting and leadership qualities to demonstrate personal growth.

UE's ties to the Methodist Church are expressed through the Chaplain who is ordained in the United Methodist Church, reports directly to the President, leads weekly liturgies in Neu Chapel, and builds bridges to other faith communities and traditions through educational programming both on and off campus (see also 2.D.).

Enduring Foundations contributes to the University's mission of preparing students for lives of personal and professional service and leadership by requiring that students complete one Social Responsibility component as a graduation requirement. Approved courses must meet [specific social responsibility criteria](#), including a requirement for at least 10 hours of active community engagement.

Co-curricular activities that meet all of the criteria may also be approved for component designations, with the guideline of 40 hours directed at the knowledge and action components of the rubric, including at least 20 hours of active engagement. [Assessment of student learning](#) in courses that meet the *Civic Social Responsibility* and *Environmental Social Responsibility* Outcomes occurs each time a course bearing that overlay is taught.

As evidence of the University's dedication to active learning and scholarship, UExplore ([Undergraduate Research Programs](#)) offers students the opportunity to participate in undergraduate research projects. The program provides students and faculty the opportunity to work together on research by providing funding for joint projects. Nearly 1,000 UE students have presented their research at peer-reviewed conferences, and 397 students have presented peer-reviewed papers at [professional conferences](#) since the inception of the UExplore program in 1989. Over the past five years, 82% of the students have publicly disseminated their research, and that percentage increases to 96% when it includes students presenting to their class.

The University's commitment to a global view in its programs and its vision is evident in its recent recognition as a leader in international education. UE enrolled over 400 students from more than 55 countries in the 2014-15 academic year; leads outstanding internationally focused programs; and has developed institutional partnerships in China, Japan, and Korea. Over 60% of UE students participate in either short-term or long-term study abroad program, many of them on UE's campus in the United Kingdom. The Institution is intentional about assessing the effect of international education to demonstrate value. For example, the Harlaxton SDO conducts [pre- and post-semester surveys](#) that measure both qualitatively *and* quantitatively 10 aspects of global citizenship. The implementation of the University's [Quality Initiative](#) also attests to its continued dedication to the global aspect of its mission.

Because education is a lifelong process of critical inquiry, the University of Evansville commits resources to continuing education programs in the greater community. This commitment is demonstrated through educational and community outreach programs such as the [Institute for Banking and Finance](#), public performances by faculty in the [Department of Music](#), the [Andiron Lecture Series](#), and the [Patricia H. Snyder Concert and Lecture Series](#). In addition, the Center for Adult Education annually sponsors the [Wednesday Morning Lecture Series](#) and partners with the Institute for Reading Development to offer a [Reading Skills program](#). CAE also partners with the [Evansville Association for the Blind](#) (EAB) to bring their qualified students to the UE campus for courses offered during the summer, providing the opportunity to experience campus life before they enroll in college. These students live in the residence halls and earn credit from regular UE Summer Session courses on campus.

In September 2015, the University presented the [UE Guarantee](#) to the freshman class entering in Fall 2016 (see 1.B.1.). The claims made regarding graduation in four years, engagement with talented faculty, participation in at least one internship, a scholarship, and the opportunity to study abroad are backed by data that show that UE can deliver on these promises. For example, results from the National Survey for Student Engagement show that freshmen and seniors at UE rate the [quality of their interaction with faculty and support staff](#) higher than students at US News Top Midwest schools and Carnegie Peer Institutions, showcasing student-faculty engagement and highlighting the importance of quality faculty interaction necessary for students to reach the four-year graduation goal.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

UE prides itself in providing high quality education through the dedication of its faculty and staff, whether on our Evansville campus, at clinical sites, through distance education, at our study abroad campus in Harlaxton, in collaboration with high schools through dual-credit courses, or through our programs for adult learners.

Our associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs have content and rigor appropriate to the degrees awarded, as articulated in learning goals and levels of performance expected, and confirmed by vetting of its faculty and by program review by peer-institution consultants or accrediting bodies.

As our Mission states, "The University is dedicated to active learning and scholarship." The general education component of all undergraduate programs provides a breadth of knowledge and skills that prepare students to become informed, ethical, and productive citizens. This breadth includes and values the diversity of human experiences and cultures. Because the University "values learning as a means of attaining freedom from ignorance and prejudice" all degree programs engage students in critical examination of information so necessary for participating as a global citizen, typically in conjunction with the senior capstone requirement in *Enduring Foundations*. Such inquiry naturally leads to scholarship or creative work by students and faculty, often in collaboration, as evidenced by the level of engagement reported by students and faculty in NSSE and FSSE data.

Since the last HLC visit, UE has responded to challenges in sustaining the quality of teaching and learning experiences, although in some areas, more needs to be done. Three examples help to illustrate the planning, the institution-wide collaboration, and areas where future efforts can be focused. First, through strategic changes made in structures and processes across academic, administrative, and student affairs departments, the institution was prepared to address the needs of increased international-student enrollment that resulted from successful global recruitment efforts. When academic needs arose, the culture of good will of people across campus helped to respond collaboratively. Second, the University Libraries has seen its effective budget decline over the years and has unfilled staff positions. Through the hard work of the Office of Development collaborating with Library leadership, much-needed renovations have been recently accomplished, but resources required to provide high-quality service and to maintain collections and online databases required for scholarship remain unaddressed. Third, faculty workload was raised as an issue by the HLC Peer Review team in 2005. HLC observed that "Faculty and administrators noted [...] increasing demands on faculty time, and have expressed concern that these [additional] duties may adversely affect teaching quality and faculty effectiveness." The Faculty and Staff Development Working Group from the [2011 Strategic Plan](#) Process discussed faculty workload and recommended action steps to assess workloads for balance and equity. In 2012, the SVPA began a process of engaging faculty to establish [priorities](#) outside of teaching and scholarly or creative work. But turnovers in Academic Affairs leadership have made consistent focus on this issue challenging. By 2014, [FSSE data](#) showed an increase in the perceived amount of time devoted to service activities when compared to data gathered in 2008. In 2015 with participation and input from several UE faculty, NACU published a [monograph](#) recommending new ways to structure departments and evaluate faculty and workload

using a holistic approach. UE continues to study the challenge of providing high quality educational experiences in a way that can sustain faculty in their dedication to our students.

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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 - Core Component 4.A

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

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
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 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.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
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, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

The University's schools and colleges offer a diverse array of educational programs, and all educational programs participate in outcomes assessment and program review that ensure quality and facilitate continuous evidence-based improvement. Because of the differences in educational programming offered in various areas, the nature of continuous-improvement strategies also differs. As such, each school, college, and administrative area develops its own processes and procedures that are most suited to the needs of its students, faculty, and staff.

4.A.1.

Program reviews are undertaken on a regular basis for all educational programs. [Programs with specialty accreditation](#) complete program review as a part of the specialty accreditation process. Programs that do not participate in specialty accreditation are [reviewed on a 10-year cycle](#) in a process that includes [external consultant reviewers](#) and a formal process for response by the reviewed programs that emphasize evidence-based improvement. Program review [schedules](#) and summaries of reports and response documents show that program review is carried out according to these policies.

Of the [23 programs](#) that are on the schedule for external program review, four have never had an external review. Of these four, two are scheduled for review in Spring 2016, one is scheduled for review in 2016-17, and one for 2017-18. Programs in the [Center for Adult Education](#) will undergo external program review through the Council on Accelerated Programs in January 2016.

Program reviews and specialty accreditations frequently result in recommendations for changes to enhance the quality of the programs, and the institution works to implement recommendations as resources allow. For example, the [program review for the Philosophy and Cognitive Science programs in 2011-12](#) resulted in recommendations concerning the size and complexity of the Cognitive Science program. An overhaul of the [Cognitive Science curriculum](#) was undertaken in Fall 2012 to simplify the requirements while still achieving the desired student learning outcomes and also allowing the variety of options this interdisciplinary major supports.

From an academic perspective, the Prioritization process, described in more detail in Core Component 5A, served as a significant internal review of all current educational and administrative programs. Data from existing continuous-improvement processes, including assessment and program review, provided some of the information used in the evaluation process. Areas of attention in the evaluation of academic programs included “Contribution to Institutional Mission and Strategic Direction” as well as “Quality Outcomes.” The strategic prioritization process [identified programs](#) where changes and/or investment of additional resources could lead to quality enhancements, and some of those changes/investments have begun.

4.A.2.

UE ensures that credit transcripts is evaluated through well-established processes at the institution. UE awards no credit for prior [experiential learning](#), except for students with ACE recommended credit completed by service to the US armed forces. All other credit-bearing activities are governed by UE’s [Credit Hour Policy](#), which is maintained by the Curriculum Committee. [Audits](#) of credit-hour policy compliance show that we have made significant progress in assuring and documenting that learning outcomes, class meeting schedules, and other academic activities are compliant with the UE Credit Hour Policy, which is compliant with the Federal Code governing award of credit.

[International Baccalaureate, CLEP, advanced-placement credit](#), and credit by examination follow national standards or our own internal standards developed and administered by the appropriate academic department, such as [foreign language](#). [International credit](#) transcribed as UE credit is approved prior to enrollment by the Office of Education Abroad, the Registrar, and relevant academic departments.

4.A.3.

UE maintains well-established policies with respect to [transfer credit](#), including transfer of [general education](#) courses. General education courses taught at Harlaxton College by [visiting faculty from Partner Schools](#) are treated as transfer credit (subject to UE departmental approval) unless the visiting faculty member agrees to assess the course using the approach associated with the approval of the course by the General Education Subcommittee. The University enters into [articulation agreements](#) with other regionally accredited institutions to facilitate the transfer of students into select UE programs, at the same time ensuring that the transfer students are well-prepared to complete their degree at UE in a timely manner. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (SVPAA), Dean, Department Chair, and Registrar are involved in developing the articulation agreement, helping to ensure that any requirements related to specialty accreditation are met. Beyond programs that have articulation agreements, the Registrar collaborates with academic departments to evaluate transfer

credit on a case-by-case basis. All credit evaluated for transfer must originate from a [regionally accredited institution](#). Exceptions to the above statement exist for military credit, which is granted based on ACE recommendations so long as the credit applies to the student's degree program and for [transfer credit from study abroad programs](#) where the student does not pay UE tuition. Courses taken at other institutions that do not apply to UE degree programs are not evaluated for credit.

4.A.4.

At UE, the [faculty has ultimate responsibility for the curriculum](#), including academic rigor, expectations, and prerequisites, as well as for faculty qualifications. As noted under 3.C.2., standards for [faculty qualifications](#) are developed collaboratively by the administration and Faculty Senate and presented in the Faculty Manual. All [curricular change](#), including creation of [new courses](#), is reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate [Curriculum Committee](#). This oversight includes evaluation of prerequisites, academic rigor, and expectations for student learning. In some cases, minor changes in modality are delegated for [review and approval](#) by the relevant department and the Office of Academic Affairs.

