

Assurance Argument
University of Oklahoma - OK

8/14/2017

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

The University of Oklahoma's mission statement as established by the OU Board of Regents (OU Regents) is:

The mission of the University of Oklahoma is to provide the best possible educational experience for our students through excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, and service to the state and society.

This mission statement guides all University operations, encompassing initiatives at all three campuses – Norman Campus, Oklahoma City Health Sciences Center (OUHSC), and OU-Tulsa. The mission is printed on the back of OU business cards and is prominently displayed on the University's [website](#). All [instructional units](#), research centers, fine arts performance halls, student support areas, and auxiliary enterprises at OU work with this same mission in mind. The specific way in which the mission is carried out naturally varies by type of unit and, to some degree, by type of campus.

Norman Campus contains the traditional elements of a residential flagship university, including classroom and academic buildings, research facilities, libraries, residence halls, athletics facilities, and instructional and research programs not focused on the health sciences. OUHSC is located in Oklahoma City and includes instructional, research, and clinical offerings across a wide range of health fields and specialties, including Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing, Allied Health, and Public Health. It also includes the OU Medical Center. OU-Tulsa offers graduate and professional programs that are tied either to Norman Campus academic units or to OUHSC academic units in Oklahoma City. This campus serves a key role in the greater Tulsa area community. The growing Schusterman Center physical campus in Tulsa contains academic buildings, research laboratories, a library, and new clinical facilities.

Because of the wide scope of programs and services provided by OU there are three documents used to further focus each campus's operations to ensure alignment with the University's overarching mission: the OU Academic Plan, the OUHSC mission statement, and the OU-Tulsa mission statement.

The [Academic Plan](#) is updated annually by the Provost's Office and submitted by the President to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE). It describes activities occurring on and between all of the University of Oklahoma's three campuses, and it provides details about initiatives related to student success, faculty impact, and community impact. The plan aligns with the state of Oklahoma's focus on Complete College America, on quantitative outputs and assessment, and on four key pillars of student success: a focus on readiness; transforming remediation; building bridges to certificates and degrees; and reaching higher for adult completion.

OUHSC and OU-Tulsa also maintain their own mission statements, approved by the OU Regents, based on the unique community needs and the resources on each campus. The [OUHSC mission statement](#) is:

The Mission of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, as a comprehensive academic health center, is to educate students at the professional, graduate, and undergraduate levels to become highly qualified health care practitioners, educators, and research scientists; to conduct research and creative activities for the advancement of knowledge and care; and to provide continuing education, public service, and health care of exemplary quality.

The OUHSC mission statement guides their efforts to provide exemplary education of students, research to advance global healthcare, and provide clinical care for the citizens of Oklahoma. The statement clearly articulates the institution's identity, role in the global community, and responsibilities to various constituencies. The healthcare education, biomedical research, and public service conducted at the Health Sciences Center under the OUHSC mission statement aligns with the overarching University of Oklahoma mission statement.

[OU-Tulsa's vision statement](#) is:

The OU-Tulsa vision is to build a nationally-recognized center of higher education excellence in select areas that emphasize strong campus-community partnerships and leverage the unique opportunities and needs in the Tulsa region.

OU-Tulsa has a uniquely community-driven approach to higher education, with many of its campus programs being designed in partnership with community stakeholders so students can simultaneously meet community needs and develop as scholars and professionals. The vision statement clearly aligns with the overarching University of Oklahoma mission statement in its emphases on teaching, research, and community service.

The three central pillars of OU's mission – teaching, research, and engagement – provide a foundation for all programs and services offered at each of its three campuses. An in-depth discussion of ways in which OU fulfills the teaching portion of its mission can be found in Criterion 3.

Students enrolled at the University of Oklahoma have access to a wide variety of degree programs. All academic programs, with the exception of some health science degrees, are administered by the Norman Campus with some presence on each of the other campuses. [Programs offered through Norman Campus](#) are organized into colleges, including: Architecture, Arts and Sciences, Atmospheric and Geographic Sciences, Business, Earth and Energy, Education, Engineering, Fine Arts, International Studies, Journalism and Mass Communication, and Professional and Continuing Studies. In addition to these degree-granting colleges, the [University College](#) provides support to first-year students, helping them transition into college life and advising them into courses needed for their eventual entry into a degree-granting college. The [Graduate College](#) coordinates admission and oversees degree progression and milestones for students pursuing an advanced degree, as well as

coordinating some interdisciplinary majors. The [Honors College](#) provides rigorous programs for undergraduate students seeking additional intellectual challenges.

OUHSC, one of only four comprehensive academic health centers in the nation, offers a variety of [degree programs](#). These programs are housed in the College of Allied Health, College of Dentistry, College of Medicine, College of Nursing, College of Pharmacy, College of Public Health, and Graduate College. Most health programs at OUHSC and OU-Tulsa are accredited through nationally-recognized boards in their respective professions, with a minority of programs instead going through an internal review and approval process.

OU-Tulsa offers several [degrees](#) that can be completed entirely on the Tulsa campus. These programs are housed, organizationally, under parent academic programs at either Norman Campus or OUHSC and are operated by a mix of full-time OU-Tulsa resident faculty and faculty who also teach at the Norman or OUHSC campuses. Examples of Norman Campus programs at OU-Tulsa include Telecommunications Engineering and Social Work. OUHSC programs at OU-Tulsa include those offered through the [College of Allied Health](#) and the [School of Community Medicine](#).

In fulfillment of its research mission, the office of the [Vice President for Research \(VPR\)](#) on the Norman Campus is responsible for the development and/or dissemination of official policies in the research and creative activity arena, as well as the facilitation of faculty, student, and staff scholarship in all disciplines represented on the Norman Campus. This work is guided by [seven Core Values](#) and includes overseeing the [Office for Undergraduate Research](#) and [Office of Research Services](#) (pre-award proposal development and post-award financial services), as well as [several programs](#) to assist both undergraduate and graduate student research. These programs provide assistance with pursuing and managing funding; providing facilities and equipment for research purposes; creating and fostering research partnerships; gathering, analyzing, and disseminating quantitative information to help promote academic scholarship; and developing opportunities for applied research specific to various disciplines, especially related to interaction with private industry via the [Center for Applied Research and Development](#).

The [Vice President for Research at OUHSC](#) manages health-specific research and oversees the [Office of Research Administration](#), the [Division of Comparative Medicine](#), and the [OUHSC Core Laboratories](#). These offices provide many of the same services as the Norman Campus VPR while also giving faculty and students access to sophisticated laboratory equipment in DNA sequencing and genomics, flow cytometry and imaging, mass spectrometry/proteomics, biomolecular structure, and laser microdissection.

The University also supports its mission to provide the best possible education experience in creative activities through several unique and prestigious fine arts programs administered by [Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts](#). These include the award-winning [School of Musical Theatre](#), the second oldest [School of Drama](#) in the country, Oklahoma's only comprehensive [School of Music](#), and the only [School of Visual Arts](#) in the state to offer graduate degrees in art history at both the master's and doctoral level. The [School of Dance](#) is also one of the top three programs nationally in ballet and modern dance techniques.

The College of Fine Arts also provides students with the opportunity to engage with the public through their creative activities. The [University Theatre](#) hosts a wide number of student-led productions open to the public, including plays, operas, dance, concerts, and a student playwright festival. The College of Fine Arts website also maintains [links](#) to several community and University organizations that support OU students by raising money for scholarships, buying new musical equipment, and promoting performances.

In conjunction with the service portion of our mission, the University incorporates community engagement and service learning into many of its program offerings. Norman Campus houses four state-funded agencies: the [Oklahoma Geological Survey](#), the [Oklahoma Climatological Survey](#), the [Oklahoma Biological Survey](#), and the [Oklahoma Archeological Survey](#). The Oklahoma Water Survey was added a few years ago to serve the broad interests of research and service. Embedding such agencies within our state's flagship institution provides more opportunities for them to engage with state citizens through OU museums and public programs, as well as linkages with academic departments that serve to enrich student experiences in related degree programs.

The [Center for Social Justice](#) in Norman promotes the use of service learning courses to help develop reciprocal relationships between OU and local community groups. The [K-20 Center](#), a statewide education research and development center, promotes innovative learning through school-university-community collaboration. The [Institute for Quality Communities](#) works to strengthen Oklahoma's towns and cities by studying the built environment's influence on quality of life and educating leaders on how communities' physical space can be reshaped to increase social ties and attachment to where citizens live and work.

What is now OU-Tulsa began as a public clinic designed to address problems created by failing health care services in the Tulsa area. That clinic has now grown into the [School of Community Medicine](#). Having OU's presence in Tulsa begin this way – as an institution engaged in the community from the very beginning – helped shape the OU-Tulsa mission. Community engagement continues to be a core tenet for campus operations. Local stakeholders are consulted when new programs are developed, students often present final projects to relevant Tulsa organizations, and many programs, such as the [School of Social Work](#), utilize service learning courses where students work on specific community needs. The School of Community Medicine offers a unique, community-specific, four-year program where students get the necessary knowledge and skills to be a specialist or primary care physician while also learning how to use their skill sets to improve the health their community. OUHSC uses [service learning courses](#) to prepare future physicians for the unique public responsibilities that health practitioners face as well as many

OU also has a distinctly strong commitment to study abroad. We believe these programs foster community engagement on an international level. Further discussion of these programs may be found in Section 1.D of this argument.

In addition to academic programs, students are provided with many services considered to be part of the University's mission to provide "the best possible educational experience" for its students. These include [career services](#), [fitness and recreation](#), [housing and food](#), [leadership development](#), [health services](#) and [counseling](#), and [academic advising](#). Most student services are housed in the Student Affairs department at each of the [Norman](#), [OUHSC](#), or [OU-Tulsa](#) campuses.

The University provides comprehensive programming welcoming new students to the OU community. [Camp Crimson](#), an orientation summer camp, helps first-year students become familiar with campus while also connecting them with student services available to them at OU. Gallogly College of Engineering offers a [Summer Bridge program](#), a four-week residential program for freshman students planning on majoring in engineering at OU. The camp is designed to help students prepare academically for the rigor of engineering coursework as well as to build relationships with peers, faculty, and staff. Participation in the Summer Bridge program has [improved retention and graduation rates](#) in OU's engineering programs. [Graduate Student Life](#) also offers a variety of programs specifically tailored to the needs of new graduate students, including Graduate Student Welcome Week.

Along with institutionally-provided services, students have access to over 500 registered student organizations between the three campuses. These organizations include sororities and fraternities as well as cultural, professional, spiritual, and other interest groups. These student services and student-led organizations, along with degree programs in cultural studies, also promote further diversity and cultural understanding as described further in Section 1.C. Annual student satisfaction surveys are conducted at [Norman Campus](#) and [OUHSC](#) to track student needs and identify areas where the University could improve the quality of its service offerings. More information about these surveys is provided in Section 4.B.

As the flagship university in the state of Oklahoma, OU is focused both on providing the very highest quality of programs and on making sure those programs meet the needs of and are available to Oklahomans. Providing access to state residents is an important part of state expectations for this institution, and our commitment to that is shown in our enrollment patterns: [residents make up 62% of Norman and Tulsa students and 83% of HSC students](#). OU is one of just two public research institutions in the state of Oklahoma, and the University's investment in graduate education is apparent in our student population. Looking at the University in total, [72% of our students are in undergraduate programs, 20% are in graduate programs, and 8% are in professional programs](#).

The University's budget is constructed in a way that supports each pillar of the mission. The best reflection of this is how funds are actually expended. Excluding self-supporting auxiliary units (e.g., Athletics, clinical operations), for the year ending [June 30, 2016](#), [spending](#) reflected the commitment to our mission: 38% on instruction, 16% on research, 6% on public service, 10% on academic support, 6% on student services and student aid, 7% on institutional support, 13% on operations and plant, and 4% on other. A more detailed look at the University's resource allocation and expenditures can be found in Section 5.C.

Sources

- Component-1A-URLs-Cited
- OU-Academic-Plan
- OU-Enrl-by-Residency
- OU-HSC-Audited-Financial-Statements-FY2016
- OU-NC-Audited-Financial-Statements-FY2016
- OU-Total-Enrl-by-Level
- Program-to-Mission-Links-by-College
- Summer-Bridge-Outcomes

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

The University of Oklahoma's mission statement is easily accessible online, including on the websites of the [Provost's Office](#), [Public Affairs](#), and [Student Affairs](#). The mission statement is also printed on University business cards and stationery. Along with OU's overall mission, [OU-Tulsa](#) and [OUHSC](#) display their campus-specific mission statements on their websites and [student handbooks](#).

Norman Campus maintains an [Academic Plan](#) that highlights current goals and initiatives in teaching, research, and engagement. Portions of the Plan are reviewed and modified annually to incorporate feedback gathered from faculty and deans, and key components of the plan are shared with the President and OU Board of Regents at their annual retreat. Annual adjustments to the Academic Plan are focused on new opportunities and challenges that have arisen for the University at local, state, or national levels. The Academic Plan is also used to demonstrate the ways in which OU works alongside the Oklahoma Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE) to achieve three main goals: enhancing access and improving the quality of public higher education for all Oklahomans; increasing the number of college graduates; and better preparing students to meet the challenges of a global economy. These goals apply to both undergraduate and graduate students.

The Plan serves as a foundation on which all planning, programming, and evaluation occurs on the Norman Campus, as well as Norman-based programs at OU-Tulsa and partnerships between Norman and OUHSC. The Academic Plan is made publicly available via the Norman Campus Provost's website. The Plan addresses the extent of the University's emphasis on teaching for non-medical programs. Goals for health-related programs are captured within various strategic plans put together by faculty and administrators in OUHSC's colleges. For example, the College of Allied Health's [strategic plan](#) covers health programs at OUHSC and OU-Tulsa, the School of Community Medicine's [strategic plan](#) covers academic programs and clinical work in the Tulsa region, and the College of Public Health's [strategic plan](#) outlines priorities for their OUHSC programs.

Strategic, mission-related information is often shared directly with constituents by President Boren, either through speeches on campus, frequent e-mail messages to students, or from his [Twitter](#) account. The University also maintains a [YouTube](#) page where upper-level administrators post informational videos on new campus projects and initiatives. Individual campuses and programs are able to leverage unique opportunities to extend the University's mission, and that flexibility allows them to quickly pivot as needed to embrace new opportunities and readily respond to challenges. Each campus frequently updates key documents that more specifically address their areas of emphasis and expertise

in pursuit of the overall mission's goals.

Deans and administrators work closely with the President and the Senior Vice President and Provost to develop and communicate mission, vision, and goal priorities. Additionally, many colleges and departments maintain their own mission statements, and communicate their strategic vision via websites, newsletters, and emails. Additional entities communicating with students, alumni, and community members include the [OU Alumni Association](#), [Institutional Research and Reporting](#), [OU Press](#), the [Tulsa Alumni Club](#), and the [University of Oklahoma Foundation](#).

In pursuit of the research and creative activity portion of the OU mission, the University maintains a decadal strategic plan regarding research initiatives, [Aspire 2020](#), referenced in the Academic Plan document. Within two years of introducing the Aspire 2020 plan, the University set record-high amounts for research expenditure and external proposals and achieved the Highest Research Activity designation of the Carnegie Foundation. Constituents are updated on new goals and benchmarks for research growth through the above-referenced Academic Plan. Research initiatives rely heavily on partnerships between the three campuses, allowing them to pool resources and strengths to expand the reach of programs. Good examples of these partnerships include the new School of Biomedical Engineering and a strategic alliance between Norman Campus and the Diabetes Institute at OUHSC.

Along with research partnerships, the Aspire 2020 plan created new resources to help with faculty research and creative projects. These include initiatives launched by the Vice President of Research to help faculty and researchers pursue funding, fund highly innovative projects that would otherwise likely not be considered, find new partnerships, and build research portfolios. The initiatives include new programs creating centralized ways to recognize meritorious research and creative endeavors. The [Center for Research Program Development and Enrichment](#) also assists faculty and graduate students with identifying research funding opportunities, providing feedback on external funding proposals, and identifying existing additional OU resources.

The University has a wide variety of programs that speak to the "service to state and society" portion of our mission. Between organizational units specifically constructed around research enriching state communities, such as the [Institute for Quality Communities](#) and the [K-20 Center](#), and academic programs incorporating service components into their curricula, OU has myriad ties to communities all around the state. OU prefers this more decentralized approach, as we feel it allows our academic units greater flexibility to find the most appropriate ways to map areas of research interest to opportunities for community engagement. Good examples of programs with strong connections to Oklahoma communities can be found within the Native American Studies, Anthropology, and Social Work departments. The office of [Broader Impacts in Research](#), discussed further in Section 1.D, oversees a large part of the OU's community engagement mission. Realizing that these activities are suffused throughout University operations, OU created a community engagement position within the office of the Senior Vice President and Provost. Having a central view of OU's array of community engagement activities allows us to better understand how they integrate overall into our mission pillars of teaching, research, and service. One accomplishment related to the new position was implementation of a [Faculty Activity System](#) designed to track faculty teaching, research, and service activities. More information about the Faculty Activity System is provided in Section 5.D.

The University takes its status as the flagship university of Oklahoma very seriously, our commitment to which is shown in our enrollment profile, as well as the emphasis placed on research and engagement programs benefiting the state. Additionally, student services described in Section 1.A have their nature, scope, and constituents clarified in the mission statements of each campus's student affairs office. The statements, along with the Academic Plan and the mission and vision documents of each college and department, detail the nature, scope, and constituents of the University's programs.

Sources

- Allied-Health-Strategic-Plan
- Aspire-2020
- Community-Medicine-Strategic-Plan
- Component-1B-URLs-Cited
- OU-Academic-Plan
- Public-Health-Strategic-Plan

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

The University of Oklahoma's mission statement emphasizes the importance of service to society. OU believes that society is strongest when it is diverse, that service must be addressed towards all members of society, and that communicating those principles clearly and consistently to everyone in the University community is very important.

The team report from our last HLC site visit noted the need for a more coordinated effort toward improving diversity, especially in academic leadership. OU has always understood the value of diversity and has long been committed to a goal of increased diversity in leadership, faculty, and the student body. We considered what actions the University could take that would have the broadest impact on all aspects of OU's operations. After extensive discussions within University leadership and with the campus community, OU created the position of Vice President for University Community in 2015. This position directs operations of the [Office of University Community](#), which is dedicated to fostering equity, inclusivity, and diversity in all areas of the University. Core values of community outreach and collaboration, integrity, and cultural awareness and understanding guide the Office of University Community, as visible in its mission:

"The Office of University Community is committed to providing an inclusive community where diversity is the cornerstone that fosters a climate that is open and welcoming to diverse people, ideas and perspectives; that promotes a positive dialogue on the nature of diversity; and that engages faculty, staff and students in activities that promote the University's core values."

University Community collaborates with multiple groups on campus to ensure that all voices are heard and valued throughout all aspects of University operations. The [Diversity and Inclusivity Academic Council](#) (DIAC), a group of administrators and faculty members from each college, serves as the primary advisory council to the Vice President. The Office of University Community has also been collaborating with OU Outreach to develop a theory of change (TOC) to guide the work of DIAC as it supports campus-wide and college-specific efforts toward improving recruitment, retention, and recognition of students, staff and administrators, and faculty from under-represented groups. The TOC includes major strategies and pre-conditions necessary to reach the long-term goal of each group. The TOC action plans will drive changes in policy and practice to enhance diversity and reduce bias. [Council member representatives](#) were selected by college deans and program directors. The 18-month process, led by the Interim Vice-President for Outreach, includes significant effort by four work groups: undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff/administrators. A full draft TOC with narrative, logic model and action plans will be completed soon and shared with the university executive team for feedback before being released to the colleges and programs for customization and implementation. DIAC, along with Outreach and University Community, will provide ongoing support and training for colleges and programs as needed.

The University's organizational structure also contains several offices or centers with a strong focus on assisting diverse communities. These include:

- The [Gender and Equality Center](#), which seeks to “foster social justice by advocating for the rights of women and LGBTQ students, empowering those without a voice, and challenging inequality.” The Center oversees a number of programs operated by faculty and students. One example is the [Sooner Faculty Ally](#) program, helping faculty, staff, and graduate teaching assistants create an [inclusive classroom for LGBTQ students](#). Another example is the [Gender-Based Violence Prevention](#) program, which helps spread awareness of issues regarding sexual assault, works towards ending sexual assault, and provides aid to victims. The Center also manages a few [health programs](#), including sexual education, discussions on body image and the role society plays in its development, and counseling on healthy relationships.
- The College of Education's [Find Your Future Summer Education Camp](#), a five-day residential program for students of color interested in becoming educators, and the [Urban Teacher Preparation Academy](#), which prepares teachers to better serve diverse students in urban public schools.
- [Student Life](#) houses Norman Campus-based student life programs for African American, American Indian, Asian American, and Latino students.
- [OU Cousins](#), another program in Student Life, which partners American students with international students to promote understanding of a diverse range of cultures.
- [Veteran Support Alliance](#), which aids current and former military personnel on campus. Their programs include assisting students who have been called to active duty, managing the GI Bill and other scholarship programs, providing career services, fostering community among military personnel, and promoting the OU Green Zone, a network of faculty and staff dedicated to providing excellent service for military personnel returning from active duty.
- [OUHSC Multicultural Student Organizations](#), which promote cultural awareness about different community groups through programs and events.

Along with these programs and centers, there are many organizations focusing on diversity, inclusion, and community building among the 500+ registered student organizations. OU's uniquely strong emphasis on the contributions of study broad to a solid liberal arts education also serves to improve awareness of and respect for other cultures. The University has a well-regarded [Human Relations](#) department dedicated to promoting service and scholarship for the betterment of society. The College of Education's [Diversity Action Report](#) identifies 50-60 courses across the curriculum that focus on diversity and inclusion as essential to education practice. University Outreach, providing community-based services to Oklahoma and beyond, organizes the [National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education](#) each year, as well as providing administrative support for the [Southwest Center for Human Relations Studies](#).

Starting in Fall 2016, all first-year students must satisfy a [diversity training requirement](#). Training consists of five program hours to be completed throughout the first year on campus, an approach consistent with existing training programs for first-year students, such as alcohol abuse prevention or sexual misconduct awareness. The main purpose of this diversity training is to help students learn about and embrace students from all types of backgrounds so that all students may more fully enjoy and engage with educational experiences on campus. The diversity experience training is guided by a [Diversity Experience Rubric](#), defining five broad themes that encourage students to consider their rights and responsibilities as a member of the OU family.

As part of the University's commitment to increasing undergraduate student diversity on all campuses, the Office of University Community partnered with the Office of Admissions and Recruitment to develop a five-point plan to meet our goal of increasing student recruitment from

underrepresented high schools. The [five points](#) demonstrate commitment to diversifying the student body in Norman and OU-Tulsa academic programs by: working more closely with regional recruiting offices to identify and more actively recruit in underrepresented schools and cities; increasing diversity of OU's National Merit Scholars students; increasing recruitment of non-resident National Achievement and National Hispanic Scholars; cross-department collaboration focused on holding more non-resident receptions; and other, smaller initiatives within the Office of University Community that are aimed at creating a culture where diversity recruitment is a regular and valued part of all recruiting efforts. OU can already see positive results in these efforts in both the [recruitment of a more diverse class](#) and [higher retention rates of minority students](#).

OUHSC's colleges and its Office of Community Partnerships and Health Policy provide programs preparing students pursuing careers with a special focus on serving underrepresented and underserved populations. The OUHSC Office of Institutional Research (OIR) works with colleges to examine non-traditional predictors of success, with the goal of using those data to increase diversity in admissions. While this effort has just begun, the [initial results](#) are very encouraging.

The University's hiring and promotion processes, as well as a range of enrichment activities, are designed and carried out with attention to diversity. Initiatives in this area fall into two general types: providing diversity training to existing community members, and continuous efforts to increase diversity at all three campuses. OU is actively working to increase diversity in employees, whether faculty, staff, or administrators. The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost has made significant progress toward increasing female representation in leadership, both by providing support to the [Provost's Advisory Committee on Women's Issues](#) and by hiring women to administrative positions that oversee activities across all three campuses, including the positions of Vice Provost for Faculty Development, Vice Provost for International Programs, Vice Provost for Health Sciences, Associate Provost for Academic Advising, Associate Vice President for Clinical and Translational Research, Associate Provost for Academic Engagement, Dean of Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts, Dean of the College of Pharmacy, Dean of University College, and Interim Vice President of Continuing Education.

The [Office of Institutional Equity](#) (OIE), established by the OU Regents in 2012, is another office that supports the University's belief that a diverse community brings strength to a great university. The OIE is located on the Norman Campus, with representation at OUHSC and OU-Tulsa, and reports directly to the President and OU Regents. Housed within this office are the Title IX and the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action offices. Most recently updated in 2015, OU's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action statements clearly represent our commitment to promoting campus diversity. A [Reporting Responsibilities](#) guide is available online, with links to Policies and Procedures for lodging complaints.

Sources

- 2016-JRCoE-Diversity-Inclusion-Report
- Component-1C-URLs-Cited
- Diversity_Experience_Rubric
- Diversity-Council-Roster-2017
- Freshman-Diversity-Trend
- IRR-Retention-Minority
- OUHSC-Admissions-Diversity

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

The University of Oklahoma fully embraces its position as a servant of the public. The mission statement focuses on educational service to our students as well as service to state and society. Additional mission statements and goal clarifications within strategic plans, discussed in more detail in Sections 1.A and 1.C, demonstrate OU's engagement with a wide spectrum of communities both internal and external. Our stated goals align with HLC's expectation that concern for the public good be a core institutional value.

As a state university, OU does not have any investors, parent organizations, or external interest groups other than the state of Oklahoma. The University publicizes budget allocations, as described in Sections 1.A and 5.C, and, of the top eight expenditures, all but facilities management are directly in service of mission-related activities. Facilities management, which makes up just over 12% of expenditures, clearly also has an indirect impact on mission activities.

Organizationally, OU belongs to an educational system with a long history of public service. The [Oklahoma State System of Higher Education](#) was created in 1941 by a citizen-ratified amendment to the state of Oklahoma's constitution (more information in Section 2.C). The system is coordinated by the [Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education](#) (OSRHE), and member institutions are governed by boards of regents. OSRHE prescribes academic standards, determines functions and courses of study, approves funding allocations to public institutions, and gives final approval to tuition/fee rates within the limits set by the Oklahoma Legislature. Additionally, OSRHE promotes broader access to public education in Oklahoma by managing scholarships, maintaining the Oklahoma College Assistance Program, and promoting student loan management and financial literacy services.

All administrators at the University report, through the President, to the [University of Oklahoma Board of Regents](#) (OU Regents). The OU Regents consist of seven citizens appointed by the governor of Oklahoma with the advice and consent of the state senate. They keep the public informed of all board decisions and processes by publishing meeting [agendas](#) and locations with advance notice as required by statute, with all changes finalized within 24 hours of the meeting, and publishing [minutes](#) after each meeting. All OU colleges also have a Board of Visitors to provide community input and support.

The University designs its academic programs to expressly meet public needs, as discussed in more detail in Section 1.A. In addition to more traditional programs, OU's [College of Professional and Continuing Studies](#) offers programs tailored to adult students. For example, their [OU North America](#)

[and Europe](#) academic programs serve military personnel, civil service personnel, and civilians in the continental U.S., Hawaii, and Europe through a combination of onsite and online courses. OU operates the [Janux Open Course](#) system, which will be described in more detail in Section 3.D. This system provides high-quality education free-of-charge to members of the public. Within a year of its debut in 2013 the Janux system had 20 courses, a record for an open course system in the first year of its operation. Students in our College of Education perform millions of hours of free public service as part of their course work every year, and the College has also assisted the state of Oklahoma in preparing emergency certified teachers – at a loss in revenue to the university but done in service of the state’s greater welfare.