All dual credit teachers and dual credit courses are approved by the chair of the department in which credit is offered as well as by the SVPAA. Dual credit teachers are considered adjunct faculty and meet the same qualification and documentation requirements as other adjunct faculty. [Yearly reviews](#) are conducted for ongoing approval of the courses offered by the appropriate department chair and the SVPAA. UE has put a policy into place regarding [assessment of dual credit courses](#), which is being implemented beginning in the 2015-16 academic year. Dual credit students are given a UE e-mail address and have access to all library resources at the institution to ensure they have the opportunity to meet the levels of achievement expected of a higher education course.

4.A.5.

Colleges, schools, departments, and programs where [specialty accreditation](#) exists are encouraged to participate in this process. Programs where accreditation aligns with the mission of the institution have engaged with the appropriate specialty accreditors and maintain accredited status. Programs in Music, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Science, Education, Nursing, Physical Therapy, Athletic Training, and all programs in the Schroeder Family School of Business Administration have external accreditation.

4.A.6.

The University places a strong focus on documenting and understanding the success of our graduates. We have a new, collaboratively developed and implemented system (The [Assessment of Career Outcomes](#) or ACO) in place to assure that student outcomes align with our mission "to prepare women and men for lives of personal and professional service and leadership." The ACO allows student employment and advanced study data to be distributed to relevant stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees, Academic Affairs, and prospective students and their families. The career outcomes rate for the University as a whole, as defined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has been 94% for 2012-13 and 93% for [2013-14](#). [Data disaggregated by program](#) are used internally by relevant faculty and administrators. Analysis of report data has led to a focus on enhancing the employment and advanced study outcomes for graduates in some [Arts and Sciences programs](#) because the career outcomes rate for the College of Arts and Sciences was as much as 10 percentage points lower than other schools at UE.

Academic departments collect post-graduate outcomes information from the Office of Alumni and

Parent Relations; the Office of Institutional Effectiveness; the Center for Career Development; and/or directly from alumni themselves through Facebook, LinkedIn, e-mail contact, and locally developed surveys. These data are used to advise prospective and current students about career [opportunities](#) in the discipline.

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4.B - Core Component 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.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
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.

Argument

Since the 2005-06 reaccreditation by HLC, UE has made a number of significant changes to its overall processes for assessment of student learning to strengthen the continuous improvement process across campus. While our efforts on the assessment of student learning were affirmed during that earlier reaccreditation process, there was recognition that the University was not putting enough focus on best practices in assessment. A fundamental shift in our approach to assessment occurred following that reaccreditation visit, including the creation of an [assessment manual](#) that outlined policies and procedures that reflected best practices in student learning assessment that is [updated regularly](#), the development of a general education program with student learning assessment as a key design principle, and a push for all programs to rethink their assessment from the ground up. The results of this shift can be seen in significantly better work in student learning assessment in many programs across campus, but also in some areas that have required more time and resources for such redevelopment. Thus, while most programs have completed cycles of assessment that include evidence-based improvement by utilizing best practices in assessment, some programs are still working to put into place these redeveloped assessment processes. It is clear, however, that the shift to best practices in assessment has resulted in improvements across campus in the effectiveness of our programs, and will continue to offer such results as all programs pursue the data collection and implementation phases of the process through each new cycle of such assessment.

4.B.1.

UE has clear [institutional educational objectives](#) for its students, which provide the basis for learning outcomes at the course and program level. [University policy](#) requires programs to assess student learning by stating learning outcomes, designing direct, authentic measures of the achievement of those outcomes, collecting outcomes data, and using this evidence for improvement. Each of the program learning outcomes is tied to the University educational objectives, including learning outcomes for *Enduring Foundations*.

Assessment policies and procedures themselves are continually updated to reflect best practices and the needs of our academic programs. The Assessment Manual is updated to incorporate new knowledge and practices learned from the review of program assessment reports by the Assessment Committee and from sources such as the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, the Assessment Institute, and specialty accreditors. By contrasting the contents of the [2008-09](#) and [2013-14](#) manuals, one can quickly ascertain the extent to which knowledge and practices advance, even

over that five-year period. For example, the 2013-14 manual emphasizes the importance of using mostly [direct measures](#) in student learning assessment, whereas the 2008-09 manual places equal weight on both [direct and indirect measures](#), but does not guide departments to focus most of their efforts on direct measures. Additionally, the 2013-14 manual includes a [rubric](#) for evaluating assessment plans and reports, a valuable tool for the Assessment Committee and a useful summary of best practices for departments that are writing their plans and reports.

Learning outcomes in assessment plans must be linked to specific institutional educational objectives and to specific evidence of student achievement. This two-way linkage ensures that measures, data collection, and ongoing actions to improve student learning are grounded in the overall institutional educational objectives. The University provides ePortfolio software, [LiveText](#), to facilitate the gathering assessment artifacts and reporting of assessment data at each level of assessment – course, program, and institution. This software is also provided for dual credit and Harlaxton programs.

4.B.2.

The recently implemented *Enduring Foundations* General Education program was designed around learning outcomes, including those in co-curricular areas that satisfy overlay outcomes, and incorporates evidence-based improvement as a design principle. Every academic course or co-curricular offering that satisfies a requirement in the program had to be [submitted](#) to the General Education Subcommittee for consideration in the new program. How the course would be [assessed](#) in relation to *Enduring Foundations* outcomes was a required part of every proposal, and ensured every course in the program was connected both to *Enduring Foundations* and through that to the University's educational objectives. Since we have been through a full cycle of reporting in the *Enduring Foundations* program ([2012-13](#), [2013-14](#), and [2014-15](#)), courses in every outcome and overlay have reported their assessment results and action steps at the course level, which has fed into the overall [assessment of the Enduring Foundations program](#).

Student Affairs staff members have developed a model [assessment plan](#) to understand how well co-curricular learning outcomes are achieved. Student Affairs has structures in place for [annual internal department program reports](#) as well as assessment of student learning outcomes reported on a three-year cycle. Work on the assessment process culminated in the summer of 2014 with a comprehensive 219-page Learning Outcomes Report outlining the work of Student Affairs' 11 departments. To provide for a more realistic workload and focus on the heart of co-curricular learning, Student Affairs revised the structure of its assessment plan in 2014-15. The Student Affairs assessment plan includes identification of domain-related learning outcomes and measures (2015-16), application of measures (2016-17), and the submission of a comprehensive report to the Assessment Committee (Summer 2017). See [Student Affairs – Learning Domain Model](#) for more details.

4.B.3.

Because of the redesign of our assessment protocols to reflect best practices over the past several years, programs are in [various stages](#) of implementation. [Several programs](#) have completed important evidence-based improvement utilizing their assessment of student learning, including curricular and pedagogical changes, while others are in the first round of collecting data and fine-tuning their revised assessment plans that focus on such best practices. All assessment plans submitted to the Assessment Committee have been collected and organized using *Blackboard* and will be made available to the HLC Peer Review Team during its site visit in February 2016.

For those curricular programs where evidence-based improvement is fully in place, numerous examples indicate improved student learning through outcomes assessment. In their 2014 self-studies

for ABET accreditation, the Mechanical, Civil, Electrical, and Computer Engineering Programs provided examples of evidence-based continuous improvement at the curriculum level. For example, the [Mechanical Engineering Program](#) re-sequenced required lower-division engineering science courses to better fit with material covered in basic math and science courses. The [Civil Engineering Program](#) raised the minimum grade required in prerequisite courses to help improve student performance in upper-level courses. Improvements were also made at the course level. For example, [Computer](#) and [Electrical Engineering](#) changed the way that seniors are prepared for their oral presentations in their senior capstone course. All these changes were based on the evaluation of assessment data that were gathered over the course of multiple years, often with input from advisory councils composed of industry professionals.

Another example of using assessment to improve student learning comes from the Nursing Program's comprehensive [Systematic Evaluation Plan](#) (SEP) that tracks student learning and program outcomes. All faculty members in the department share responsibility for implementation of the SEP across the curriculum. The Nursing Program's student learning objectives are consistent and congruent with the University's educational objectives, with the goal of producing a liberally educated professional nurse. Curricular changes resulting from this assessment process include increasing the pediatric content in various courses based on lower scores on the standardized pediatric assessment exam (the HESI), and increasing the time students spend working with nurse managers to understand and appreciate nursing leadership. Additionally, content has been added to several courses related to current issues in nursing (pain management, medical errors) as data gathered through the assessment process have indicated these areas as ones in need of enhancement.

In Student Affairs, numerous examples show how student learning has been improved in co-curricular areas through continuous evidence-based improvement emerging from the assessment process. For example, Cultural Engagement and International Student Services used a direct measure quiz to assess the level of knowledge new international students had obtained from orientation sessions on essential information including maintaining immigration status, identifying campus resources, academic plagiarism, and differences between their own and American culture. [The Spring 2014 instrument helped uncover low levels of targeted learning, but only after the orientation sessions.](#) To remedy this issue, in Fall 2014 [peer mentors](#) were used to score the assessments and provide direct feedback to students to make sure all new international students fully understood the content that was being provided. As another example, Residence Life has used results of perception data in the Annual Residence Life Fall Feedback Survey to help reframe instructional approaches for Resident Assistant staff. Data from Fall 2009 and 2010 showed that the question; "My RA has made a reasonable effort to get to know me." had an average rating 0.25 lower than other indicators on a 5-point scale, related to the Student Affairs Residence Life Outcome E – the RA Leadership Experience. In response the department made a significant adjustment in their training approach for RAs, targeting for improvement the quality of interaction starting Fall 2011. RAs were provided a workbook called [BASIC](#) (Building A Strong Involving Community), and RA training emphasized methods for building strong personal interactions on the floor. As a result of changes made in instructional approaches related to survey assessment data, Resident Assistants increased their understanding and ability to engage in positive interactions with floor residents. Students have since rated this indicator as one of the highest on the [survey](#).

4.B.4.

Most of the institutional efforts in the assessment of student learning are overseen by the Assessment Committee. The majority of members on the Assessment Committee are faculty, and all voting members on the General Education Subcommittee, which deals with proposed assessments for courses in the General Education program, are from the faculty. The Assessment Committee includes

faculty from all four colleges and schools. There is some overlap between membership of the [Assessment Committee](#), the [Curriculum Committee](#), and the [General Education Subcommittee](#) by way of office. Furthermore, the Assessment Committee also includes key administrators and Student Affairs professionals. Assessment policies and procedures were developed over years in a consultative process that included the professional development of key faculty and administrators, which resulted in protocols that conform closely to national best practices. Faculty Senate [Curriculum Committee approval](#) requires a discussion of how proposed changes fit the relevant program assessment plan, and all [general education course approvals](#) include specific assessment plans directed at outcome criteria.