OUHSC operates a full range of medical facilities in the heart of the largest metro area in Oklahoma, while also offering an array of medical academic programs which contain public service as a key component. Students perform patient treatment under direct supervision of faculty members as a curriculum component in clinical and teaching facilities across the state. OUHSC values external constituents for their role in educating our future healthcare workforce. Students treat patients in over 850 clinical affiliation sites, the majority serving citizens of the state of Oklahoma. The Colleges of Dentistry and Allied Health provide [patient treatment](#) as part of their programs. The College of Dentistry also offers their Dental Hygiene program to more rural areas around the state through collaboration with three regional career technology centers across Oklahoma, providing synchronous coursework delivery to students with the goal of improving rural healthcare. The Department of Dental Hygiene’s Weatherford site was included in a [HLC Multi-Site Visit](#) completed in November 2015. Colleges also host special events that provide information, screening, and patient care for the [public](#).

Another way the University works within communities is through its various study abroad programs. OU maintains [three international study centers](#) where students can attend classes taught by OU faculty while participating in the local community through internships and community service. These three centers are located in Arezzo, Italy; Puebla, Mexico; and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The [Arezzo](#) center allows student to engage with the community through language-exchange events, dinners with locals, and programs coordinated through OU Arezzo, as well as participate in internships at local nonprofits. The [Puebla](#) center has service learning courses in medical, pre-med, and nursing programs as well as English language. The [Rio de Janeiro](#) center offers courses studying global inequality and poverty, with students having the opportunity to engage with local activists working on these issues.

Along with these established international centers, the University maintains several other community-based study abroad programs. One example is the program with Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe, named one of *Time Magazine*’s 100 Most Influential People for her school for orphaned and destitute girls in Northern Uganda. Students earn [business](#), [architecture](#), and medical course credits by volunteering at Sister Rosemary’s school; they teach, fundraise, dig wells, or operate a small pharmacy and medical clinic onsite.

The [Broader Impacts in Research](#) office promotes the ability of research to benefit society and contribute to the advancement of desired societal outcomes. The Broader Impacts office at OU is a proof-of-concept office funded by the Vice President of Research, the first office of its kind attempting to move Broader Impacts past the National Science Foundation criterion to a larger conceptual framework helping faculty and other investigators link their research to transformational outcomes relevant to individuals, diverse communities, and society at large. The office of Broader Impacts pursues this goal by making connections between faculty, researchers, administrators, programs, community partners, other potential stakeholders, and both internal and external resources.

OU’s Aviation program operates a popular summer camp, [Sooner Flight Academy](#), that provides

opportunities for elementary and middle school children to conduct a variety of hands-on experiments and activities related to aeronautics and physics. Other services provided to the community at large include the [Osher Lifelong Learning Institute](#), which provides a variety of noncredit courses tailored to older adults, and OU's participation in the annual [Medieval Fair of Norman](#), operated in cooperation with our [Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies](#). OUHSC has public service initiatives through many of its health centers, including the [Harold Hamm Diabetes Center](#), [Family Medicine Healthy Hearts for Oklahoma](#), and the [OU Physicians Live to Give](#) program. OU Outreach has a wide array of [centers](#) working to meet local, state, and community needs including [early childhood development care](#) for Oklahoma children, continuing education for teachers, [executive training](#), and the [prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse](#), among others. Outreach also operates OU's [American Indian Institute](#). The state of Oklahoma has a larger Native American population than most other states. OU recognizes the challenges native communities face as opportunities to provide service in the fields of health, education, and language and arts preservation and celebration.

Sources

- 1642 20160205 Multi Location Visit - Reviewer Analysis
- 1642 20160205 Multi Location Visit - Reviewer Analysis (page number 12)
- Component-1D-URLs-Cited
- Outreach-Departments

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

The OU mission statement is posted prominently, both physically and digitally. It makes consistency of strategic effort across our three campuses – distinctly different both geographically and functionally – possible. It allows the University the latitude to adapt different, yet interrelated, foci of our campuses to meet our central, overarching goals.

OU's commitment to our mission is visible in our efforts to continually assess our operations and where they fit in to the mission. We strive at all times to meet those goals: educating students to meet the needs of the global environment, be a leader in research, and provide service to the state and society.

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 of Oklahoma's commitment to integrity is well documented in its policies and is translated into action by the offices and administrators tasked with explaining and enforcing those policies. This commitment begins with the state constitutional, statutory, and administrative provisions that make OU a steward of state resources and a servant to a public mission. The University's founding provisions are in [Article XIII Section 8](#) of the State Constitution, and in [70 Oklahoma Statutes Section 3301](#). The obligations of state higher-education institutions are set forth generally in Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes. The recently-revised [State Ethics Rules](#), particularly [Rule 4](#), establish baseline requirements that all Regents and all other University employees must follow regarding the use of public resources, avoidance of private inurement, disclosure of conflicts of interest, and commitment to the public good in all their activities. As part of a state system of public education, OU also adheres to all policies of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) as set forth in their [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

Within the University, this public-service commitment is exemplified at the highest level in its mission statement and the OU Board of Regents (OU Regents) [Policy Manual](#), the foundational compendium of policies for faculty, staff, and student ethical policies and processes. For the benefit of all employees, OU Regents' and other policies are organized and published in [Faculty](#) and [Staff](#) Handbooks for each campus, regularly updated and posted online by the appropriate campus Provost and Human Resources. Policies and interpretive statements reflecting specific federal and state compliance provisions are published as appropriate on University websites and implemented by specific University offices. With respect to ethics in financial and compliance matters, OU has a [Compliance Director](#) who reports to the Office of Legal Counsel and maintains a staff of 36 full-time employees to address compliance issues on all three campuses. Reporting to the OU Regents and the President is an Internal Audit office that has grown to 17 full-time auditors (excluding interns and support staff), who review all offices and units periodically and conduct special [audits](#) as needed.

Specific compliance policies are addressed by an [Office of Compliance](#) that includes the [Office of Human Research Participant Protection](#), [Office of Export Controls](#), an office for the [care of experimental animals](#), [environmental health and safety](#), [radiation safety](#), healthcare billing, and HIPAA. Other offices reporting to the President, appropriate Vice President, or Office of Legal Counsel include an [Institutional Equity officer](#) (Title VII and other discrimination issues), an [office](#) to investigate and prevent sexual discrimination and harassment (Title IX), an [Office of Research Services](#) (grant and contract issues), a robust [Athletics Compliance](#) office (NCAA requirements), and numerous others. A Compliance Advisory Committee ([Section V](#)) meets regularly and includes deans

and vice presidents from all three campuses.

The University has multiple intake points for complaints and reports of misconduct. OU has an [Ombudsperson](#), a designated neutral dispute resolver. Academic Affairs also has an Associate Provost responsible for working with faculty, students, and staff to resolve issues under the purview of the Provost's Office. There is a [hotline](#) for anonymously reporting compliance concerns, as well as another [24-hour ethics hotline](#) maintained by Internal Auditing established in late 2016. The [President's Action Line](#) is also available for reporting of concerns of all kinds, via both phone calls and emails. It is staffed by trained student volunteers and is housed within the President's Office. Both methods of contact for the Action Line are highly publicized in the campus community. Reported concerns are referred to the appropriate University offices for action and are monitored to ensure follow-up and resolution. The University maintains an institutional [conflicts of interest](#) policy that guards against financial encroachment on institutional academic responsibility. In addition to enforcement, the University launched OnPoint LMS, a robust learning management system for providing [training modules on policy and compliance issues](#) including FERPA, discrimination and Title IX issues, computer security, and fire safety, among others. The LMS currently houses ten training courses and has over 85,000 total completions.

Sources

- Component-2A-URLs-Cited
- Institutional-COI-Policy
- Oklahoma-Ethics-Rules-2017
- Oklahoma-Ethics-Rules-2017 (page number 226)
- OUHSC-Org-Chart
- OU-Regents-Policy-Manual

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

As a public institution, the University has not just an ethical but a public, statutory commitment to transparency under state [Open Meeting](#) and Open Records ([Title 51, Chapter 24](#)) laws. Beyond its statutory obligations, the University promotes transparency with respect to academic programs and requirements in its [Admissions](#) website and online [General Catalog](#). Information regarding the identity, roles, and qualifications of faculty and staff is provided on organizational units' websites. Information regarding control and accreditation relationships is provided by the OU Board of Regents' [Policy Manual](#), as well as the [OU Fact Book](#) and [accreditation](#) website, both maintained by the Office of Institutional Research.

Information regarding the cost of attendance and the availability of financial aid is provided in abundance on the [Financial Aid](#) website and a regularly-updated [tuition estimator](#). Bursar Services posts online the [current academic year tuition and fee rates](#) for undergraduate, graduate, resident, non-resident and international students. The breakdown of flat-rate costs and per credit hour costs as well as a complete list and explanations of all mandatory hourly, semester, and college and technology fees are included. In addition to the Tuition Estimator, Bursar Services provides extensive information on [flat-rate tuition](#), banked hours and payment dates.

The University is committed to making sure all incoming students understand both the costs of an OU education and the array of resources available to help cover those costs. Based on feedback from students and their families, the University created a financial plan process built into initial enrollment and revised the fall billing cycle to provide clearer information about charges earlier in the semester. OU has made a major investment in an innovative financial counseling program – [MoneyCoach](#) – provided to all incoming freshmen to help figure out the best way to pay for college given their individual circumstances. Coaching sessions are built into the freshman orientation process. Further, OU developed a two-credit course, “[9 Things Every College Student Should Know About Money](#),” that is open to all students and offered several times a year. It is designed to give students a basic knowledge of personal finance and money management and to develop financially literate students who will be fiscally secure today and in the future. The course won the 2015 Gold Star Award from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

The Office of Admissions and Recruitment clearly outlines admission processes for freshmen, undergraduate transfer, concurrent high school, and new graduate students on their [website](#) and when communicating with the public in all manners. The website in particular allows the prospective applicant to select their admissions type (e.g., freshman, new transfer), then outlines the process relevant to the selection. Each student is provided with a list of exactly what items are required for admission, as well as all relevant deadlines. Degree requirements are conveyed to enrolled students via the University's family of [advising websites](#). More information about this can be found in Section 3.D.

Sources

- Component-2B-URLs-Cited
- Oklahoma-Open-Meeting-Act
- OU-MoneyCoach-Program
- OU-Regents-Policy-Manual

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

The foundation for autonomy of the OU Board of Regents (OU Regents) is established by [Article XIII Section 8](#) of the Oklahoma constitution and is further articulated by [70 Oklahoma Statutes Section 3302](#), which provides for gubernatorial appointment of Regents to a seven-year term. A “for cause” removal provision insulates Regents from political influence. The powers and duties of the Regents are also defined by statute, [70 Oklahoma Statutes Section 3305 \(2016\)](#). Deliberations and decisions of OU Regents are public and transparent pursuant to state [Open Meetings](#) and Open Records statutes, and their relations with donors and other external parties are similarly open by statute.

The OU Regents have several standing committees that meet as part of each regularly scheduled board meeting, including the Finance and Audit Committee, the Norman Campus Committee, the Health Sciences Center Committee, and the Athletics Committee. Division of the standing committees by campus allows the OU Regents to become more familiar with the academic enterprise on each campus. Information is provided to the OU Regents by the Vice Presidents in charge of each operational area, coordinated by a Vice President for University Governance. Each year, the OU Regents have a planning retreat where they review University operations, formulate plans for the upcoming year, and receive more in-depth briefings on issues of special concern.

With respect to the institution's day-to-day management, publicly-available [minutes](#) of each OU Regents meeting demonstrate a strong record of approving the President's recommendations, which have in turn been formulated after extensive input from faculty, staff, students, and the public. For example, the University's [Benefits Committee](#) has been deeply involved in formulating institutional approaches to growing health costs, with ad hoc [“town hall” meetings](#) held regarding the financial issues affecting OU. Academic matters are overseen by the Senior Vice President and Provost in consultation with the faculty. Faculty input comes not only from the [Faculty Senate](#), but also from numerous “PACs” – [Provost Advisory Committees](#) – on matters such as academic advising, women's issues, financial management, and general education courses.

Sources

- Component-2C-URLs-Cited

- Oklahoma-Open-Meeting-Act

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

As a public institution, OU's commitment to freedom of expression begins with the First Amendment. At the institutional level, the University's commitment to academic freedom is enshrined in its [Faculty Handbooks](#), which contain OU's version of the 1946 AAUP statement on academic freedom ([Norman, OUHSC](#)). In practical terms, academic freedom is maintained by faculty appeals ([Norman, OUHSC](#)) and [grade appeal](#) processes that protect faculty and students, respectively, from adverse action or evaluation that would restrict academic freedom in any way. This commitment to academic freedom includes academic responsibility in the pursuit of truth. The OU Board of Regents' [policy on academic responsibility](#) is supported by the Faculty Handbook ([Norman, OUHSC](#)) through a system of annual [faculty evaluation](#) plus tenure ([Norman, OUHSC](#)) and [post-tenure](#) reviews that assess the value and extent of faculty productivity.

OU's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#) directly addresses this issue in Section IV, which says in part:

This policy is intended to protect members of the University community from discrimination, not to regulate protected speech. No provision of this policy shall be interpreted to prohibit conduct that is legitimately related to course content, teaching methods, scholarship, or public commentary of an individual or faculty member or the educational, political, artistic or literary expression of students in classrooms and public forums.

OU's commitment is further expressed in its research and teaching initiatives, including the [Institute for the American Constitutional Heritage](#) (IACH). The IACH was established in 2009 as an interdisciplinary center exploring all aspects of the Constitution, from its historical context to its role in contemporary society. The Law Center participated in the [Freedom Online Coalition's annual conference in 2016](#), discussing ways to address hate speech and harassment while still protecting freedom of expression.