In addition to the overall processes for assessment that include significant participation by faculty, assessment for particular academic programs also involves faculty members in substantive ways. For example, while primary responsibility for assessment in the College of Engineering and Computer Science falls on the program directors, all faculty members participate in assessment. The Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science uses an assessment day concept wherein [EECS faculty reviews](#) program [educational objectives](#). The Mechanical Engineering program uses [ME Program Outcome Assessment Worksheets](#) that gather data from 100- to 400-level courses using an assessment question bank and rubrics for rating student work.

Significantly, programs that participate in [specialty accreditation](#) have received [positive feedback](#) on [outcomes assessment](#), indicating alignment between our policies and procedures and those of specialty accreditors. For example, the ABET accreditation process for programs in the College of Engineering and Computer Science provides evaluation of, feedback on, and guidance for the assessment practices employed by Civil, Computer, Electrical, and Mechanical Engineering as well as by Computer Science. In Fall 2009 the ABET review team noted either a concern or a weakness in meeting Criterion 3, documentation that students attain the outcomes identified by ABET as necessary for a baccalaureate program. Programs used the ABET feedback to make changes either to the curriculum or to their assessment processes. For example, the [Mechanical Engineering Program](#) provided an interim report on new assessment processes that helped to show the degree of attainment of outcomes, resolving the weakness.

Similarly in the College of Education and Health Sciences, the Nursing Program uses their SEP to assess their curriculum and student achievement of learning outcomes on an ongoing basis. Student learning outcomes are developed based on contemporary nursing practice and professional standards. Analysis of data and action plans are discussed in nursing faculty meetings with follow-up occurring as needed.

All faculty members teaching within *Enduring Foundations* assess courses in the program each time those courses are taught and submit a formal assessment report to the Director of General Education every three years, rotating based on the particular outcomes that serve as the focus of assessment in a given year. Those reports include summary discussions and action plans based on the results of the assessments. The action plans provide examples of evidence-based improvement. Those summary and action plans can be found in the General Education Assessment report for each year, and provide numerous examples of evidence-based improvement. In the 2012-13 report, for example, the First-Year Seminar (FYS) program made a number of changes to the program after their first assessment cycle, including changes to the yearly workshop for faculty who teach in the program, and changes to the assessment rubrics and artifacts themselves. In that same report, evidence-based improvement is described from courses in [Biology and Chemistry](#) where pedagogical changes were planned based on certain areas where student outcomes were not as strong as expected. Similar examples can be found in both the [2013-14](#) and [2014-15](#) reports. At the end of two assessment cycles (six years), instructors will be required to resubmit their courses to the General Education Subcommittee for new approval.

The *Enduring Foundations* program completed the first three-year cycle of assessment in Spring 2015, and instructors will meet at the end of the Spring 2016 semester to discuss the results of the assessment data on student performance, to recommend course modification or improvement, as well as to consider any needed changes to the program structure, the outcomes, and/or the criteria.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

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.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of 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.)

Argument

NOTE: With respect to student success metrics, we do not distinguish between retention and persistence, and our internal documentation uses "retention" as the preferred term. We understand completion to be the ultimate indicator of the success of our retention initiatives.

4.C.1.

The Strategic Plan gives overarching guidance to efforts to promote [retention and completion](#) and places these efforts in the context of the mission of the institution. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness [benchmarks retention data](#) to our fellow schools in the New American Colleges and Universities (NACU) consortium, a group whose members share similar missions and student populations, and to the *U.S. News & World Report* top 10, which informs ambitious, aspirational goals.

Since the 2010 freshman cohort, the retention rates from first to second year have been [83% \(2010\)](#), [85% \(2011\)](#), [86% \(2012\)](#), [85% \(2013\)](#), and [81% \(2014\)](#). In 2015, a [Director of Retention](#) was hired through the Innovation and Re-investment Fund motivated in part by comparison of UE's retention and graduation data with those of comparable institutions. The Director of Retention leads retention efforts on campus, with support from offices across campus (including the Center for Academic Advising [CAA], Institutional Effectiveness, the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of the Dean of Students). The Director of Retention leads the [Student Success Team](#) (SST), a University-wide committee made up of faculty and administrators, to develop short- and long-term retention initiatives and strategies. The charge to the SST emphasizes continuous evidence-based improvement that helps individual students and the [student body as a whole](#).

The Director of Retention and the SST use guidance from the Strategic Plan, internal data, and external benchmarks to set and evaluate ambitious but attainable [goals for retention of students](#). The proposal submitted for creating the new position of Director of Retention compares UE's 86% overall retention rate to retention rates at colleges with whom we share a large number of cross-applicants.

The [proposal](#) shows the significant effect on [student enrollment](#) if UE achieves a 3 percentage point increase each year for all cohorts starting with Fall 2011.

Adult Education monitors retention and completion in its degree programs. [Completion rates in adult education](#) have recently ranged from 63% to 100%, with most cohorts in most programs showing completion rates of over 80%.

4.C.2.

Data on retention and completion are collected and updated annually. This information is presented with reference to [benchmarks](#) and to our Strategic Plan. The Director of Retention and the SST [collects and analyzes data](#) on an [ongoing basis](#), with a focus on achieving retention and completion goals by [assisting at-risk](#) students at multiple points during the semester. Freshmen are surveyed using the [nationally normed BCSSE instrument](#), and the companion [NSSE survey](#) has been administered to incoming students as well as graduating seniors. The Director of Retention also analyzes retention data with respect to other markers such as high school GPA, whether or not they live on campus if they are from the nearby community, and whether they are first generation college students (as reported through BCSSE). Together, these data reflect the situation of our student population, and contextualize completion and retention goals and programs.

It is anticipated that the [Student Planning Module](#) of *Colleague* will help the Institution in planning course offerings that are needed by students to complete their degree programs.

4.C.3.

The types of students who are typically well-retained with high rates of completion inform recruitment efforts in the Office of Enrollment Services. Information about the types of students who tend to be successful at UE is being used in admission decisions, leading to an increased denial rate. For example, in [2013](#), 98 applications were denied while in 2014, 243 were denied. That same year, average SAT scores increased five points to 1162.

The Director of Retention and the SST have started several new initiatives that make use of BCSSE data. Beginning in Fall 2015, faculty advisors have access to the individual information provided by advisees, including how much they expect to study in college, whether they expect to struggle, and what kinds of grades they received in high school. BCSSE data also give insight into the student body as a whole, identifying the large proportion of students who are the first in their families to attend college. In November 2015, a [letter](#) was sent home to parents counseling them on the importance of their encouragement in helping their son or daughter persevere in a rigorous academic environment.

The SST administers group initiatives including registration reminder e-mails, targeted outreach to sub-populations that are at-risk for leaving the University, and [instructions to students](#) for University systems like WebAdvisor.

Starting in 2007, retention efforts initiated a call campaign where University employees contact each freshman in the fall semester to ask how his/her experience is going. These outreaches are crucial in identifying students that need additional resources and connecting them with the appropriate person. The SST also developed the [Early Alert System](#). This system allows professors and administrators to place an alert on a student if there is concern about their well-being. The categories and kinds of alerts that can be issued are comprehensive: including academic, personal, financial, and professional. The student, advisor, and academic advising staff receive the alert and can assess what further action is necessary. The CAA monitors all alerts.

SST data are used by CAA and other student support services to help craft success plans as required for individual students, and for [student populations with special success-related needs](#). Several examples of the latter are provided in the evidence file.

With a focus emerging from our Strategic Plan and our Quality Initiative on increasing enrollment of international students, additional support to aid [retention of international students](#) and assist with their [academic success](#) has been implemented through the [Writing Center](#), [First-Year Seminar](#), and [Mathematics](#).

As we work to increase campus diversity, the importance of staff in the Office of Diversity Initiatives (ODI) to campus conversations about retention and completion has also increased. The reconfiguration of the [President's Cabinet](#) to include the Diversity and Equity Officer is an example of the enhanced attention to diversity in broader University planning.

In October 2014, the ODI worked together with the University of Evansville Inclusion Committee (UEIC) and members of the African American Alumni Association to examine enrollment trends for students of color over the previous five years. Findings showed a persistent reduction in African American students enrolled over this period. A [concerted and continuing effort](#) was made to increase the level of personal contact and communication with prospective students of color, resulting in an [increase in percentage of students of color enrolled in Fall 2015](#). In Spring 2015, the ODI worked with the Board's Diversity Committee to develop a [Diversity Plan](#) for the University based on benchmark data.

The ODI and the UEIC have used several different resources to help in making decisions about programming, activities, etc. each year to improve retention and completion. In 2011-12 the University participated in the [Diverse Learning Environments Survey](#). [From the data](#) it was determined that UE students expressed more satisfaction with the University's climate but engaged less frequently with challenging content/activities and had less frequent interactions with students who were different from them. [As a result, the ODI and the UEIC developed more meaningful opportunities for students to be challenged and interact](#). Some examples include: more diversity speakers on campus who offer challenging content, opportunities to interact through historical reenactment activities or other simulation projects, or by being a part of diversity dialogues with other students on campus that offers discussion topics such as racism, classism, heterosexism, sexism, and ableism. As an example, the ODI also developed an Anti-Bias Team, which is made up of students who registered for a semester long social responsibility course, completed four full days of anti-bias training through the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), and participated in 20 or more hours on campus or in the community by presenting activities from an anti-bias curriculum developed for the students. The Anti-Bias Team is the first group in the country trained by the ADL to be able to present a developed curriculum on a college campus as well as in the community. Providing both an atmosphere that improves the campus climate and resources to students who feel excluded are part of our efforts to [improve student retention and completion](#).

ABET evaluation of the [Electrical](#), [Mechanical](#), [Civil](#), and [Computer Engineering](#) programs raised concerns about the ability of students to graduate in a timely manner due to possible difficulties in meeting the general education overlay requirements. In response to these concerns and others, the assessment process for Enduring Foundations included evaluation of overall programmatic implementation and found that [some students in specific programs could have difficulties](#) meeting the overlay outcomes for graduation in Spring 2017 (the first cohort). Faculty meetings are being held Spring 2016 to proactively respond to these issues.

4.C.4.

UE tracks retention and completion of students using the standard Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System ([IPEDS](#)) definitions for many purposes because the bulk of students enter as first-time, full-time students. Students are never removed from their cohorts for calculation of retention and graduation rates, again following IPEDS definitions (i.e., the cohort is adjusted only for death, permanent disability, military service, or mission service). In addition to monitoring these data internally, these are the retention and [completion data](#) reported externally.

Operationally, it is important for us to monitor the retention of traditional cohorts beyond the standard first to second year. We also track retention of [transfer students](#) and of all [students by level](#) both from [fall to spring](#) and [fall to fall](#). Retention of all students is [monitored daily](#) by the Offices of Enrollment Services and Institutional Effectiveness during continuing [student registration](#) periods.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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.

Summary

The University of Evansville embraces its responsibility for ensuring the quality and integrity of its educational programs. The faculty bears the primary responsibility by maintaining high expectations of student learning and working with administration and staff to provide all our students with opportunities for success in college and beyond. Qualified faculty who understand the student-focus of our mission develop courses and curricula that are reviewed by faculty colleagues through the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee and the Academic Assessment Committee. Faculty in academic programs value review from external faculty consultants and, in the case of select professional programs, from practitioners of their profession for specialized accreditation. To ensure the integrity of the curricula developed by UE faculty and to ensure that UE degrees and credits have meaning and value, faculty collaborate with administrators to develop and apply transfer credit policies and to oversee the rigor of dual credit course equivalency standards.

The institutional commitment to quality is the foundation for improving processes at UE that help ensure the continuous improvement of our academic programs. The successful accreditation of our professional programs rests not only on the assessed quality of those programs but also on the quality of the programs across the institution, especially in the General Education program. In a similar way for non-accredited programs, consultant peer-reviews specifically focus on assessment of student learning outcomes and areas of improvement. However, these program reviews have not had a consistent history of implementation and documentation, given the lack of consistent resources to focus institutional efforts and an interruption to the process in AY 2013-14 due to the Strategic Program Prioritization Initiative (see Criterion 5). Those programs that have been through external review have benefited greatly from the feedback of external faculty peer reviewers, fostering program changes and improvements.

Similarly, in the area of academic assessment, we see programs at different stages in the development of student learning outcomes, the collection of assessment data, and the use of data for program improvement. Programs with specialty accreditation tend to already have well-developed assessment plans in place, benefiting from feedback by the specialized accreditation organizations. Co-curricular programs in Student Affairs can also point to changes made annually based on data gathered by their assessment process. More progress is being made through the leadership of an active Assessment Committee, led by a faculty chair, and through changes in the assessment process: from the development of assessable University educational objects, to better guidance from the Assessment Committee about best-practices in assessment, to tools that help in the assessment process (e.g., e-portfolios), and the acknowledgement that assessment is not a one-size-fits-all process. All these intentional efforts are carried out with the goal of advancing the culture of assessment at UE. Challenges to the growth of this culture of assessment include competing commitments on faculty time and developing meaningful ways to assess student learning across a broad spectrum of disciplines and learning outcomes through in-house expertise.

In the end, the success of our students is an important indicator of the quality of the education and the learning environment at UE. While not all students, for various reasons, will be able to complete their degree at UE, the institution prides itself in providing the personal attention that helps in students' persistence, perseverance, and success in careers, vocations, advanced study, and personal growth. Continued efforts by the Office of Diversity Initiatives in gathering information about the challenges faced by our diverse student body provides a strong foundation for creating a learning environment that celebrates diversity and aids in the retention of vulnerable students. More broadly, UE has been intentional through its Student Success Team in leveraging offices across campus in the retention of first-year students, with a special focus on vulnerable populations, whether domestic or international. In 2015 the University created the new position of Director of Student Retention as a result of the Strategic Program Prioritization Initiative and the subsequent Innovation and Re-investment Fund. The position will help to lead efforts in student retention through the use of data gathered as part of the University's continuous improvement process.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

UE has the appropriate resource base to support its programs now and in the future. Through planning efforts related to resources, the institution is able to respond to any possible resource concerns from a variety of areas, including enrollment shifts, economic changes, and unanticipated needs. An example of such planning on a larger scale occurred during the 2013-14 academic year, when the University initiated a major strategic program prioritization initiative. This process was undertaken, in the [words of President Kaze](#), to "review and prioritize all programs and services at the University, so that we can more strategically focus our resources on those programs which are most central to our mission." The key intent was to ensure that how the University allocates its resources was aligned with our mission and vision, and to do so in such a way that resulted in a balanced budget at a time when projections indicated future budget deficits. This process served as an overarching evaluation of administrative and academic programs at the institution based on reports provided "bottom up" from the program areas. After the two main evaluative committees provided their recommendations to the President, [a report of recommendations](#) for changes at the institution was made by the President to the Board of Trustees, which approved those recommendations. The outcomes included decisions about programs and staffing, allocation of resources for re-investment in order to begin or strengthen work in areas that were or had the potential to be successful, and actions to ensure the financial stability of the institution. Following up on those recommendations, several committees were formed to oversee the process of implementing the recommendations and considering allocation of re-investment resources to ensure continued success of the institution in achieving its mission. Rather than simply cutting programs in a time of fiscal constraint, an intentional process helped ensure that decisions regarding resources were made with appropriate evidence and institutional mission as the driving factors.

The University of Evansville has the resources necessary in all areas to support institutional operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

The infrastructure discussed in the following paragraphs pertains primarily to the Evansville campus, with the exception of fiscal resources. Fiscal resources include the consolidated financial activity of both the Evansville campus and our Harlaxton location in Grantham, England. With respect to human resources, physical, and technological infrastructure, Harlaxton follows the same general practices, processes, and policies as the Evansville campus. Human resources policies developed for Harlaxton are similar, but reflect governance by a different set of legal standards.

Fiscal Resources

The Office of Fiscal Affairs and Administration oversees and monitors the fiscal health of the institution, and the accounts are [audited annually by BKD](#), LLP. The University benchmarks its fiscal health by participating in a number of external surveys and studies to assess its allocation of resources and effectiveness as an institution, many of which utilize IPEDS data as the foundation. Other studies are based on uniquely identified data sets. For example, the University benchmarks several fiscal indicators, including [operating expenses](#) and [net tuition](#) through the New American Colleges and University (NACU) consortium. Two annual benchmark reports, the Financial Indicators Tool ([FIT](#)) and Key Indicators Tool (KIT) [Parts A](#) and [B](#), compare financial data to the mean and median for a regionally-adjusted peer group of institutions. HLC's Composite Financial Index ([CFI](#)) based on financial data submitted by UE shows that we met the HLC standards for financial operations (ABOVE THE ZONE) except for 2012 when UE's CFI fell within a range that resulted in a Letter of Concern. Through a major gift and changes made in overall operations, UE once again reached a CFI that placed it ABOVE THE ZONE.

In addition to external benchmarking, the University also documents trends using our own internal operating results. For example, the University uses our audited financial results to generate [trend-lines](#) over a 5- to 10-year period of key operating indicators for comparison with [Moody's benchmarks for both small and large universities](#).

Benchmarking data indicate that our [expenses on a per-student basis](#) falls near the average for peer institutions. However, we fall well below the average on [net tuition revenue per student](#). Over the past 10 years, the University has placed an emphasis on increasing its resource base to support current and future educational programs by actively seeking donors to support non-scholarship endowment funds. The University's non-scholarship pooled endowment funds have increased from \$15.3 million in [2004](#) to \$30.8 million in [2014](#). These funds support a variety of educational programs. Some of the larger non-scholarship funds that have been established include the Ridgway Faculty Development Fund, the Schroeder Family Endowment Funds to support a dean position, career services, and other programs within the Schroeder Family School of Business Administration, and a Science Lab Equipment Endowment Fund to support science labs in the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition to non-scholarship endowment funds, [overall endowment](#) has increased from \$78.7 million in 2010 to [\\$128.8 million at the end of fiscal year 2014-15](#).

These data show that the University's allocation of resources to academic programming and support for students and learning is in line with our peers and in many cases exceeds the percentage of operating budget directed toward these areas. The available resources for the institution are sufficient to grow the University's mission going forward.

Human Resources

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness produces a Fact Book that contains five years' worth of comparative data on the student population, faculty and non-faculty staffing patterns, as well as some key overall indicators. The data show a [student-to-faculty ratio](#) of 13.5:1 in 2014-15, which reflects a slight lowering from the 14.3:1 ratio in 2010. Administrator- and staff-to-student ratio was 7.8:1 in 2014-2015, also a slight lowering from 8.3:1 in 2010. Both trend lines reflect an increased human resource base to support educational programs. Benchmarking data based on NACU schools indicate that our [staffing on a per-student basis](#) falls near the average for all schools surveyed. In addition, we have an Office of Diversity Initiatives that works with offices on campus to promote diversity hiring.

Physical Infrastructure

To support allocation of resources to facility needs on campus, a master facility plan is created roughly every seven years. It is shaped by the University's strategic plan and the results of [deferred maintenance studies](#) conducted. The last two facility plans completed were [2004](#) and [2011](#). The primary drivers in any facility plan have been the improvement of classroom, social, and residential experiences for students. The five-year needs identified in the 2004 plan have been fully met through the construction of a new student center, expansion of classroom and experiential spaces in the Schroeder Family School of Business Administration Building and the College of Education and Health Sciences, and new and upgraded housing for students. These occurred from 2005-09 at a cost in excess of [\\$55 million](#), coming from a combination of fundraising and debt. The five-year needs identified in the 2011 plan are currently under way with a focus on Bower-Suhrheinrich Library and Hyde Hall classroom renovations, the former completed in December 2015; a new greenhouse, recently completed at the start of Fall 2015; and enhanced fitness facilities for the whole campus. In addition, six new townhouse-style residential facilities (144 new beds) were constructed for students in 2013 at a cost of \$8.3 million.

Facility needs that fall outside of the plans must also be addressed, as recently evidenced by a \$700,000 renovation to the [swimming facility](#) used by student-athletes and the general campus population. Annual repair and renovation needs are integrated into our budgeting process and are prioritized according to the strategic needs of the University.

Technological Infrastructure

The Office of Technology Services (OTS) oversees and provides technology support for the institution. The [2013-15 Technology Strategic Plan](#), drafted by the Technology Task Force composed of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and Trustees, has helped guide decision-making in the area of technology. [New investment in software](#) over the past decade has included *Datatel/Ellucian*, enterprise software geared toward higher education needs in numerous areas, and *Blackboard*, a learning management system that is used and supported across campus. When student learning assessment data collection needs increased with the restructuring of our assessment processes (see 4B for more details), [LiveText e-portfolio software was purchased](#) and supported as a key data collection and reporting system for student learning assessment. See 5D for a discussion of the implementation of *Slate* CRM specifically to address critical enrollment services needs. To address the need of supporting our software investments, two additional programmers were hired in 2014.