Sources

- Component-2D-URLs-Cited
- NC-Faculty-Evaluation-Memo
- NC-Grade-and-Academic-Appeals-Boards
- NC-Post-Tenure-Review-Memo
- NC-Tenure-and-Promotion-Recommendations
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook (page number 27)
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook (page number 28)
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook (page number 32)
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook (page number 54)
- OUHSC-Tenure-Memo-16-17

- OU-Regents-Policy-Manual
- OU-Regents-Policy-Manual (page number 21)

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

The University's commitment to integrity in research and scholarship begins with the Non-Discrimination Policy discussed in more detail in Section 2.D. The [Vice President for Research](#) (VPR), particularly the [Office of Research Services](#), provides assistance and oversight for researchers with respect to conflicts of interest in the sponsored research area. The Institutional Review Board and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee offices provide oversight for research conducted on human subjects and animal subjects, respectively. Potential and actual conflicts of interest and commitment generally, whether in teaching, research, or service, are addressed by the OU Board of Regents' [Conflicts of Interest](#) (COI) policy. This is further addressed in [Outside Employment](#) and COI policies in the Faculty Handbook ([Norman, OUHSC](#)). These policies are the subject of an annual campus-wide [announcement and disclosure process](#). The University's commitment to integrity in research is ultimately enforced by its Ethics in Research ([Norman, OUHSC](#)) policy, which the Provosts and VPRs for each campus are responsible for interpreting and enforcing.

Student academic integrity is strongly emphasized on all three campuses, in ways that are proactive rather than reactive. For Norman Campus and OU-Tulsa students, integrity is addressed via the student [Integrity Council](#), assisted by an [Office of Academic Integrity Programs](#) (OAIP) which reports to the Provost. The 60+ member council, which invites membership from every college and is open to both undergraduate and graduate students, promotes a culture of academic integrity by providing classroom presentations, special "Integrity Week" activities, and peer-educator services in integrity awareness classes for students found to be in violation of the [Academic Misconduct Code](#). The ethical use of information sources and the basic assumptions of college-level work are explained in a [Students' Guide to Academic Integrity](#) on the Integrity Council website. Appropriate use of information sources in student work is enforced in part by a subscription to Turnitin.com, the appropriate use of which, in turn, is addressed and encouraged by OAIP staff, college IT representatives, and the Writing Center. Academic integrity is generally addressed by the Norman Campus Academic Misconduct Code, with separate policies addressing integrity for the College of Law and the colleges at OUHSC. At OUHSC academic integrity is prioritized within each college as an aspect of professional ethical training. OUHSC has its own student [Integrity Council](#), an umbrella group within student government which provides presentations and annual workshops. On the national scene, OU is a longtime, active member of the [International Center for Academic Integrity](#) (ICAI), and hosted the southwest regional ICAI conference in 2017. The newly created position of Ethics Specialist, which reports jointly to the Provost, the Office of Legal Counsel, and the Office of Compliance, brings together all three strands of this portion of Criterion 2.

Sources

- Academic-Misconduct-Code
- Component-2E-URLs-Cited
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook (page number 60)
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook (page number 186)
- OU-Regents-Policy-Manual
- OU-Regents-Policy-Manual (page number 152)

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

In all its activities, the University of Oklahoma is committed to ensuring integrity, transparency and fairness for all its stakeholders. OU provides as much of its operational information as possible via online resources, clearly demonstrating our belief that public institutions should make themselves as accessible as possible. Specific programs and offices exist to ensure and promote integrity in admissions, teaching, research, service, finances, and all other aspects of the University's mission.

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

The University of Oklahoma has several interconnected institutional mechanisms and processes intended to assure quality, relevance, appropriateness, and currency of its courses and degree programs. Key examples include approval processes for new courses and degree programs, course- and program-level assessment processes, the periodic Academic Program Review (APR) process, and specialized accreditation processes for professional programs.

As reflected in the OU [course approval process](#), applications for all new courses must pass several levels of approval, beginning with discussions among faculty at the departmental level before forwarding to the dean. If the course or degree program is at the graduate level, it must be approved by the [Graduate Council](#). Once passed through those levels of approval, the application is forwarded to the [Academic Programs Council](#) (APC), and then to the Provost. Once the Provost has approved the new course, the application goes to the OU Board of Regents (OU Regents) before being forwarded to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE), who grant [final approval](#). Approval of new degree programs and/or fields of study follow the same general process.

Course-level assessment is conducted by individual faculty to ensure ongoing enhancement of student learning and is measured, in part, by student performance relative to the expected course learning outcomes articulated for each course. Every course in each degree program is mapped onto the program's goals and/or student learning outcomes to ensure that students' performance in that course contributes to their overall performance in the major. For example, the [BFA in Visual Arts curriculum map](#) shows how this alignment activity allows program faculty to demonstrate the role and importance of each course in the curriculum and helps verify that the curriculum is appropriately structured and balanced to attain program objectives. This process offers faculty an opportunity to identify gaps and redundancies and to make any adjustments needed for continuous improvement.

Those OU degree programs with specialty accreditors have thorough quality assurance processes intended to prove the currency and appropriateness of the course materials and ensure graduates of those programs are able to achieve credentials for professional practice. Sixteen colleges have

academic programs with specialized accreditation, as listed in the [OU Fact Book](#).

Academic Program Review (APR) at OU is conducted on a seven-year cycle as mandated by the OSRHE's [Academic Program Review Policy](#). The primary purpose of APR is to ensure that all degree programs function at the highest possible levels of academic quality and are consistent with the mission of the University. There is a [schedule](#) specifying when each unit is due for APR review. For example, ten units were reviewed in 2016-2017 while nine units will be reviewed in 2017-2018. This process is described in more detail in Section 4.A.

In 2012, OU created the Office of Academic Assessment to provide a more thorough and comprehensive review of our programs. All levels of degree programs establish well-articulated and measurable student learning outcomes as part of their program assessment process. Information about student learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate degree programs is available on the Office of Academic Assessment [website](#). All professional programs at OUHSC and OU-Tulsa have clearly delineated goals and outcomes for student learning. Because all of the University's health programs are specially accredited, assessment of student learning and general program quality is assured as part of their meeting the standards for each accrediting body.

At OU, the quality of all educational programs and their goals or student learning outcomes are consistent irrespective of the manner of delivery and locations. The University provides support for online programs and teaching technology at the institutional level through the Digital Learning Initiative, as well as via college-level offices. All fully online and blended courses are designed, approved, and delivered in accordance with [standards](#) for quality assurance set forth by the Academic Programs Council. OU's international programs adhere to the same course development standards, systems, and procedures as those offered at the three regular campuses. Faculty hiring and evaluation processes are the same as those set out in the Faculty Handbook ([Norman](#), [OUHSC](#)). OU has a small number of consortial/contractual agreements related to OUHSC programs, all of them designed to help address Oklahoma's lack of quality rural healthcare. OUHSC colleges maintain full control over curriculum and faculty qualifications in these arrangements, and all of the agreements result in less than 20% of program content delivered by non-OU providers.

The University of Oklahoma offers a dual credit program to high school students referred to as Concurrent Enrollment. OSRHE sets [admission standards](#) as well as expectations about faculty qualifications. The program is open to high school juniors and seniors, and participants are classified as non-degree seeking visitors. According to OSRHE policy, participating students' total combined enrollment in both high school and OU courses may not exceed nineteen semester hours for a fall or spring term, or nine semester hours for a summer session. Concurrent Enrollment students enroll in regular University courses taught by regular faculty. Due to this equivalence of program quality, the learning outcomes and level of achievement should be the same as for students enrolled in the University full-time. Dual credit is only available through the Norman Campus.

Sources

- BFA-Visual-Arts-Curriculum-Map
- Component-3A-URLs-Cited
- Course-Approval-Process
- New-Course-Instructions
- OSRHE_New_Program_Request_Form
- OSRHE-Policy-Manual-Chapter-3

- OSRHE-Policy-Manual-Chapter-3 (page number 65)
- OSRHE-Policy-Manual-Chapter-3 (page number 99)
- OU-Accreditations-Fact-Book
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook
- OUHSC-Faculty-Handbook (page number 22)
- Program-Review-Cycle

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

General education is at the heart of every University of Oklahoma student's learning experience. Consequently, the general education curriculum is designed to ensure that graduating Sooners have both breadth and depth in the fundamental knowledge, skills, competencies, and values they need to flourish as individuals and as citizens.

The last HLC site visit recommended review and improvement of the general education program and its assessment. The University agrees that our already-strong general education curriculum should be continually examined for any areas we might improve upon. OU appointed a Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives, one of whose responsibilities is oversight of the general education curriculum.

The University's [General Education requirements](#) fulfill the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE) [General Education Policy](#). The [Provost's Advisory Committee for General Education Oversight](#) (PACGEO) is charged with assessing the general education program's adherence to state policy and determining if it is serving its intended function, i.e., ensuring that each student receives a broad, liberal education regardless of their area of specialization. PACGEO [committee members](#) are appointed by the Provost from faculty and staff involved in teaching and/or advising students about general education requirements. The Committee is responsible for evaluating new and existing courses to make sure they meet general education requirements and for improving awareness of those standards among faculty and students. The PACGEO [guidelines](#), available online, are crucial to ensuring that all courses approved for the general education curriculum not only support the University's mission but also provide a solid foundation for all OU's degree programs. As part of the general requirements, all courses should:

1. Be quality, college-level courses focusing on critical analysis of the topics relative to the specific core areas for which they are approved,
2. Broaden students' perspectives by introducing them to the methodologies, concepts and facts of

- diverse disciplines,
3. Provide students with opportunities to improve their ability to express themselves in written and oral forms and use mathematical analysis when appropriate,
 4. Foster critical analysis and library research skills, and
 5. Instill curiosity about subjects outside students' major fields and foster a desire to continue learning.

In addition to the above are requisites intended to ensure consistent quality over all courses approved for general education. These include guidelines related to writing assignments, course content, class size, faculty qualifications, multi-section courses, grading policy, and active learning. For example, every general education course must include a writing component appropriate to expectations within its disciplinary area, in order to enhance written communication skills among all OU graduates irrespective of their major.

The University provides a [Gen Ed Planner](#) tool to help walk students through the requirements. To fulfill graduation requirements, all students must complete a total of 40 credit hours of OU general education courses distributed among the following Core Areas:

- Symbolic and Oral Communication (3-6 courses, 9-22 hours)
 - English Composition (2 courses, 6 hours)
 - Foreign Language (2 courses, 6-10 hours)
 - Mathematics (1 course, 3 hours)
- Natural Science (2 courses, 7-8 hours)
- Social Science (2 courses, 6 hours)
- Humanities (4 courses, 12 hours)
 - Understanding Artistic Forms (1 course, 3 hours)
 - Western Civilization and Culture (2 courses, 6 hours)
 - Non-Western Culture (1 course, 3 hours)
- Senior Capstone Experience (1 course, 3 hours)

At least one course used to satisfy the general education requirements (in addition to the Senior Capstone Experience) must be at the upper division level and outside of the student's major. The Senior Capstone is taught by senior faculty who help these upper level students understand their post-graduation options, whether that's identifying good job options or continuing on to graduate-level education. OU recently completed a major overhaul of our [signature introductory history](#) and political science courses, as well as significant improvements to entry-level math courses. Courses approved to meet general education requirements are reviewed on a regular basis and may be dropped from the roster if they no longer meet the standards.

Part of maintaining the quality of courses approved for OU's general education curriculum is making sure assessment of student learning is documented. As stated in [Section 4.25](#) of the Norman Campus Faculty Handbook each course syllabus should reflect defined goals of the courses, as well as how those goals are to be realized in the context of the teaching and learning process. To address this requirement, faculty should articulate the knowledge, skills, and competencies they expect students to be able to demonstrate upon completion of the course. Course syllabi should also indicate which methods faculty will use to assess student learning outcomes. Actual means of assessment may vary by type of course, instructor teaching the course, and discipline, and assessments used may vary in terms of whether they are direct, indirect, formative, summative, qualitative, and/or quantitative.

All degree programs at OU reflect, in their documentation of annual assessment activities, ways in which students are actively involved in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information, as well

as mastery of modes of inquiry and/or creative works, and developing skills adaptable to changing environments. Each degree program has research-related [student learning outcomes](#) that faculty address using a variety of learning activities and authentic direct and, where necessary, indirect assessments to determine the extent to which students are engaged in gathering, analyzing and communicating information. For example, in the [2015-2016 Assessment Report for B.S. in Health and Exercise Science](#), department faculty expect graduates of the program to demonstrate an ability to think, read and write critically. To address this outcome, students in the Senior Capstone Course were required to review relevant literature and identify a relevant research topic, write testable hypotheses and design research methodology, collect data, analyze and interpret their research findings, and present findings in written and oral forms. Faculty then evaluated student performance using a rubric. Results of this assessment process showed that all the 113 students enrolled in the course “Met” or “Exceeded” expectations, validating the program’s current structure and content.

Findings from the University’s participation in the [2016 National Survey of Student Engagement Report](#) show our students have a high level of engagement in these core skill areas. Students were asked to rate how much their experience at OU contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development in specific areas including *thinking critically*, *writing effectively*, *analyzing numerical/statistical information*, etc. [Findings show](#) OU seniors agreed with faculty assessments, selecting “very much” and “quite a bit” in thinking critically/analytically (86%), working effectively with others (73%), and writing clearly/effectively (71%).