Decisions to upgrade technological capabilities and increase capacity are a direct result of the needs of students, faculty, and staff as evidenced through the use of [monitoring tools](#) such as MRTG (Multi Router Traffic Grapher). Over the past several years, we have implemented campus-wide wireless access, moved to virtual desktops in computer labs, placed computers and projectors in every classroom, and added four video conferencing units to aid in instruction with classes that occur

simultaneously on our main campus and at our Harlaxton campus. We have also increased bandwidth in several iterations to deal with cloud computing needs and to enhance video streaming in the classroom, allowing our faculty to stream live presentations by nationally recognized speakers and experts in the classroom. During the summer of 2015, [\\$2.6 million](#) was spent to substantially upgrade bandwidth, streaming capabilities, wireless access, and videoconference capabilities. During AY 2015-16, we will begin to examine our process to be used for the next technology strategic plan.

5.A.2.

The University allocates resources with a primary focus on the educational purposes of the institution.

The University is a non-profit organization with no parent company, but it does have a subsidiary campus operating in Grantham, England (Harlaxton) – which is also a non-profit organization. The University supports its Harlaxton campus by collecting revenues generated by students attending that campus and then transferring a portion of that revenue to cover operating costs. That transfer occurs through the use of [forward exchange contracts](#). Of the students attending Harlaxton, approximately 60% are UE students using this as a study abroad opportunity, with the remainder being students from partner institutions.

While any resource reallocations that are needed annually are shared by all administrative and academic departments on campus, the primary objective of these changes has been to protect or enhance the academic or social experience for students. Any new funds allotted in the budget process have first gone to academic areas in the form of new faculty positions, development of a faculty compensation plan and increased academic support costs. As an example, in [AY 2014-15, an additional \\$639,609 was allocated through the budgeting process, with \\$705,000 allocated to academic areas](#), meaning that other areas netted a decline. When resource needs exist outside of the regular budget process, those requests are made directly to the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and Administration (VPFAA) and the President. Decisions on funding these requests are based first on the strategic plan of the institution and then on the potential impact to the student experience. When approved, these additional resource needs are reflected during the year on [budget progressions](#) provided to the [President's Council](#) (see 5.A.5. for further discussion on the budget progressions).

5.A.3.

The University has a clearly defined mission of learning that is realistic for the institution.

This mission served as the driving factor in the 2011 [strategic planning process](#) that resulted in [seven core goals](#) guiding the University's decision-making process. The [Board allotted \\$2.5 million](#) from the University's endowment to implement and sustain [initiatives](#) that grew out of those goals. Marketing, enrollment services, and international services initiatives were successfully implemented over a two-year period, and the ongoing costs of those programs have now been integrated into the [operating budget](#) of the institution. The annual budget process also focuses on the needs identified by the Strategic Plan Core Goals. Requests for additional resources are measured against those goals, the University Mission, as well as the student experience (see also 5.C.2.). The [President and the Board](#) approve the final budget with an eye toward furthering the University's mission and goals.

5.A.4.

Faculty, administrators, and staff are highly qualified and deeply committed to the institution and its mission.

The credentials for these positions vary and are based on a [job description](#) developed by the position's supervisor or area Vice President. [Vacancies](#) for each position include the [education and experience](#) required for employment by the University. Details for hiring procedures are outlined in the [Faculty](#) and [Administrator](#) Manuals.

Of the [176 full-time faculty members](#) employed by UE in the 2014-2015 academic year, 98.1% of our full professors, 93.9% of our associate professors, and 77.9% of our assistant professors possess terminal degrees with three additional faculty members in the process of working on their doctorates. See 3.C.3. and 3.C.4. for a discussion of professional development for instructors at UE.

Professional development opportunities are also available to faculty, administrators, and staff within the institution itself, with programs such as tuition remission, new hire orientation, technology-related training through OTS, fall faculty and administrators conferences, Eykamp Center for Teaching Excellence, and a variety of lecture series. Funding is made available to staff and administrators on an as-needed basis for professional development [conferences, webinars, etc.](#) when resources are available through operational budgets and through the Office of Academic Affairs. The University evaluates performances of [staff](#) and [administrators](#) annually. [Staff](#) and [administrators](#) complete a self-evaluation form as well to reflect on their own performance over the previous review period. The University uses these evaluations to ensure that job requirements continue to be met and as the basis for planning and goal setting between the individual and her or his supervisor in relation to the goals of the individual and the department. The [Office Staff Association](#), open to all non-faculty personnel, sponsors monthly meetings that have a component of continuing education and [professional development](#) opportunities.

Please see 3.C.6. for a discussion of the qualifications, training, and support of staff members who provide student support services.

5.A.5.

The University engages in an annual budget process.

[President's Council members](#) collaborate with deans, department chairs, and administrative budget directors to determine resource needs for each fiscal year and use a series of forms to submit [requests](#) for consideration of budget inclusion. Resource reallocations and additional resource requests are documented and submitted to the Office of Fiscal Affairs (OFA) using a process outlined in an [annual budget memo](#). Resource reallocations and requests are recommended for inclusion in the budget by the President's Council based on priorities identified in the mission and strategic plan. The budget is prepared from these recommendations and presented to the Board Finance Committee for further review and discussion. The Board provides final approval of the budget. The President's Council continues ongoing discussions in regular meetings throughout the year to identify and prioritize additional resource needs.

The approved budget for each fiscal year is distributed to budget directors on the [FRx Webport](#). During the year, [budget adjustment requests](#) may be submitted to transfer funds between budget line items. The OFA must approve all requests. Budget directors monitor budgets daily on a real-time basis using [WebAdvisor budget reports](#). After each monthly closing, [budget reports](#) are also available to budget directors on the [FRx Webport](#). In addition, a [monthly statement](#) of activities comparing actual unrestricted operating results to budget is prepared for review by the VPFAA and provided to the Board Finance Committee periodically throughout the year. A [budget progression](#) comparing actual to budget is provided to the President's Council on a routine basis throughout the year. In years when enrollment does not reach projections, it has been necessary to implement budget reductions for

the remainder of the fiscal year. The reductions are typically computed as an across-the-board percentage reduction and applied to controllable expense categories. Each Vice President (in collaboration with department chairs and center directors) and the President determine the allocation of [budget reductions](#) for their unit or specific departments.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

5.B.1.

The governing board understands the institution and provides appropriate oversight of policies and practices. It meets all of its legal and fiduciary responsibilities as outlined in the Charter of the University and its Bylaws.

The Board's knowledge of the institution is developed and maintained through understanding of the University's Charter and Bylaws, attendance at Board and standing committee meetings, new trustee orientation, periodic Presidential correspondence, and broad institutional updates through AceNotes.

The [Charter of the University of Evansville](#) empowers the Board to make decisions that promote the objects and purpose of the University, to create Bylaws consistent with the Charter, and, in conjunction with the faculty, to confer honors and degrees. The Board has the power to elect a President of the University, and to appoint faculty members and administrators who are nominated by the President. In conjunction with the faculty and Faculty Senate (the term in the charter is "University Senate"), the Trustees approve academic degrees, programs and courses of study, set the tuition and fees to be paid by the students, and confirm an appropriate annual operating budget to ensure the institution's efficient operation in the fulfillment of its academic purposes. The Board has [the authority to receive donations and bequests](#) made either generally for the benefit of the University or for purposes in harmony with the objectives of the University.

The University Bylaws establish both the structure and responsibilities for all members of the Board of Trustees. The range of standing committees defined by the Bylaws ensures that Board members are knowledgeable about all aspects of the institution, as described in 2.C.1.

A [new trustee binder](#) and formal orientation provides an introduction to campus leadership and to the various elements of the entire enterprise, the Strategic Plan, and the institution's mission and history. Annually at the October meeting of the Board, trustees are provided with established and updated information regarding Board membership and responsibilities.

Members of the Board also serve on special committees, task forces, or working groups as mission-critical institutional issues arise. Board appointments to these institutional groups are typically

extended and/or approved by the President. Since the appointment of such committees is driven by specific institutional goals and objectives, the Board member is engaged only until such goals and objectives are achieved. Examples of institutional committee engagement of members of the Board include: [Presidential Transition Committee](#), [2010-11 Strategic Planning Process](#), [Pricing Working Group](#), [Division I Athletics Assessment](#), and [Senior Administrative Search committees](#).

Furthermore, the President corresponds with members of the Board between meetings to ensure Board members are [informed about issues of strategic importance](#) to the University, to share [relevant articles about higher education](#), to [announce key University appointments](#), and [to extend invitations to institutional events](#).

5.B.2.

The University subscribes to the tenets of shared governance; policies and procedures for such governance are outlined in the University Bylaws and constituent-specific manuals.

The University has a well-defined [organizational structure](#) that establishes the hierarchy and reporting relationships among employees across units. The University subscribes to the tenets of shared governance, with several internal governance bodies representing faculty, students, and administrators influencing the operations of the University. Each has its role and mechanisms for providing input into University decision making: the President's Council and President's Cabinet are the [administrative](#) decision-making bodies; the [Student Government Association](#) (SGA) is the principal means for student participation in University governance; and the [Faculty Senate](#) serves as the major mechanism for faculty input into shared governance.

One area where input and governance is not as direct is in the role of hourly staff. Staff input is largely gathered through their supervisors, but also through their occasional involvement on University administrative or *ad hoc* committees, in the strategic planning process, outlined in 5C3, and in the Prioritization process, outlined in 5.A. More recently the [Office Staff Association](#) (OSA) has been working with the President to explore ways to integrate the OSA into UE's governance structure.

In addition, a variety of [task-oriented committees](#) include representation across [faculty](#), [students](#), staff, and [administrators](#) and are charged with decision making for functional issues such as assessment, budget, retention, faculty development, strategic planning, research practices, and arts and cultural programming.

The Board of Trustees, a self-governing entity, conducts [regular meetings](#) that provide a venue to engage constituencies and discuss or act on strategic issues, institutional policies, and institutional expenditures. (See 2.C.2. and 5.B.1. for additional details.)

The President is the chief executive officer, appointed and accountable to the Board, and is charged with the management of the University and all its affairs under the general supervision of the Board. In this task the President is aided by members of the President's Council whose roles and responsibilities are outlined in the [Administrative Manual](#). The Council includes the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (SVPAA), Vice President for Development, Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and Administration (VPFAA), Vice President for Enrollment Services (VPES), Vice President for Marketing and Communications, Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA), and the Director of Athletics. The President's Council [meets two to three times monthly](#) during the academic year.

The President's Cabinet expands the administrative leadership team to include the academic deans, a

member of the faculty (elected by the faculty), the Diversity and Equity Officer, the Executive Director of International Programs, and the Harlaxton College Principal. The [President's Cabinet meets once a month](#) to discuss strategic and operational issues.

Two academic councils, the [Council of Deans](#), made up of the deans of the Schools and Colleges, and the [Academic Leadership Council](#), made up of chairs, academic program directors, and directors in academic areas, are convened by the SVPAA. They meet regularly during the course of the academic year to discuss issues related to academic concerns and provide input to the academic leadership of the institution.

The University has formal processes that enable faculty to engage in governance through the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Manual describes the mechanism for faculty participation on the Senate and standing committees, and includes representation from each academic unit as well as Harlaxton. According to the Faculty Bylaws, faculty responsibility is in educational policy rather than administrative decisions. Faculty, acting with the President, determine all [matters of educational policy with respect to academic programs](#), including degree requirements, honorary degrees, academic standards, and “general University development.” Acting on behalf of the faculty, the Senate receives, reviews, and acts on reports, recommendations, and proposals from its standing committees and individual senators. [Faculty Senate business](#) is conducted through monthly meetings, through the work of its Executive Committee, and via numerous standing committees. The Senate submits recommendations, in writing, to the University President.

Students have many opportunities for involvement in governance through the [Student Government Association](#) (SGA), as attendees at Faculty Senate meetings, or [membership](#) on Faculty Senate Standing committees or other committees and working groups that are appointed by the President. The student body also has representation on the Board through [three student-elected trustees](#). The SGA President is the chief student spokesperson and acts as a liaison between the student body and the University administration; the SGA President serves in the following University groups: Faculty Senate, Fiscal Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, and the Student Government Executive Committee. The SGA President and Vice President are elected annually, along with the Senior Trustee, through [campus-wide student elections](#).

The University has a number of *ad hoc* academic and administrative committees covering a range of issues from assessment of student academic achievement to the honors program to undergraduate research. Committee composition, supporting the tenets of shared governance, is articulated under [Article III/Standing Committees in the Faculty Manual](#). Student committee appointments are outlined in the [Student Government Association Constitution](#).

In addition to formal processes for engaging internal constituents, the University also holds open-forum types of meetings that are open to faculty, staff, and administrators. Open meetings were held for Prioritization, for recent budget challenges related to lower enrollment, and the new UE Guarantee initiative, described in 1.B.1.

5.B.3.

Faculty, administration, staff, and students are all involved in setting academic requirements, policies, and processes through the governance structure.

The [Charter](#), Bylaws, and various manuals articulate the [structure and primary functions of the governance units](#), including the roles of [each unit's respective leader](#), required [committees and subcommittees](#), and the roles of those committees. For example, the Faculty Senate’s standing

Curriculum Committee receives, discusses, and votes on the approval of new or modified courses and programs. The process for curriculum change is detailed and involves faculty, administrative, and student input at all levels of the organization. New degree programs go to the Faculty Senate and Board for approval.

The Charter, Bylaws, and various manuals provide shared responsibilities through Faculty Senate standing committees, administrative committees, and *ad hoc* committees. With the exception of *ex officio* student and administrative roles, [Faculty Senate standing committees](#) are elected by the faculty, while administrative committees are appointed by the President and have representation from faculty, administrators, and [students](#). Task forces supplement pre-existing committees to create additional avenues for contribution and collaboration across the University, particularly on new and/or special initiatives, such as the [International Programs Task Force](#).

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

5.C.1.

The University allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, beginning with the annual budget process itself, outlined in 5.A.5, which revolves around the priorities identified in the mission and strategic plan. The strategic planning process, outlined in 5.C.3 established the priorities that continue to guide us today in the allocation of resources.

In 2013-14, the University undertook a [Strategic Program Prioritization Initiative](#) for the purpose of better aligning resources with enrollment and our strategic plan (See 5.A.). The Prioritization process identified [approximately \\$3 million in resource reductions](#) across both [academic and administrative departments](#). The process also created a \$1.2 million [innovation and re-investment fund](#) to enhance existing programs and implement new programs to support the recruitment of and increase learning opportunities for students.

The [Master Facility Plans](#) developed in conjunction with the strategic planning process most recently in [2004](#) and [2011](#) are driven by the goals of improving classroom, social, and residential experiences for students. Details of these plans are outlined in 5.A.1. For example, the library renovations addressed the [Strategic Plan](#) and its attention to enhanced learning and social environments.

[The Office of Development](#) plans and carries out its work to develop and secure resources based on the mission of the institution, the University's Strategic Plan, and the Master Facilities Plan. Efforts to raise funds are connected back to those same plans and priorities, thus reflecting that both the development as well as the allocation of resources are focused on the established mission and priorities of the institution.

5.C.2.

In Spring 2015 the University began a new [Institutional Systematic Evaluation and Planning \(ISEP\)](#) process to link assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting for FY 2016-17 and beyond. The ISEP process naturally grew out of the lessons learned from the Strategic Program Prioritization Process and our [Quality Initiative \(QI\)](#): *Developing Responsible*

Global Citizens. The Prioritization Process (as described in 5.A.) was undertaken because of a particular set of circumstances related to near-term enrollment shortfalls. Prioritization reinforced the importance of having a planning process in place that engages and unites the University community on an ongoing basis. Features that informed the development of the ISEP process and were key parts of Prioritization and QI are:

Mission-Driven: Assessment, evaluation, planning, and budgeting were carried out with the [University's Mission](#) and [Strategic Plan](#) as guiding principles.

Comprehensive: The Prioritization process encompassed all areas of operations across the institution (broadly categorized into academic and administrative programs), providing an unprecedented comprehensive view to inform planning and budgeting to address short-term needs and ensure long-term quality. In a similar way, the QI integrated academic and administrative programs across the Institution and deliberately linked assessment, evaluation, and decision-making to the budgeting process for a Core Goal of the Strategic Plan.

Informed by Data: Both processes showed the value (as well as the challenges) of documenting evidence required for program evaluation and decision-making. Data for the prioritization of academic programs included evidence from student outcomes gathered from the [Academic Assessment process](#), from the Center for Career Development, from [specialty accreditation processes](#) (if applicable), and from other sources. The QI used institution-level data such as NSSE to identify [areas that remain future challenges](#) in developing responsible global citizens. As both processes show, the institution should leverage the data that we already collect in the normal course of operations.

The ISEP process implemented in Fall 2015 was vetted by the [President's Cabinet](#) during its [retreat in July 2015](#). In addition to the three features carried over from previous institutional-level planning processes, the following features were designed into our ISEP:

Continuous and Ongoing: [ISEP](#) makes explicit the linkage among “Assessment and Evaluation,” “Decision-Making,” and “Implementation.” Implementation of action items requires ongoing assessment and evaluation to ensure that improvements continue in a sustainable way.

Collaborative and Cooperative: ISEP identifies the offices responsible at various stages of the process. Area Vice Presidents or Directors lead discussions in the President's Cabinet meeting so that the Cabinet may evaluate the institution's progress on a Core Goal of the Strategic Plan based on an agreed-upon [rubric](#). While the discussion leader or leaders gather [the findings, evidence, and data and make recommendations](#), the President's Cabinet works collaboratively to arrive at decisions or chart action steps. The implementation of the decisions and action steps is the responsibility of the President's Council. Discussions and evaluations will be completed early in the Spring term so that the President's Council can meet the January deadline for discussing rate increases, salary increases, and [budget projections](#) for presentation to the Board. The focus of the discussions thus helps to set the pace during the planning year.

Timely: ISEP clearly identifies a schedule for assessment and evaluation based on the frequency with which different data are or can be gathered and also tied to the institution's existing budget timeline. For example, some data, such as the profile of the entering class, are gathered annually and can be used to help in discussion of UE's Core Goal IV: Recruitment and retention of student body of high academic achievement and personal aspirations. However, other data, such as academic program assessment reports, are submitted to the Assessment Committee on a staggered three-year cycle for each program.

ISEP has been a standing item on the [Cabinet agenda](#) for [Fall 2015 and Spring 2016](#). The first ISEP discussion took place at the September 2015 Cabinet meeting and focused on the University's Core Goal related to Internationalization, led by the Executive Director of International Programs. It is fitting that the administrator in charge of the efforts for the University's Quality Initiative started discussions to provide good examples of linking institutional mission, student learning outcomes, evaluation of programs, institutional planning, and budgeting.

5.C.3.

The University planning process is holistic and attends to both internal and external constituent groups.

There is an institutional expectation that internal and external constituencies need to be considered in the planning process as well as policy and protocol development. This expectation is passed along to departments, particularly when considering changes that could have a significant impact on students and staff. Examples include seeking input from internal and external constituencies (faculty, staff, students, alumni, community) in the development of a [revised marketing major](#) for the School of Business, [creating a marketing plan and brand](#) for the University of Evansville, and the [implementation of a tobacco-free campus](#) in Fall 2015.

The 2011 Strategic Plan was designed to encourage significant participation by all of the University's constituencies. The [nine subject matter working groups](#), which developed recommendations for the plan, included 120 individuals representing faculty, administrators, staff, and trustees. Students were represented on eight of the nine working groups, with the exception being the Faculty and Staff Development Working Group. Where appropriate, alumni and parents were represented as well. As it was being developed, information about the planning processes was posted on the University's website for review by anyone internal or external to UE, including [minutes](#) from working group and steering committee meetings. On that same area of the website, a feedback form was made available for constituents to make comments or suggestions. The feedback was funneled to the appropriate working groups for their consideration. The [feedback form](#) is still available, with comments now going directly to the President's Office. The draft of the plan was [distributed](#) to the [University community](#) for [response and feedback](#), gathered through the website, e-mail, and two [campus-wide open forums](#). This feedback was reviewed by the [Steering Committee](#) and incorporated into the plan's final draft before distribution to the Board for its consideration and [approval](#).

In a number of [academic](#) and co-curricular areas, external advisory boards exist to provide advice, feedback, and objective criticism of the programs within those areas in relation to the external constituencies represented by the members of those advisory boards. (See also 3A1) For example, the [Advisory Board](#) for the Institute for Global Enterprise Indiana takes an [active role](#) in providing expertise for student projects with real impact for the local and global community.

The Office of Alumni and Parent Relations uses regular surveys of [alumni](#) and [parents](#) to gather input from those groups to plan programs, events, and activities for engaging and involving these groups in the life and work of the institution.

The [Board of Visitors](#) (BOV) is an advisory board consisting of members of the community whose purpose is to provide community input, leadership, and support to the President of the University and through him to the rest of the University community. The BOV provides advice to the President on important concerns of the community, and it helps the institution develop a network of community partners, identify and develop programs needed within the community, and find funding sources for programs.