OU is committed to fostering diversity and promoting inclusivity for all students, faculty and staff. With a culturally diverse student body representing all 50 states, over 50 tribal affiliations, and over 100 foreign countries, OU’s [Diversity Enrichment Programs](#) has been very successful in efforts to make our institution as diverse as possible. All OU colleges have at least one designated faculty and/or staff member to address diversity, community, and inclusion initiatives in their area. The University of Oklahoma believes diversity in both people (e.g., students, faculty) and curricula is essential to building a campus climate that fully welcomes and engages all community members. This can be seen in our comprehensive general education requirements that include not only two semesters of a foreign language but also a non-western civilizations course. The University has a strong [African & African American Studies](#) department and will offer a [Latinx Studies](#) major starting in Fall 2017. OU elevated the [Native American Studies](#) program to a full department in 2015 to better support its intensive studies in tribal governance, indigenous arts, and native languages. OU’s teacher education program assures that teacher candidates understand diversity and its impact on human development and learning. More information on diversity initiatives at OU can be found in Section 1.C.

The University also has a comprehensive study abroad program, with a variety of options intended to broaden students’ understanding of the world around them. One-third of OU students study abroad during their undergraduate career, and 20% of those students participate in our signature international program in Arezzo, Italy. OU currently offers study abroad programs in 79 countries and over 223 cities on six continents. Students from 120 countries are enrolled at one of the University’s Oklahoma campuses. Our students’ exposure to international experiences, combined with [diversity and inclusion programs](#) at the college level, provide a sense of professional identity and camaraderie to students within their degree programs.

The University of Oklahoma is in the Carnegie Classification’s “[highest research activity](#)” group. The status recognizes the University’s support of faculty and students’ active contributions to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge. Research, creative endeavors, and teaching at all levels blend together, creating knowledge on which the University’s scholarly enterprise rests. The strength of OU’s research programs is critical to its success in this area. Catalyzed by outstanding research initiatives, [from 2007 to 2016 the University increased its total research expenditures from](#)

[\\$251.9 million to \\$289.1 million](#). These gains reflect the high quality of OU's research programs, and our investment in the kind of superior research infrastructure and facilities needed to support the level of creative and innovative work being produced by OU faculty and students.

All OU tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to be actively involved in producing scholarly and creative work in their respective disciplines. Measurement of scholarly output and research contributions has varied by college and department in the past, but on Norman Campus that information is now being captured in the recently-implemented [Faculty Activity System](#) – a database tool being used to record and report metrics about faculty teaching, research, publications, presentations, awards, creative and service activities, and other professional accomplishments. Norman Campus faculty have access to Vice President for Research resources provided to support their research pursuits via a peer-managed Research Council (e.g., [funding opportunities](#), [research facilities](#), [research awards](#)), while OUHSC faculty also have supplemental research [resources and services](#) available at both campus and college levels.

The [Office of Undergraduate Research](#) (OUR) was established a few years ago to coordinate institutional programs providing undergraduate students with opportunities to participate in faculty-mentored research and creative activities. OUR is guided by a [Faculty Council](#), consisting of volunteer faculty members from various colleges and departments, and has developed several [resources](#) intended to boost undergraduate students' research and creative endeavors. Examples include [Graduate Research Guides](#), [Mentored Research Fellowships](#), and the [Curiosity to Creativity Symposium](#). The OUHSC Graduate College hosts four [summer undergraduate research programs](#) aimed at preparing and encouraging undergraduates to pursue careers in biomedical research or health related sciences: [Cancer Undergraduate Research Experience](#), [IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence](#), [Native American Research Centers for Health](#), and [Summer Undergraduate Research Experience](#). The Norman Campus Graduate College provides [workshops and training](#), as well as an annual [Graduate Student Research and Creativity Day](#). Graduate students can also compete for [research awards and recognition](#), including the Pat Tillman Foundation Scholarship, Graduate Fellows, and Provost's Awards, with prizes ranging from recognition certificates to funding for dissertation completion. For [example](#), in 2014-2015, 61 students won the Provost's Certificate of Distinction for Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching, while seven students were awarded the Nancy L. Mergler Dissertation Completion Fellowship – a \$15,000 grant towards dissertation completion.

As reflected above, OU has a wide range of scholarly, creative and innovative work produced by faculty and students from various disciplines in fulfillment of OU's research mission.

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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

The University of Oklahoma has high-caliber faculty contributing to the fulfillment of its teaching mission. Faculty are expected to teach, do research, and contribute service to the University as described in the specified in the Faculty Handbook ([Norman](#), [OUHSC](#)). Faculty are also responsible for developing, implementing, and reviewing curriculum in their respective programs. While all curriculum changes are under the jurisdiction of the faculty for that program, specific processes and procedures are in place in every department, and at the university level, to ensure adherence to proper institutional protocols. For example, most departments have undergraduate, graduate or combined departmental curriculum committees charged with reviewing all curricular proposals (e.g., creation of new courses, proposal to delete a course, etc.) before they are submitted to the [Academic Programs Council](#) (APC), an institutional-level body advising the President, Provost, and Faculty Senate on matters relating to instructional programs and curricula at the Norman Campus. The APC's main responsibility is evaluating the educational value of existing and proposed programs.

OU faculty, individually and collectively, play a central part in defining expectations for student learning in their courses, as well as identifying appropriate and authentic means of ensuring students meet or exceed set learning goals. This faculty-centered process means that each degree program can systematically document the alignment of expectations of student learning in their courses with overarching student learning outcomes articulated for their respective degree programs, state both direct and indirect assessment methods used to address each learning outcome, discuss and report how students have performed and, most importantly, develop a program-level action plan on how they intend to use results of student achievement for continuous improvement.

University faculty also serve on search committees charged with filling both full- and part-time faculty positions. Departmental faculty are also involved in decisions regarding Graduate Assistants (GAs), both Research Assistants (GRAs) and Teaching Assistants (GTAs). This participation is in

line with Faculty Handbook ([Norman, OUHSC](#)) language specifying that faculty members should contribute to the government and leadership of the University through timely participation on committees, councils, or other advisory groups at the department, college, and university level.

[The University of Oklahoma has a total of 3,569 faculty. Of these, 2,848 \(80%\) are full-time while 721 \(20%\) are part-time. Of the full-time faculty, 44% are either tenured or on tenure-track. The most recently calculated student-to-faculty ratio is 17.3 to 1.](#) This ratio demonstrates OU has sufficient numbers of faculty to fulfill the teaching portion of OU's mission. Full-time faculty are hired after a [comprehensive search process](#), during which their educational qualifications and disciplinary interests are evaluated in relation to the department's needs and long-term strategy. Part-time instructional faculty are hired in accordance with Faculty Handbook policies and procedures ([Norman, OUHSC](#)), which require a terminal degree for teaching graduate-level courses and prefer one for undergraduate courses. Instructional faculty who do not meet standard qualifications must possess significant industry/clinical expertise and/or equivalent certification. Each fall the Norman Campus Provost circulates an official memo reminding colleges and departments of faculty qualification requirements; in the spring departments are sent lists of faculty members for whom additional documentation of qualifications is needed. This annual process ensures departments are both aware of faculty qualification policies and their adherence to them is verified.

Every faculty hire at OU is considered in light of overall institutional initiatives. Faculty lines left vacant by retirement or departure are not automatically refilled with a direct replacement but are swept back to the central budget. Each year colleges review their faculty needs, taking into consideration program demand, changes in disciplinary focus in various fields, and long-term strategic plans. They submit new faculty hire proposals to the Provost, then the President, for approval (discussed in more detail in Section 5.C). This process ensures faculty lines are made available in areas most in need of them, and it also allows the University to craft cluster hires in areas of emerging scholarly interest, fostering interdisciplinary work and more closely integrating innovative research into the teaching enterprise. Further, this process allows for a clearer and more uniform search process. The Provost's office has developed valuable [resources](#) for faculty recruitment, such as [Golden Rules for Successful Searches](#), the [OU ADVANCE Report](#), and [Key Best Hiring Practices](#). This more focused and deliberate hiring approach also helps OU work toward our common goal of building a diverse group of faculty and an inclusive work climate.

The legislative and academic [authority](#) of the Norman Campus graduate faculty is vested in the Norman Campus [Graduate Council](#), the governing body for all policies relating to non-health sciences graduate programs offered at Norman Campus and OU-Tulsa. The Dean of the Graduate College serves as the chief officer for graduate studies and presiding officer of the graduate faculty and Graduate Council. The approval process for graduate faculty appointments begins at the departmental level, where appropriate disciplinary criteria, including terminal degrees and evidence of scholarship, are evaluated. Per the graduate faculty [charter](#), each academic unit must elect a Graduate Faculty Committee made up of members of the graduate faculty in that unit. The Graduate Faculty Committee must develop criteria for graduate faculty membership appropriate for the unit, in accordance with eligibility requirements and graduate faculty privileges specified in the Graduate Faculty Charter, and these criteria are published on the Graduate College [website](#). The membership for each [master's](#) and [doctoral](#) committee must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College. There is a corresponding [OUHSC Graduate Council](#) which develops, recommends, and implements policies relating to graduate education in health sciences programs at OUHSC and OU-Tulsa.

The University of Oklahoma is committed to investing in the success of its faculty at all stages of their careers. Under the leadership of the Vice Provost for Faculty Development, the University has in place various processes and programs intended to foster periodic self-assessment at the departmental

level, as well as offer ongoing professional development for all faculty. In accordance with the Faculty Handbook ([Norman, OUHSC](#)) performance evaluations of all salaried faculty – whether temporary or permanent, tenured/tenure-track or renewable term – are conducted annually at the departmental level. Evaluation procedures are subject to approval by the dean and the Provost. Thus, each academic unit determines the nature and level of acceptable scholarly work, evidence of teaching effectiveness, and types of service appropriate and accepted for their discipline. The University maintains a [faculty development website](#) with additional resources for professional development.

In general, this annual process begins with Committee A – a standing committee in each unit comprising the Chair/Director and two of its tenured faculty members – evaluating each faculty member in their academic unit according to the criteria and procedures approved by that unit. Evaluation results are put into a Summary Report of Annual Faculty Evaluation and submitted first to the faculty member for a response (if any), then to the appropriate dean and, finally, to the Senior Vice President and Provost. Annual evaluation of regular faculty also includes evaluation of non-tenured faculty (i.e., [Renewable Term Faculty](#), [Ranked Renewable Faculty](#) and adjunct faculty). Clearly stated in Provost’s memos regarding renewable term faculty and ranked renewable faculty is the requirement that, in addition to an annual evaluation, all faculty in those categories receive a comprehensive and thorough evaluation of their performance during the final year of their multi-year term.

All instructors of Norman Campus courses are evaluated by their students using eEvaluate – a locally administered online course and instructor [evaluation](#) system. [Public Course and Instructor Evaluation Reports](#) are available on the Provost’s Office website. As explained in the Faculty Handbook ([Norman](#)) the course and instructor evaluation process is intended to provide feedback to the instructor on his/her instruction and information to chairs, directors, and Committee A in order to assess the quality of instruction within the academic unit and allow for appropriate recognition of excellent instruction. Instructional evaluation by OUHSC students is also done on a regular basis but is less centralized. For example, the College of Nursing uses their own [CoursEval system](#).

General criteria and guidelines for promotion and tenure at OU are described in the Faculty Handbook ([Norman, OUHSC](#)). Each academic unit and college also has more specific criteria related to the discipline and established practices of that unit. There is a Faculty Development section of the Norman Campus Provost’s Office website providing information about additional [resources related to the Tenure and Promotion process](#). One of these is a half-day [Annual Tenure and Promotion Workshop](#) designed to give tenure-track faculty an overview of the process as well as share strategies for a successful journey toward tenure and promotion. There is also an [Annual Tenure and Promotion Process Meeting for Directors and Committee A](#) members providing similar review and helpful information for those evaluating promotion proposals. In 2016, a total of 75 faculty members attended the Annual Tenure and Promotion Workshop.

As part of promoting retention of tenured faculty, the University has in place policies intended to foster continuing high professional competence and accomplishment among all faculty in their respective disciplines. The Norman Campus [Post Tenure Review](#) policy provides details about the process, timing, and required documentation for regular promotions from assistant to associate, and associate to full professor. These processes are designed to provide faculty with an opportunity to assess their overall performance during the five years after their award of tenure and present plans for the next five-year period. Further, tenured faculty members undergoing review receive valuable feedback from a performance assessment conducted by the academic unit’s Committee A. Each OUHSC college and department sets forth standards for promotion of faculty within that unit. In addition to regular promotions, OU has various faculty awards created to recognize outstanding teaching, research and creative/scholarly activity, and professional and university service and public

outreach. Examples include Regents' Awards and several [Distinguished Professorships](#), such as the [David L. Boren Professorship](#), [Presidential Professorships](#), and Endowed Chairs Professorships. The Faculty Handbook ([Norman, OUHSC](#)) provides details regarding criteria for selection, as well as nomination and selection procedures.

OU also provides multiple opportunities for faculty professional development. On the Norman Campus, the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) (CTE) offers several faculty development activities throughout the year. Services are offered in both one-on-one and group settings. For example, as reflected in their [2016 Impact Report](#), CTE was instrumental in implementing a university-wide migration from the Desire-to-Learn learning management system to Canvas. As a result, 1,269 instructors now use Canvas, 1,890 courses have already been created in the platform, and 21,590 students were enrolled in Canvas courses in Spring 2016. CTE also oversees organization of the annual two-day [New Faculty Orientation](#) providing critical information, resources, and support to new faculty for their teaching, research and service, as well as an annual 12-week [New Faculty Seminar Series](#) designed to promote ongoing conversations, interactions and networking between new faculty and the campus community. CTE supports other University initiatives, such as fostering technology use in active learning classrooms, overseeing faculty learning communities, and promoting [Digital Learning](#).

OUHSC's [Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Faculty Development](#) provides resources and information for faculty career development as well as tools for teaching and learning. Every year, OUHSC holds a [New Faculty Orientation](#) workshop that assists with professional networking, introduces the senior leadership team, fosters interaction with other faculty and staff, and provides information and resources as new faculty begin their careers at OU. Other valuable faculty resources at OUHSC include: [Education Grand Rounds](#), designed to offer faculty information about tools, innovations, and strategies for teaching and learner assessment; and [Resources for Faculty](#), featuring valuable information on academic career planning, Award Dossier Tips, and Teaching Resources.