5.C.4.

The University understands its current capacity and plans accordingly, attending to possible impact of various types of potential fluctuations.

The University engages in a process of financial modeling annually, tied closely to the creation of budgets and resources to support strategic initiatives. Such modeling attempts to assess the impact of changes over a three- to five-year period in variables such as enrollment, rate increases in tuition and room and board, levels of scholarships for students, staffing needs, compensation costs, and inflation. Enrollment goals for freshmen and transfer students are set annually by the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and Administration (VPFAA) and the Vice President for Enrollment Services (VPES) as a result of the modeling process and take into consideration such factors as market changes, demographic shifts, and proposed tuition increases. Also incorporated into assumptions is the initiation of new programs, elimination of programs, and, as appropriate, the impact of resource initiatives such as the Prioritization process. Information driving these assumptions comes from various departments across campus and [external data](#) including [benchmark information](#). The results of this modeling process help to set the underlying assumptions for the [annual budget process and recommendations](#) to the Board of Trustees. For example, since 2013, the VPES in conversation with the President and VPFA look at state and regional benchmarks of [tuition pricing](#) at other institutions. A recommendation for the undergraduate tuition increase is then made to the [Executive Committee of the Board](#) and reviewed and approved by the full [Board in its May meeting](#). Long-range planning in 2012 incorporated a range of variables including salary increases, growth in student enrollment, and net-tuition revenue to review the University's [tuition](#) and [pricing practices](#) against its peers. The result of this process was the implementation of the [Big Freeze](#), guaranteeing no tuition increases for four years starting with the incoming class of 2013 and all students returning in Fall 2013.

The future planning for the institution relies on the accumulation of data, both internal and external, to set goals and plans at the department level. The outcome of the Prioritization Process not only resulted in a realignment of [resources for the institution](#) as a whole, but also enabled [individual departments](#) to better understand the factors influencing the continuing success of their programs. This resulted in a set of goals at the department level and an identification of resource needs that will now become the basis of [future planning and budgeting for the institution](#). A comprehensive cost study of academic programs (described in 5.D.) helped to underscore the interdependency of academic programs and ramifications of enrollment increases between programs.

Retention initiatives and goal planning for retention is spearheaded by the Director of Student Retention (with assistance from the Student Success Team), who analyzes data such as retention of both domestic and international students, withdrawals, housing, campus climate, student satisfaction, student persistence, and at-risk groups and recommends to the President's Cabinet strategies to enhance UE's retention and graduation rates. Furthermore, focusing on quality academics and [support services](#) at UE that aid freshmen who have already made a commitment to the University can be leveraged to improve persistence past the sophomore year. Improvement in [retention rates](#) helps to lessen the effect of downturns in freshman enrollment that result from myriad factors beyond the control of the University.

5.C.5.

The [annual budget process](#) further discussed in 5.C.1 seeks to identify factors affecting the University in the next 12-month budget cycle. It balances revenue expectations based on enrollment and retention trends, tuition and room and board rate increases, projected scholarship discounts and other sources of

income, with resource needs including staffing, compensation increases, and inflation expectations. It provides the opportunity for each department to examine its needs and request realignment of resources or increased resources depending upon anticipated events. In addition, as discussed in 5.C.4, a [three- to five-year forecast model](#) has been developed and is [updated annually](#) to accommodate emerging factors. The model provides flexibility in analyzing the effects of demographic shifts and other factors that will have a direct impact on operating revenues and expenses.

The University's strategic planning process in 2010-11 examined existing strengths and identified goals and action steps in anticipation of emerging developments that could affect UE's quality in the future. The Strategic Plan working groups considered benchmark data, national and international demographic trends, and myriad other information in the development of their recommendations. Among the emerging factors were job growth, the importance of globalization, and rapid developments in information technology. For example, the Enrollment Working Group discussed areas of job growth based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data. The [Enrollment Working Group](#) and the [Academic Programs Working Group](#) reviewed job growth data to discuss possible ways to leverage existing academic programs for enrollment growth.

As another example, in anticipation of the rapid pace of globalization and in recognition of the University's mission to develop responsible global citizens, the Strategic Plan Core Goal II sought to enhance the international dimension of a UE education and represents a move toward greater internationalization and multiculturalism. Following the 2011 Strategic Plan, the President authorized a University-wide Task Force on International Engagement to bolster comprehensive internationalization. The [Task Force recommended](#) the integration of key campus services and the creation of the new position of Executive Director of International Programs in January 2013. The Executive Director serves as the chief international officer, works with the campus community to fulfill the goal of providing a global education for every student, and facilitates collaboration across academic and non-academic offices to advance international engagement on the Evansville campus and at international sites. Strategic initiatives in internationalization and social responsibility guided campus conversations about the selection of the University's QI, *Developing Responsible Global Citizens*.

The development of the current general education program, Enduring Foundations, specifically attended to goals in the Strategic Plan around the need for strengthening the [international focus and social responsibility commitments](#) of our core, emerging from the ongoing expansion of globalization and its concomitant issues.

The Strategic Plan also called for the formation of a strategic technology plan, which was developed in 2012. A representative group of faculty, students, administrative staff, and Board members created the plan for 2013-2015 to provide a framework for technology resources to meet the various constituency needs within the scope and mission of the University. The plan identified existing technology needs including staffing requirements for the Office of Technology Services to support current systems and to implement new technology. It also addressed anticipated future needs including upgrading our network and communication infrastructure. Areas identified for upgrades included electronic door locks, wired Village properties, redundant Internet connections, and increased Internet capacity. During the summer of [2015](#), \$2.6 million was committed to these upgrades, with work completed in early Fall 2015. At the end of 2015, progress toward accomplishment of goals identified in the plan will be reviewed and a [new plan will be developed for the following years](#).

As an NCAA Division I school, the University must remain vigilant regarding shifts in the student-athlete population as well as intercollegiate teams to ensure compliance with Title IX. In February

2009, the University retained the services of Good Sports, Inc., Title IX and Gender Equity Specialists, to review Title IX considerations for participation and scholarship in intercollegiate athletics and the potential addition of intercollegiate teams for men and women, specifically track. The [review](#) concluded that UE could achieve and maintain compliance for participation and scholarships with minor to moderate adjustments to its current program. Should UE add teams, the extent of any adjustments necessary would be determined by which team(s) UE adds.

The continued and growing concerns about the “value” of a private college education, affordability, and student debt play a part in enrollment trends, and institutional planning and efforts. For example, the University put in place the Loan Repayment Assistance Program ([LRAP](#)) to assist eligible students with [loan repayment](#) after graduation, especially those UE students who want to work in relatively lower-paying but meaningful fields. After earning a bachelor’s degree from UE, eligible graduates who obtain full-time employment but with annual earnings less than \$37,000 will receive a quarterly check to reimburse some or all of their student loan payments. [Loan assistance](#) will continue until the graduate’s income rises above the program’s upper income threshold of \$37,000 or until loans are paid off. As another example of responding to the question of “value” and employability, UE recognized the need to create an intentional [End-to-End Career Development program](#) for prospective and current students, as well as alumni. The planning and development component of this program resulted in an institutional commitment of operating funds, as well as realignment and allocation of human resources. The End-to-End program was supported by the Board with the commitment of strategic initiatives funding, and the program has been embedded in many curricula across departments.

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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

The University's ability to make investments that improve its effectiveness and capabilities in a sustainable manner depends in part on the institution's financial health. As described in 5.A., the University's benchmarking data, showing that we have the resources to support our mission and operations, is used as a broad measure of the effectiveness of the University operations that manage its assets and debts (Office of Fiscal Affairs and Administration), that grow enrollment (Office of Enrollment Services), and that increase philanthropic contributions to the University (Office of Development and Alumni Relations). In addition, the broad fiscal measures show how well the institution makes investments with the existing resources to help the University achieve its mission and secure its future.

Like many other private, liberal arts-based, undergraduate-focused institutions that have been affected by recent enrollment trends, the University has managed to make investments in time and resources to improve existing operations, with an eye toward better effectiveness, enhanced capabilities, and sustainable development, even within periods of tightened finances. As an institution committed to learning, major improvements have resulted from gathering information, from listening, and from making the connection between where we want to be and where we are.

In 2006, the University analyzed the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats ([SWOT](#)) of the forerunner to *Enduring Foundations*. Discussions with non-tenured and tenured faculty and students were documented by the SWOT analysis facilitators, and this analysis became one of the driving forces behind the General Education [revision process](#) that resulted ultimately in *Enduring Foundations*.

One of the concerns raised during the SWOT analysis of the previous General Education program was the ability to assess outcomes. Assessment has long been recognized by the University as an important process for gathering evidence of the effectiveness of academic programs, and so the University has sought ways to evaluate and improve upon assessment. In 2011, the Assessment Committee developed [rubrics for evaluating assessment plans and reports](#), which aid in capturing progress using assessment [dashboards](#). [LiveText](#) was purchased to promote the use of direct evidence in the assessment of *Enduring Foundations*, and after the first three-year cycle, evaluation of the program has begun. However, sustainability of the assessment process without further [investment in resources](#) remains an issue.

With fiscal constraints in the background and our Mission in the foreground, the University has made improvements and investments that enhance our capabilities and allow for future growth. The 2012 Report from the [Task Force for International Engagement](#) documented the number of students participating in education abroad and the number and origin of our international students. Based on the 2011 Strategic Plan and the information gathered institutionally, the University saw an

opportunity to expand opportunities for education abroad and increase capabilities to recruit and enroll more international students, in both cases increasing the opportunities for students to engage in global diversity. With modest investment in international recruiting through Strategic Plan allocations from our endowment, the University saw a dramatic increase in international enrollment. But key to the effectiveness and expanded capabilities of international efforts on campus was an organizational restructuring that helped to ensure better service to our students. In addition to a more diverse experience for our students (both domestic and international), successes in education abroad have helped UE garner national recognition that helps in efforts by marketing and communications to increase awareness of UE's identity and quality.

The creation of new academic programs is the joint responsibility of faculty, administrators, and the Board of Trustees, being mindful that the expansion of academic capabilities requires examination of questions about the program's sustainability and the program's effect on institutional sustainability. For example, in 2006, the new Doctor of [Physical Therapy](#) degree was established based on existing capacities of the Physical Therapy program and the direction that the Physical Therapy profession was taking. In 2012 a major in [Public Health](#) was offered to complement existing capacities and strengths in Health Science and capitalize on the potential for growth in this area, especially in the area of nutrition. Both developments required investment in faculty and resources, and both have proven to be good investment for the University in terms of enrollment health and growth. In 2014, the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate approved the creation of a [Physician Assistant](#) program to build upon UE's strengths in the health sciences and to capitalize on the growing demand for graduates in this field.

In the future, creation of new academic programs will benefit from a [comprehensive academic cost](#) study that was conducted in 2013. Unlike previous cost studies, which sought to allocate costs by department, the goal of the study was to determine the cost and the revenue per major, as well as to more fully understand the interdependency of programs. In the study all University expenditures and revenues were allocated to academic programs. The cost study information was shared with several internal constituents, including the faculty and the Board of Trustees. It was also one of several measurements used to inform the 2014 prioritization process.

Knowing the concerns of families regarding the value of private education and knowing the career outcome rates of our graduates, the University sought and received funding from the Lilly Foundation Endowment to enhance the capabilities and effectiveness of the Center for Career Development. The End-to-End career program described in 5.C.5. expands opportunities not only for current students but also for prospective students and alumni. While the efforts are coordinated through the Center and its Director, the [work](#) reaches across campus with collaboration with the Office of Alumni and Parent Relations and academic programs.

As student-centered institution, the University strives to make improvements in how we gather student feedback about UE's operations and to respond appropriately to student concerns. The Office of the Dean of Students records [concerns raised](#) through the Student Government Association regarding campus life, including concerns about dining facilities and residence halls. In addition, programs in the Office of Student Affairs provide [annual usage statistics of services](#) and [facilities](#) by students that is shared with the Board. Improvements made to campus facilities that are heavily used by students are further informed by [deferred maintenance studies](#), concerns received in the area of [Physical Plant](#) (overseen by the Office of Fiscal Affairs and Administration), and [focus-groups](#) comprising students, faculty, staff, and administrators that provided input to the campus Master Facilities Plan. In response to past concerns, the [Office of Development and Alumni Relations](#) and the Office of Fiscal Affairs and Administration worked to secure the financing for the construction of the Ridgway University Center (opened in 2008), the Townhouses (the newest residential offering, the

first of which opened in 2013), and a major renovation of the Library for improved collaborative and individual study spaces. Ridgway, whose design was informed by [student input](#), provided the campus expanded dining capabilities, new facilities for lectures and gatherings such as the annual International Bazaar, and consolidated the many programs in Student Affairs to create new efficiencies in their operations.

Not all improvements are as dramatic as changing the face of campus. Some improvements evolve out of continuous efforts:

- The desire to document and systematically handle student concerns (as well as concerns from faculty, staff, and administrators) resulted in the development of [AceAnswers](#). The system is coordinated by the Diversity and Equity Officer, who helps to ensure that a direct report to the President is able to discern systemic patterns in concerns, if any.
- With the rapid pace of developments in information technology and the increase in usage of portable electronic devices and digital media for educational and marketing purposes, the Office of Technology Services makes use of [student surveys of Internet technology](#) and [Internet usage](#). This information helped to inform a major [technology upgrade](#) in Summer 2015.

Future improvements in academic and student-life effectiveness, expansions in capabilities, and the long-term sustainability of the University (which include issues such as compensation of faculty, development of staff, and maintenance of existing facilities) depend on generating revenue. Three key operations are crucial to meeting the University's short-term and long-term needs: Development and Alumni Relations, Enrollment Services, and Marketing and Communications.

Recent difficulties in reaching enrollment goals, experienced by so many other schools in the Midwest region, underline the importance of the Office of Development and Alumni Relations (ODAR). The ODAR sets clear goals for fundraising for the office and each staff member. Performance in achieving fundraising goals is [documented](#) on a [quarterly basis](#). Development uses performance indicators as the basis for planning and decision-making to identify goals and work toward achieving them. As explained in 5.C.3., ODAR uses data from outside consultants to more effectively reach out to alumni and parents to maintain affinity and solicit support.

The importance of the Office of Enrollment Services (OES) to the sustainability of the University cannot be overstated, given that net tuition contributes significantly to the University's revenue. OES focuses both on recruitment and retention. OES, along with its Office of Financial Aid, works collaboratively with the Office of Fiscal Affairs and Administration, the Office of Marketing and Communications, and others on campus to develop strategies for addressing concerns raised about the value of private higher education, including more aggressive strategies for [financial aid](#). These concerns are documented through the College Board's [Admitted Student Questionnaire](#) (ASQ). This survey goes to all accepted students to the University and asks them performance related questions as to why they chose or did not choose UE. Additionally, surveys go out to parents of non-matriculating students to better understand why students did not choose UE.

The prioritization process helped to document the need for [CRM strategies](#) to help in the effectiveness of OES. To help with gathering, documenting, and communicating information that is necessary for improving Enrollment Services operations, the University evaluated and purchased the [Slate CRM](#) (customer relationship management) software. Information about individual prospective students is more easily managed and shared among enrollment services personnel in areas such as admissions and financial aid, and with Academic Affairs personnel such as the Registrar. In addition, faculty department chairs, individual faculty, and athletic personnel can easily gather information regarding prospective students who have expressed an interest in a particular major. On an institutional level,

the software will also allow tracking of demographic data and communication interaction related to pools of potential students, applicants, admitted students, and matriculants.

Responses from the [ASQ data](#), [parents surveys](#), [campus visit surveys](#), and consortium benchmark data help to focus on the key issues faced by the University in meeting the expectations of families. The responses and results of these performance measures shape considerations of price increases, scholarship levels, and enrollment goals. Furthermore, the campus visit experience is shaped by the feedback received from those visiting campus to shape programming during an Open House type event. One specific result from the responses is to increase the number of overnight stays by prospective students.

Retention data documented by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, along with results from surveys such as the National Survey of Student Engagement, are key markers of the success of individual operations and the operation of the institution as a whole. Maintaining high retention rates helps ensure sustainability of operations by helping to ensure steady tuition revenue. Retention efforts are discussed in more detail in 4.C.3. A key component of retention is the development of an environment that welcomes and celebrates diversity, a value consistent with the University's Mission. Section 4.C.3 details ways that information documented by the Office of Diversity Initiatives has led to programming that strives to make the campus even more welcoming of our increasingly diverse community.

Key to recruitment efforts is an effective Office of Marketing and Communications (OMC) that paves the way for efforts by the Office of Admission. Prior to 2012, the University relied on outside consultants to help evaluate the public's awareness of UE's identity. [Results from STAMATS](#) showed that UE was not well known outside of Southern Indiana. Based on this identified challenge, on recommended action steps from the 2011 Strategic Plan, and [recommendations from STAMATS](#), the OMC was created to better focus marketing and communications strategies that could result in improved recruitment efforts and stronger community and alumni affinity with the University. The Office collaborates with academic programs and the Athletics Department to make the [most effective use of assets](#) that help in promoting the UE brand identity.

Improved efforts in marketing and fundraising also help the Athletics Department meet key financial goals. [Over the past 10 years, the Athletics Department](#) expenses have averaged 11.9% of the Educational and General Expenses of the University (below the target range of 12.5 and 13.5%), and the University's net investment in athletics has averaged 5.4% of Educational and General Expenses of the University (within the target range of 4.5 and 5.5%). Athletics has also shown mild growth over the five- and 10-year period for program revenues (tickets, corporate sponsors, game guarantees, conference revenue, excluding fundraising), but short of the 3-5% growth factor necessary to remain fiscally stable. Additionally, restricted and gift income (fundraising) has stayed relatively static except for a large increase in 2014, due to the realization of five years' worth of future pledges in one fiscal year. The Athletics Department is working with the [OMC](#) on a [new marketing strategy](#) focusing on game experience and entry price points, so as not to rely on the actual competition results, but making the entertainment of the game and support of the University the focus of the events.

The OMC has led efforts to make the campus community and beyond better aware of UE's Mission and identity through the IMPACT campaign (see 1.B.1.). OMC has also recently implemented the [UE Guarantee](#) campaign (see also 1.B.1.), that tackles head-on concerns that families have about the value of private education by guaranteeing the experiences that are hallmarks of a UE education: graduation in four years because of commitment of faculty and staff, scholarships, internships, engagement with world-class faculty, and study abroad. These promises are backed by [evidence](#) that the University can show regarding the quality of the education we provide now and will continue to

provide in the future.

There are numerous other examples of the University and its individual operations gathering information to continuously learn how to improve its effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, as befits an institution dedicated to life-long learning. Although the process was arduous, the 2013-14 Prioritization process represents a major investment in time to document comprehensively all academic and administrative operations at the University. The process examined size, scope, productivity, quality, and opportunities, providing insight into individual programs as well as the interconnections between programs. With a combination of discontinuation, consolidation, and reinvestment in programs, the University hoped to ensure that UE would continue to serve students and society now and into the future. Individual prioritization reports can be made available to HLC Peer Reviewers during the Comprehensive Evaluation Site Visit.

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Summary

Since the 2005 HLC visit, the University has endured a number of challenges and has celebrated a number of successes in fulfilling its Mission. We continue to work as a community to improve how well we provide life-transforming educational experiences that prepare students to engage the world as informed, ethical, and productive citizens. Our financial resource base in 2005 included an endowment with a market value of a little over \$60 million, and through intentional efforts in the Office of Development, that value has risen to exceed \$120 million in 2015. While the strengthened financial position helps ensure the longevity of the University, in the short term we continue to feel the effects of enrollment downturns that so many other colleges and universities have faced in recent years. As stewards of our resources and guardians of our Mission, we have had to make some difficult choices. Admittedly, those choices have had some negative effects on the spirit of community that has sustained the University historically. While we continue to have the fiscal, physical, technological, and human resources necessary to provide vital higher education opportunities to our students, we realize that restoring and maintaining that good will require continuing efforts and improved communications.

The resiliency of our leadership structures, processes, and community is proven in the midst of challenging fiscal environments and turn-over in individual leadership, yet we continue to strive for excellence. We realize the need to include staff more formally in charting the course for our future. We have witnessed the benefits of strategic planning in making improvement on our campus through new buildings such as the Schroeder School of Business, the Ridgway University Center, and the dramatic renovation of the Bower-Suhrheinrich Library. And our University has benefited from strategic efforts in Diversity Initiatives and Marketing and Communications that we firmly believe will result in long-term gains. We recognize the benefit of a planning and budgeting process that is not only mission driven but that also incorporates data about student learning outcomes and programmatic outcomes from across the University in all its operations. We have just completed the first round of ISEP reviews. Grounded as it is in our 2011 Strategic Plan, ISEP underlines the importance of developing a new Strategic Plan in the near future. Further, this commitment to more intentional use of information to guide decisions points to new opportunities in the development and integration of functions within UE's leadership structure. These new opportunities will help coordinate planning and visioning to ensure the University's continued success.

Sources

There are no sources.