Evaluation and development are in place for graduate assistants as well. According to the Norman Campus [Graduate Assistant Handbook](#) and the [OUHSC Graduate College Bulletin](#), evaluation of Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) performance is done at the academic unit level by the chair/director or their designate. The evaluation process may include periodic observation of a GTA's teaching followed by a discussion of observation findings. OU also offers professional development opportunities for graduate students in their roles as graduate instructors or teaching assistants. These include [Development for International Teaching Assistants](#), to help international teaching assistants become more successful in their first encounters in OU classrooms; [Graduate Teaching Academy](#), which promotes and maintains a standard of teaching excellence amongst graduate students; and the [Graduate Teaching Fellowship](#) for graduate students interested in pursuing careers in higher education.

Beyond evaluating performance of individual faculty members, OU has a regular process designed to thoroughly review each of our degree programs, called the Academic Program Review (APR), discussed in more detail in Section 4.A. Mandated by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education, it is conducted on a regular schedule that rotates through all programs in turn. Besides offering opportunities for a systematic analysis of the objectives and performance of academic units, APR calls for critical assessment of teaching effectiveness. In light of this, Section V(b) of the [APR Self-Study Instructions](#) seeks information on the appropriateness of faculty credentials in fulfilling their teaching roles, evidence of excellence in teaching (such as teaching awards), strategies for promoting innovation in teaching to improve student learning, and department level criteria for evaluating faculty teaching. In addition to the institutional APR process, faculty in programs with

specialized accreditation (e.g., Social Work, Medicine, Business, Engineering, etc.) are subject to review and assessment by those accrediting bodies relative to their qualifications to teach in their respective disciplines. Accreditation reports as well as institutional reports of these programs provide details of any issues pertaining to faculty qualifications. In sum, the University has in place numerous policies, processes and procedures, as well as resources that help assure that faculty are staying current in their disciplines.

Pursuant to the [Faculty Handbook](#), instructional faculty are required to include office hours on their course syllabi to ensure they are available to students for individual academic support. The policy articulates the value of faculty being available to students for, among other things, academic advising and conducting research or scholarly activity.

OU has several faculty mentoring programs at the department, college, and university levels intended to provide students at all levels with personalized nurturing and professional development as they pursue their education. For example, undergraduate capstone research experiences involve faculty mentoring as a key course element. Faculty teaching in graduate programs provide student mentoring in support of students' advancement in research, conference presentations, and publications. At the institutional level, the [President's Distinguished Faculty Mentoring Program](#) provides students with opportunities to build relationships with faculty, increase their personal network, and gain valuable life experience. As reflected in the program's [Faculty Mentoring Course Brochure](#), in Fall 2016 a total of 12 faculty members participated in mentoring students from various disciplines.

OUHSC faculty mentor students at various points throughout their studies. For example, the College of Medicine's [Gene Team Summer Scholars Program](#) recruits students across all disciplines specifically for the purpose of broadening their knowledge of and experience with academic and biomedical research. By bringing students and faculty mentors together from the widest possible range of research specialties, the program promotes the development of inter-disciplinary research collaborations. Seven graduate departments and programs at OUHSC have also created a first-year interdisciplinary curriculum to prepare students for career choices in the biomedical sciences. Students enrolled in the [Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences](#) can participate in eight-week long lab rotations with faculty mentors. The interdisciplinary nature of this program combines the expertise of over 120 participating faculty and provides students with a breadth of knowledge and technical acumen that is highly sought in today's competitive job market.

In order to make sure OU's policies and procedures about faculty accessibility are effective, OU conducts an annual Student Satisfaction Survey that contains questions designed to measure students' perception of performance in this area. [Results of the 2016 survey](#) indicate that 78% of students reported being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the availability of faculty during office hours. OU also participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every three years, and [2016 NSSE results](#) indicate both first-year and senior students have sufficient opportunities to visit with faculty members outside of class. More than simple course-related queries, the NSSE results also found many students reported taking advantage of faculty mentoring and research programs, with over a third reporting they have talked about career plans with a faculty member and about a quarter indicating they have worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework. In conclusion, there is a strong evidence of faculty accessibility to students outside of class visible across all three OU Campuses.

All staff members charged with providing student support services at OU, such as financial aid counseling, academic advising, and co-curricular activities are required to possess relevant degrees, certifications, and/or experience appropriate to their positions. Minimum qualifications are determined by the employing department in consultation with the [Office of Human Resources](#) and are

outlined in job descriptions for each position. Applications for all full-time positions, as well as for selected part-time positions, are completed online. [Recruitment and hiring processes](#) are outlined on the Human Resources website, which provides a step-by-step process intended to ensure a well-qualified and diverse applicant pool for each position. HR works closely with departmental search committees to complete the selection and hiring process in compliance with the law and University policy.

As noted in the Faculty and Staff Handbooks, all full-time, part-time, and temporary employees must complete several [training modules](#), depending on their job descriptions. While some mandatory training courses, such as Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Awareness Training are required of all students and employees, others, such as FERPA Training and HIPPA Training, are only required for employees whose normal work requires specialized training. Human Resources offers [professional development workshops](#) year-round to all regular employees (e.g., Effective Communication, Travel Policies & Procedures, etc.). Training opportunities are also available at division and department levels. For example, the Veteran Support Alliance established the OU Green Zone, a network of faculty and staff who volunteer to assist students who have served our country as well as Faculty/Staff [Green Zone Training](#) for volunteers interested in better understanding and serving veterans on our campus. In addition to resources provided by OU, many support staff actively participate in state, regional, and national conferences of their respective professional organizations. Participating in these conferences allows support staff to build their professional skills and learn about best practices.

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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

The University of Oklahoma offers a wide range of support services and resources that help students make connections, get involved, and feel a sense of belonging at OU. These programs, available on all campuses, contribute significantly to students' overall success both during their time at OU and as they transition to the next phase in their lives. To provide first-year students with a centralized, one-stop resource, several administrative units that provide support services to students – including the [University College](#), the [Writing Center](#), [Project Threshold](#), and the [Graduation Office](#) – are physically co-located. OU has found these [extra support services contribute directly to retention and graduation rates](#).

The University College offers several free academic assistance programs designed to help students make a successful transition to the University, thereby building a solid foundation for academic success. These [services](#) include: [Advising and Enrollment](#), the Student Learning Center, the [Assessment Center](#), and the Center for Student Advancement.

The Norman Campus Writing Center offers help with all types of writing projects, at any stage in the writing process. The Center uses consultants from various disciplines to assist students with brainstorming ideas for dissertations, putting final touches on short response papers, or working on creative projects. In 2016-2017, the Center recorded 4,249 consultation sessions with 1,774 students, and it arranged for 65 class visits and workshops in various academic departments. [Schusterman Library](#) also provides writing services to students at OU-Tulsa, including one-on-one consultations, assignment clarification and research preparation, and answers to APA and MLA style questions. The OUHSC [Writing Center](#) offers similar assistance to students at that campus, including help with topic selection, strategies for successful research, proper citation use, grammar correctness, and draft revision.

Project Threshold, established at OU in 1970, is one of seven TRIO programs federally funded by the U.S. Department of Education to provide personalized academic support services to individuals who may face barriers to academic success in their college careers. Specifically, the program serves first generation students, economically disadvantaged students, and/or students with documented disabilities. While the grant specifies that up to 300 students can be identified for assistance per award

year, OU has aided 1,125 students through the past three years on the Norman Campus.

OU's offers services and resources, including the [Disability Resource Center](#), to students with disabilities, of types including physical, psychological, learning, medical, and vision. As of Spring 2017, the total number of registered students with disabilities was 1,070 across all three campuses. To accommodate these students' needs, resource staff meet with students to make sure appropriate resources such as tutoring, mentoring, transportation/parking services, scholarships, and counseling are available as needed. [Norman Resource for Students](#) provides a complete list of services for students at Norman Campus, [HSC Resources for Students](#) provides a similar list/information for students at OUHSC, and [Tulsa Resources for Students](#) reflects resources available for all students at OU-Tulsa.

The OU Graduation Office helps students graduate sooner through a variety of initiatives aimed at increasing student success and retention. A key initiative, known as the [Compass Network](#), helps undergraduate students overcome personal challenges to their success at OU. The program provides students with one-on-one consultations with Graduation Office staff, creating an action plan to address any issues that may impede their success, such as choosing a major, improving GPA, overcoming or dealing with homesickness, addressing financial concerns, and planning for graduation.

OU seeks to continuously enhance student success through [Student Affairs services](#) distributed across all three campuses. These include Career Services, Fitness and Recreation, Student Media, Health Services, Gender and Equality Center, Housing and Food Services, Leadership and Volunteerism, Saferide, Student Life, and Student Conduct. These services are intended to help develop student skills, cultivate diverse, campus life experiences, and enrich the University community. OUHSC provides an [A to Z Student Guide](#) to their student support resources, and OU-Tulsa has a comprehensive listing on their [website](#). Student Affairs has a strong commitment to continuous improvement of its student services and has a robust assessment program designed to carefully examine programs as they relate to the overall mission of the division. [Annual reports](#) provide comprehensive assessment results for each service offered by Student Affairs departments, and include information about each unit's mission statement, program outcomes, assessment measures, summary of activities and related findings, and intended use of results for continuous improvement.

In order to make sure our student services are sufficient and effective, OU conducts an annual Student Satisfaction Survey containing questions designed to measure students' perception of performance in this area. [Results of the 2016 survey](#) show the percentage of students who reported having used the service that were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with each service:

- Academic advising (64%)
- IT support (61%)
- Financial aid (49%)
- Course registration (68%)
- Library services (80%)
- Career services (58%)

The University of Oklahoma's commitment to providing the best educational experience to all students is evident not only in services provided to existing students, but also in the array of programs helping acclimate incoming students to the university environment. OU's [admission process](#) values an applicant's whole experience and is structured to include evaluation of student's excellence in academics, the arts, athletics, leadership, service, citizenship, and character.

After admission, all incoming students undergo a comprehensive enrollment and orientation in University College's [New Sooner Enrollment Program](#). This program, designed for all fall-entry new freshmen, has current OU students guide small groups of incoming students and their parents through a half-day campus visit. Prior to enrollment, all incoming students must complete [entry-level assessments](#) of their academic preparation in Reading, English, and Math, at which point they are placed in appropriate levels of coursework. New undergraduate transfer students also go through an entry-level assessment process. These assessments were developed to ensure all incoming students are placed into appropriate course levels. During this campus visit, new students also meet with academic advisors to discuss potential majors, select their fall schedule, and learn about campus services. The expected outcome of the New Sooner Enrollment Program is for students to leave campus with an appropriate class schedule, a sense of what they can look forward to in the fall, and feeling comfortable at OU.

During their first year, students experiencing difficulty choosing a major can meet with qualified [Major Exploration Coaches](#) who help them find a major to match their interests, strengths, and career goals. OU also organizes a [Majors/Minors Fair](#), providing students with an opportunity to meet representatives from every academic program at the University. With over 150 different degree options to choose from, this is a great resource for students looking for more information about majors and minors that might suit them. In addition, the University College offers several [seminars](#) and [courses](#) designed to help new students make a successful transition to higher education and build a solid foundation for further academic success, including "Gateway to College Learning," and "Faculty Mentoring." Students needing additional help with math courses can turn to the [Math Center](#) for individual attention.

New student support services are available on all three campuses. Learning support and preparatory processes for students in various health programs at OUHSC and OU-Tulsa are provided by individual colleges. For example, the College of Nursing has a specialized [orientation](#) for all of its new students. Similarly, the orientation process for all new College of Allied Health students are coordinated by their [Office of Academic and Student Services](#).

The Norman Campus [Graduate College](#) hosts a [Graduate Student Welcome Week](#) as part of orientation for all incoming graduate students. Events include an all-day Tour and Orientation Day, during which students familiarize themselves with important study resources such as the Bizzell Library and attend sessions designed to orient them to systems like Canvas, OU's learning management system. At other times of the year, graduate students participate in [Professional Ethics Training](#) and [Graduate Students Research and Creativity Day](#). These Graduate College events are supplemented by Center for Teaching Excellence events mentioned in more detail in Section 3.C.

Academic Advising's [mission](#) is to "educate and empower students as they design, develop and implement individual academic plans leading to intellectual and personal growth for success as citizens of the global community." Advising is great example of OU's commitment to continuous improvement. Significant investments have been made over the past few years in improving the quality of academic advising across the University. Recent enhancements include:

- Developing an inclusive academic advising community: [Provost Advisory Committee on Academic Advising](#) (PACAA), referred to as "All-PACAA." This group will review existing policies and procedural implications, provide important campus updates and deadlines, and discuss presentations from campus representatives on programs that impact student success.
- Expanding advising services to include coaching. The University invested \$90,000 in support for 20 members of the advising community to complete ICF-accredited Academic Life Coach training. Those coaches-in-training are currently completing remaining requirements for

certification, including 100 hours of documented coaching sessions.

- Creating an on-campus professional development workshop series, sponsored and coordinated by the Academic Advising Resource Center, to explore the unique needs of potentially vulnerable student populations including Native American Students, Transfer Students, Underprepared Students, Students with Mental Health Challenges, International Students, and LGBTQ Students.
- Prioritizing active participation in the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Six teams from OU successfully submitted proposals to the 2017 NACADA Regional Conference; one team won Best of Region, the highest evaluated session at the conference. The Advising Fee Committee funded travel for 80 advisors to attend state, regional, and national conferences, at a cost of approximately \$50,000.

General academic advising for first-year students is provided by University College, with the [Honors College's OU Scholars Program](#) providing specialized advising to OU Scholars, National Merit, National Award, and Conoco Phillips Scholars. Students who have completed fewer than 24 credit hours are advised by University College. Students ready to transition to a degree-granting college must meet that college's GPA and other entry requirements. An advising [flowchart](#) illustrates the full process of academic advising, from admission to graduation. Once students are admitted to a degree program, they work with the advising staff for their college or department. An Academic Advising [website](#) provides information about [each college's advising process](#), as well as details about advising for transfer students, international students, and pre-professional students. OU developed an online advising system named iAdvise, through which students schedule advising appointments. iAdvise also provides access to [Degree Requirements Checksheets](#) and [Degree Navigator](#), both of which help students track degree requirements and current status in their chosen program.

Neither OUHSC nor OU-Tulsa has new freshmen, so they have separate systems set up for advising in their degree programs. OUHSC hosts an [Advisors' Symposium](#), an annual, one-day conference that provides advisors from institutions across the state with current information about OUHSC academic programs. This event allows all OUHSC programs to present information about admissions, applications, cost and curriculum in a uniform, consistent manner. Once students have been admitted to an OUHSC degree program, their academic advising process is handled by their program college. For example, the advising process at the College of Medicine includes [Peer Assisted Learning](#), a faculty-guided tutoring program for pre-clinical students that provides support in addition to typical contact with course directors.

The University of Oklahoma strives to be an innovator in using technology to link constituents to its mission and values. As part of this effort, OU created the [One University Digital Initiative](#) and, within this initiative, the [Janux Open Courses](#) system. One University promotes a high-quality educational experience by combining pertinent University information into one central location, linking students to a larger community of their peers on campus, providing them resources such as open-source textbooks, and allowing users to create new connections that leverage existing software and technology to more easily share information with a wider audience. This platform both communicates the University's vision, goals, and institutional priorities to students and allows OU to tailor messages to the various stages of a student's educational experience. For example, the [OU Bound](#) mobile application is specifically designed to orient newly-accepted students to the University, providing them with a checklist of required activities that is linked to offices and staff that can assist with them.

The Janux Open Courses system provides service to state and society both by promoting OU's service offerings via partnership with an innovative state company and by providing open courses with a global reach. The Janux system helps fulfill the University's mission while also being a powerful tool for expanding its message of service to new groups of constituents.

As also discussed in Section 3.C, OU provides many resources to support faculty and students in the teaching and learning process. For example, the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) (CTE), through Faculty and Graduate Students Communities, provides cross-disciplinary opportunities to connect, communicate, and collaborate on innovative teaching strategies and technology integration. CTE's Textbook Alternative Initiative supports faculty efforts toward adopting, converting, or creating digital educational content to replace high-cost textbooks and course supplements, leading to an average annual textbook cost savings of \$500 per student. The [Digital Learning Initiative](#) helps faculty integrate digital technologies into courses and programs. Other [services](#) include one-on-one consultations regarding Course Design, Academic Technology, [Instructional Videos](#), and [Instructional Technology](#). The Office of Academic Assessment (OAA) offers many services to faculty, including course and program [assessment workshops](#). OAA also hosts an annual [Assessment Forum](#), an institution-wide conference bringing together faculty and graduate assistants from across all OU campuses.

In Fall 2015, the Norman Campus Vice President for Research established a [Faculty Leadership Academy](#) as a means for investing in faculty professional development and assisting them in identifying, enhancing, creating, and continually applying leadership in many contexts including research, teaching, service, and their personal lives. The OUHSC [Faculty Development](#) program provides many resources for career development and improving teaching and learning. In addition to resources mentioned in Section 3.C, OUHSC's Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Faculty Development offers several teaching and learning [programs and workshops](#). For example, the [Educators for Excellence](#) workshop fosters fellowship, dialogue and discovery about what it takes to promote and sustain faculty and staff dedicated to achieving excellence in teaching and learning. Faculty also have access to [External Resources](#) and [Teaching Resources](#) sites, both of which offer excellent consolidated information on teaching and learning.

The University of Oklahoma has three main libraries, one on each campus, plus several smaller, affiliate libraries. As the largest research library in the state of Oklahoma, Norman Campus's [Bizzell Memorial Library](#) contains more than 6 million volumes, 1.3 million e-books, 3.6 million microform materials and 116,000 serials subscriptions. Its collections include some of the most important early manuscripts in the history of science currently held in U.S. libraries, such as Galileo's personal copy of his work supporting the Copernican theory, with corrections in his own handwriting. Materials not owned by OU Libraries can be requested through [interlibrary loan](#) from other institutions around the world. The library also offers a service, called [Sooner Xpress](#), which delivers requested research materials (including interlibrary loans) to Norman Campus users at a branch library, home, or office. The Bizzell Memorial Library ranks 32 out of 114 academic research libraries in North America for volumes held. It has almost 300 employees, including 20 library faculty, and 48 professional staff. The Bizzell Library has well-developed [research guides](#) and tutorials, with a [professional librarian](#) assigned to each discipline/subject to provide instruction on finding, evaluating, and using information sources. While some library instruction is provided upon request, librarians also [offer](#) drop-in workshops on research tools, methods, and strategies and are available for one-on-one consultations.

Over the past few years, the Dean of University Libraries conducted a thorough [review](#) of student and faculty needs, then used that information to guide significant changes to the physical environment of the Bizzell Library. Based on student feedback and national best practices, the building's layout of has been transformed. The fifth floor of the library has changed from an underutilized space to a state-of-the-art gallery area used to highlight OU's special collections. A lower level of the library contains the recently opened [Peggy V. Helmerich Collaborative Learning Center](#), featuring a collaborative classroom as well as individual and group study areas, a seminar space, a Community Room, a Digital

Scholarship Lab, and group meeting and research areas. Another level of the library is currently being renovated to provide a work and collaboration area reserved for faculty and graduate student use. The Dean of University Libraries is constantly seeking new opportunities to maximize use of library facilities, gathering feedback from students and faculty about what services are most needed and monitoring what types of spaces are most utilized.

OUHSC's [Robert M. Bird Health Sciences Library](#) contains the largest collection of health resources in the state of Oklahoma, both print and electronic. The library holds 314,026 volumes, 272,711 monograph titles, 164 Databases and 73 Reference Consultations and is staffed by nine faculty and 32 staff and students. OU-Tulsa's [Schusterman Library](#) serves students, staff, and faculty of Tulsa-based programs from both the Norman Campus and OUHSC. The library includes a digital exhibit space, an information commons with 24 computer workstations, comfortable seating, two student group study rooms, reference assistance, and writing center services. The library has more than 19,000 books and audiovisuals and current subscriptions to about 300 print journals. It also coordinates with the other campuses to provide access to thousands of electronic journals, e-books, databases, and images. OU-Tulsa also has the [Morningcrest Health Library](#), which serves medical students, faculty, patients, families, and members of the public visiting the Schusterman Center Clinic. The [Donald E. Pray Law Library](#) at the OU Law Center supports instructional and legal activities of the Law Center's faculty and students, as well as the public. This research library contains more than 360,000 print volumes and more than 25 databases including those from Westlaw, LexisNexis, Bloomberg BNA, HeinOnline, and Commerce Clearinghouse (CCH).

The University's Norman Campus has [over 560,000 square feet](#) dedicated to a wide array of research facilities across all disciplines, ranging from laboratories and field stations to studios, computer labs, and high-end data analytics centers. Though departments and colleges configure and maintain most laboratory facilities, there are also Core Facilities partially supported by central resources that are administered by the VPR. Norman Campus facilities include the [Electron Microprobe Laboratory](#), [Samuel Roberts Noble Electron Microscopy Laboratory](#), [Kessler Atmospheric and Ecological Field Station](#), [Stephenson Research and Technology Center](#), and the [Radar Innovations Lab](#). There are also several college-specific scientific laboratories. For example, the [Gallogly College of Engineering Labs](#) offer state-of-the-art research facilities for all students and faculty of the Gallogly College of Engineering. Each college at OUHSC has excellent research laboratories for its discipline area. For example, the College of Medicine's Laboratories offer training and instrumentation for medical students, faculty, and medical researchers. The [Stanton L. Young Biomedical Research Center](#) is available to faculty for NIH-funded oncology research. OU-Tulsa also provides [resources for research](#) conducted on that campus. Most recently, the Norman and OUHSC campuses have created a Consolidated Core Facility to reduce duplication and leverage shared assets to promote collaboration.

The [University Research Campus](#), a 277-acre tract of land adjacent to the southern end of the Norman campus, brings together state and federal government organizations, University academic and research programs, and private companies for mutual synergy. With more than one million square feet developed in only a decade, the Research Campus is now home to more than 2,200 tenants including more than 450 private sector employees across 13 companies, more than 300 federal government employees, and nine buildings anchored by the National Weather Center and OU's School of Meteorology. The Research Campus now includes a 25,000 square foot Innovation Hub that is a transformative maker space open to students, faculty, staff, and the general public. The [University Research Park](#) (URP) located in Oklahoma City near the OUHSC campus, has more than 700,000 square feet of space supporting biomedical research and houses several private companies based on OU research, such as [Moleculera](#) and [Selexys](#). The URP is located next door to the new [GE Global Research Center](#) and is at the core of the emerging [Oklahoma City Innovation District](#).

OU's fine arts programs are located on the Norman Campus, where there are excellent performance facilities for drama, music, theatre, and fine arts programs. For example, the [Donald W. Reynolds Performing Arts Center](#) utilizes the latest technical equipment with the ambiance of a turn-of-the-century European concert hall and provides 20,000 square feet of space to the OU School of Dance, while the [A. Max Weitzenhoffer Theatre](#) offers an intimate, state-of-the-art 235-seat flexible theatre-in-the-round setting for drama, opera, and musical main-stage productions. Drama Studio venues include the [E. Frank Gilson Lab Theatre](#), a 73-seat proscenium theatre with an off-Broadway feel, and the [Studio Theatre](#), a 50-seat, intimate and flexible blackbox theatre used for student-directed and Lab productions. The School of Music, a fully-accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music, provides excellent facilities for students and faculty. These include the [Catlett Music Center](#), home to the University of Oklahoma's School of Music; Symphony Orchestra; the Pride of Oklahoma marching band; and many faculty and student ensembles. Catlett also contains studios, rehearsal suites, classrooms, MIDI labs, the Grant Fine Arts Library, a recording studio, and [three performance halls](#) – the Paul F. Sharp Concert Hall, the Morris R. Pitman Recital Hall, and the Grayce B. Kerr Gothic Hall.

OUHSC's advantageous location in Oklahoma City, as well as the community-focused health programs at OU-Tulsa, provides our students and faculty with plentiful clinical practice and field opportunities in government, business, and non-profit organizations. The OUHSC [Health Centers](#) have clinics corresponding with degree programs in the colleges. The largest of these is [OU Physicians](#); with 650 doctors and 300 advanced practice professionals it is the state's largest multi-specialty physician group with practice areas encompassing almost every specialty. OUHSC has a close affiliation with OU Medical System for advanced clinical training facilities for medical students, residents, physician associates, nurses, speech pathologists, and many others. The [College of Dentistry](#) has one of the top clinical training programs in the country, with an expanding faculty practice, newly integrated comprehensive dental clinics for students, and a full range of specialties. OU-Tulsa's [Schusterman Center Clinic](#) also serves students and faculty in health programs, and the [Wayman Tisdale Health Center](#), a 50,000-square-foot clinic in Tulsa, brings primary care and specialty medicine to those with limited access.

The College of Law [Legal Clinic](#) offers an outlet through which OU Law students and faculty can serve the community, including specialized [Advocacy Clinics](#) in the areas of Child Abuse and International Human Rights. The rigorous nature of clinical experience provides students with unique opportunities to develop advocacy skills, and offers them hands-on practice in factual investigation, research and writing, problem-solving, client relations, and professional responsibility. Most students gain valuable experience assisting needy members of the community. Law students' pro bono volunteering has almost tripled in the last three years to more than 14,000 hours in 2016.

OU's information technology infrastructure is designed to support teaching and learning at all three campuses, and it undergoes continuous upgrades to remain current, secure, reliable, and relevant. Campus IT infrastructure includes: academic support to around 150 centrally-scheduled [classrooms](#) with updated, standardized, and user-friendly technology; almost 1,000 PC and Mac workstations, scanners, and printers spread among 40+ [computer labs](#); traditional and wireless [printing areas](#); and [digital resources](#) such as Canvas, MyMedia, and Lynda. OU's technology infrastructure and support also works to promote university-wide research initiatives, contributing significantly to success in the teaching and learning process. For example, the [OU Supercomputing Center for Education & Research](#), a division of OU IT, helps students, faculty, and staff learn to use advanced computing in science and engineering research and education. To date, this resource is utilized by over 750 students, staff, and faculty in 22 departments across the University. The most active users are students, from all levels. There are also users at 24 institutions across Oklahoma plus over 150 collaborating users across the U.S. and worldwide. [Research IT](#) has facilitated over \$186M

in total external funding; OU IT's Cyberinfrastructure has enabled over 700 publications.

Originally founded in 1899, the [Sam Noble Museum of Natural History](#) is a research division of the University of Oklahoma. Housing more than ten million objects/specimens in twelve collections, curators conduct fieldwork and independent research at sites across the United States as well as around the world. Each curator has a professorial position in a corresponding academic department and teaches classes in addition to their research and curatorial duties. Students also participate in laboratory research and field studies associated with museum collections and research programs. The museum is home to both the world's largest and smallest *Apatosaurus* skeletons; a *Pentaceratops* skeleton, whose 10½-foot skull also is the world's largest; and the oldest work of art ever found in North America, a lightning bolt painted on an extinct bison skull. Curators, students, and research associates collaborate with colleagues at institutions around the world. [Research results](#) are accessible on the museum's website. In 2014, the Sam Noble Museum was awarded the National Medal for Museum and Library Service by the Institute for Museum and Library Services, the nation's highest honor conferred on museums and libraries for service to the community.

The [Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art](#) is one of the finest university art museums in the country. Strengths of the nearly 17,000-object permanent collection include the approximately 3,300-object Eugene B. Adkins Collection, the more than 4,500-object James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection, the Weitzenhoffer Collection of French Impressionism, and substantial collections of 20th century American painting and sculpture, traditional and contemporary Native American art, art of the Southwest, ceramics, photography, contemporary art, Asian art, and graphics from the 16th century to the present. Temporary exhibitions are mounted throughout the year, exploring the art of various periods and cultures. As an academic museum, faculty and students have access to valuable resources as part of instructional initiatives. Currently enrolled OU students can participate and earn credit in the [Museum Internship](#) and/or become [Art Museum Ambassadors](#); both programs are excellent opportunities for students interested in exploring museum careers. Admission to the museum is free, made possible through funding provided by the Athletics Department.

The Graduate College offers a variety of research-related programs for graduate assistants (GAs). Key among them is a "[Professional Ethics Training-Responsible Conduct of Research](#)" workshop which has been required of all GAs since Fall 2010. This program emphasizes University expectations that all students appointed to GA positions will perform their duties to the highest standards of professional ethical conduct. The training provides graduate students with realistic, work-based strategies for identifying and resolving complex ethical dilemmas. OU has been recognized in the Council of Graduate Schools' [best practices report](#) for being a leader in implementing professional integrity training programs. This positive recognition not only enhances the reputation of the University, but also imparts a valuable professional credential and additional value for the students pursuing advanced study at OU. The [Office of Undergraduate Research](#) also provides valuable resources for students pursuing research activities. The OUR's comprehensive [webpage](#) provides an excellent listing of research-related services across the Norman Campus.

Sources

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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

The University of Oklahoma has many co-curriculum programs, created in support of our institutional mission. Students at OU supplement their high-quality classroom experiences with a wide range of co-curricular activities. The University views co-curricular programs as opportunities for students to develop interpersonal and leadership skills, enhance diversity and cultural understanding, and pursue areas of passion outside the classroom. There are over 500 [student](#) organizations across all three campuses, ranging from professional associations to religious, cultural, service, and student government groups. To effectively foster success in all our students' college endeavors, OU established a [Co-Curricular Involvement Policy](#), a set of priorities and expectations for students balancing academic and co-curricular success. [Interprofessional education is a major OUHSC initiative](#).

The [Division of Student Affairs](#) oversees many co-curricular initiatives created to help students develop key skills, have diverse campus life experiences, and participate in the University community. These initiatives contribute significantly to student educational success. Their impact on students' educational experience is evident in [Student Affairs Annual Reports](#), the most recent of which indicates healthy levels of student participation in various co-curricular activities. Almost half of Norman Campus first-year students participated in intramural events in 2015-2016. OU's Faculty in Residence program is popular with both faculty and students. Having a faculty member, along with their family, living and interacting with students on a daily basis provides more natural and frequent opportunities for faculty to find out what issues students have with current programs and concerns they may be dealing with.

The Graduate College's [Graduate Student Life](#) supports OU's community of advanced degree-seeking scholars through academic, social, and professional development programming. Each spring, graduate students have the opportunity to present scholarship at events such as the [Three Minute Thesis](#) competition. Graduate Student Life also collaborates with other campus organizations to assist in students' pursuit of the advanced degree, providing workshops on creating a digital identity, developing a research narrative, and conducting a literature review. Social events, such as the Graduate Student Trivia Night series and [Graduate Student Welcome Week](#), provide opportunities for new and continuing students to engage with the broader community and network with students from other programs. Graduate Student Life regularly offers professional development support, such as workshops with Career Services, etiquette dinners, and complimentary business cards. Future initiatives include a reinvigorated professional development series that will focus on early career-building and on all aspects of the job search, led by seasoned faculty members from a broad array of backgrounds and disciplines.

The University's [Behavioral Intervention Team](#) (BIT) provided training and outreach assistance to 340 OU community members during 2015-2016, connecting students exhibiting signs of distress with support and resources. Students at OUHSC attend a Diversity Inclusion Forum, co-sponsored by OUHSC [Multicultural Student Services](#) and the OU [Physician Associate Program](#). As part of OU's participation in the 2016 [Big Event](#) day of community service more than 5,800 students volunteered at 180 job sites, providing Oklahoma non-profits with over \$145,000 worth of labor. Other notable OUHSC co-curricular activities include the [Bridges to Access](#) program, an [Institute for Healthcare Improvement Chapter](#), and [Leadership HSC](#). At OU-Tulsa, a Diversity Coalition of students, staff, and faculty, established through a collaborative effort between Student Affairs and the Office of University Community, planned and implemented programs designed to promote diversity and inclusion on their campus. In addition, OU-Tulsa was able to secure \$7,000 of federal funding for improvements to their campus [Fitness Center](#).

OU's Writing Center coordinates several [high impact educational practice programs](#), including Service Learning Courses, First Year Seminars and Experiences, Common Intellectual Experiences, the aforementioned Learning Communities and Undergraduate Research, Study Abroad, Writing Across Campus, Collaborative Assignments and Projects, and Internships. The [Institute for the Study of Human Flourishing](#) (ISHF) was recently created "*to advance the science of virtue and to promote the flourishing of OU Students and all Oklahomans.*" The institute focuses on nine key character traits or virtues it sees as crucial not only for academic success and the flourishing of individuals and communities, but also as being a reflection of moral identity and the educational mission of the OU community. These nine virtues fall into three main categories: [Intellectual Virtues](#), [Executive Virtues](#), and [Civic Virtues](#). ISHF challenges students to reflect about virtues through a variety of [new and existing programs](#), including the [Gateway to College Learning](#) course, an annual Welcome Lecture, a Common Read program, a spring break event called [Camp IMPACT](#), and a Course Development Program that works to embed the nine virtues into courses across the curriculum.

Leadership development is an important part of OU's co-curricular efforts and is viewed as an essential student learning outcome of our students' college experience. Co-curriculum programs challenge and inspire students to be responsible citizens and leaders on campus and in their communities. Among the various formal programs supporting this focus on leadership development is the preeminent [President's Leadership Class](#) (PLC). Created in 1961, the PLC was initially created to help keep outstanding Oklahoma high school students in the state for college. 56 years later, it has become one of the most recognized freshman leadership programs in the nation. Out of more than 12,000 applicants each year, just 100 students are hand-selected from each incoming class to be part of this tight-knit community of student leaders. Other leadership programs include: [President's Community Scholars](#), [Jon and Cathryn Withrow College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Scholars](#), [International Leadership Class](#), [National Education for Women](#), [Student Life Emerging Leaders](#), [Leadership and Volunteerism](#), [Leadership Scholars](#), and [Jerry Holmes Engineering Leadership Program for Engineers and Scientists](#).

As already discussed in Section 3.B, the Office of University Community promotes multicultural education across the entire institution, working to ensure retention and success of underrepresented student groups and fostering a supportive, inclusive environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Further, Student Life supports many [programs and services](#) including African American Student Life, Latino Student Life, and Asian American Student Life. [Fraternities and sororities](#) have been part of OU's campus life since the early 1900s and have provided spaces for students to socialize and challenge each other to be better. Participation in Greek life helps students realize academic, professional, and personal goals both in college and after graduation. More than 6,000 students belong to 58 active Greek organizations, approximately 31% of the student body. They contribute to the campus community through educational programs, service and philanthropy projects, and social

activities.

OU's nationally-renowned [intercollegiate athletics](#) program provides an environment that enables student-athletes to achieve their highest academic, athletic, and personal aspirations. As part of our tradition of excellence, OU student-athletes are encouraged to maintain a balance between athletics, academics, and the social aspects of college, and they receive support to help them find that balance. OU achieved a record-high Graduation Success Rate (GSR) of [85% in 2016-2017](#), an improvement from 72% just four years ago, and our GSR exceeds the [Division I national average of 84%](#). OU's student-athletes broke their previous record of 3.07 cumulative GPA in Fall 2016 by earning 3.09 in Spring 2017, extending our streak to 11 consecutive semesters above 3.00. Five teams – women's basketball, women's golf, women's gymnastics, rowing, and women's tennis – were [publicly recognized by the NCAA](#) for earning Academic Progress Rates (APR) in the top 10% nationally, all of which posted a perfect 1000 multiyear (4-year) average. In the last two years, our student-athletes and staff have worked with some 180 different organizations (schools, community organizations, etc.) to complete approximately 9,500 hours of community service. During that time, representatives of the athletics department attended approximately 700 events.

OU is committed to providing a safe and comfortable living environment that enhances the overall learning experience of our students. Per [Housing Policy](#), all single freshman students under 20 years of age must live in a University residence hall for their first academic year. OU has several [academic learning communities](#), providing students with shared academic interests and/or experiences an opportunity to live together, learn together in shared classes, connect with other students and faculty with similar interests, participate in community service projects, and prepare for the future through exclusive activities and events. An important part of the residence hall experience is the opportunity to select a [Special Interest Community](#) (SIC), which promotes community living among students who share similar academic interests. Examples of SICs include the *Scholastic*, for students interested in focusing on academics, and *Global Community*, which puts international students and American students into roommate pairs. All students are encouraged to participate in [first-year learning communities](#), [honors courses](#), and [faculty mentoring programs](#).

Assessment is integral to the development, implementation and continuous improvement of our [co-curricular programming](#) and is discussed in more detail in Section 3.D. In addition to OU-based assessment processes, we turn to external checks and benchmarking to provide additional information about effectiveness of programs. In the [2016 results](#) of OU's participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement, we can see what our first-year and senior students report about their experiences with High Impact Practices (HIP) at OU. Survey [results](#) show the proportion of OU first-year students who either participated in or planned to participate in one HIP was *higher* than the average for our Carnegie Class (46% vs 42%). [Results](#) also show the proportion of OU seniors who either participated in or planned to participate in two or more HIPs was higher compared to seniors in each of the three sets of peers.

Based upon the above information, OU demonstrates that its co-curricular offerings are both appropriate to our institutional mission and successful in positively impacting our students.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

The University of Oklahoma provides high-quality degree programs through the combined and coordinated efforts of academic units across all campuses. The quality of educational programs and goals for student learning are consistent, irrespective of delivery modes or locations.

OU's general education curriculum plays a formative role in every student's undergraduate experience and is designed to ensure that graduating Sooners have the fundamental knowledge, skills, competencies and values they need to flourish as individuals and as citizens. Graduate and professional programs deliver a transformative education reflecting broad intellectual content in which students develop as scholars with many opportunities for experiential learning. The quality of OU's educational programs is constantly monitored via institutional processes at course, program, and university levels.

OU has an outstanding faculty, serving as role models and mentors to their students and with dynamic and world-class scholarly pursuits; they are supported by the University's commitment to ongoing professional development. Student learning across modalities is augmented by both professional and support staff delivering support services focused on student success. OU has made strategic investments in technology enhancement and active learning that enrich the educational environment for our students. Additional co-curricular learning opportunities are available to students through a wide spectrum of programs and services.

Sources

There are no sources.

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

At the University of Oklahoma, Academic Program Review (APR) is viewed as an evaluation process meant to help units assess and improve their teaching, scholarly and creative activity. As also discussed in Section 3.A, every degree program undergoes a formal review approximately once every seven years as mandated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) [Academic Program Review Policy](#). For OUHSC programs, regular reviews are based on procedures outlined in their [Graduate College Program Reviews](#) guidelines and are conducted on a schedule corresponding to the specialty accreditation standards governing each program. These reviews are guided by each college's Curriculum Committee and its related [curriculum change and review policies](#).

For Norman Campus programs, this process follows guidelines and a [timeline](#) set out in [Academic Program Review Instructions for Self-Study Report](#). Each year an APR Committee is appointed by the Provost, comprising regular faculty members from departments not being reviewed that cycle. Departments undergoing review receive a [departmental profile document](#) containing five years of data about enrollment, degrees, credit hours, faculty, etc. This information is used by departmental faculty to make projections related to their program's strategic goals and prepare an extensive [self-study](#)

[report](#). One part of this process added since the last HLC site visit is an [external reviewer report](#). External reviewers visit campus and meet with departmental faculty and staff before providing a written report of their findings to the APR Committee.

Once a department submits its self-study report, it is reviewed by the APR Committee. The committee then submits a set of recommendations to the Provost, taking into consideration input of departmental faculty, external reviewers' reports, and the dean. The Provost provides a [final summary](#) of the review process, addressing strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in a set of recommendations. The department under review develops a plan to address the recommendations that must be put in place before their next review. The APR process is designed as a framework for constant improvement. The result of the entire process is reported to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

OU's [prior learning assessment regulations](#) apply to all campuses and programs and must be in compliance with OSRHE's policy regarding [Credit for Prior Learning](#). OU encourages students to seek prior learning assessment credit for knowledge they may have acquired in a variety of ways. Students enrolled at OU, as well as former students eligible to re-enroll, may take prior learning assessment examinations for undergraduate credit, provided they have not been enrolled in an equivalent course at the college level and received a grade other than W for it. Examples of Prior Learning Assessment Credits accepted at OU include: [Advanced Placement Program](#), [College Level Examination](#), [Departmental Examinations](#), [Excelsior College Examinations](#), [International Baccalaureate](#), [Military Credit](#), and [Non-Collegiate Learning](#). The amount of prior learning assessment credit that may be applied toward a degree is subject to OU graduation requirements and those of the relevant college. Each college's dean determines how this credit may apply toward a degree.

Prior learning assessment credit posted on transcripts from other institutions in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education will transfer to OU, subject to the same conditions as resident credit from these campuses. The neutral grade of satisfactory (S) is assigned to all types of prior learning assessment credit authorized by OSRHE. Should a student fail a prior learning assessment examination, no grade will be recorded. A student also may not receive credit for a repeat of an exam previously failed. More information about other test options can be obtained from Admissions or the [Center for Independent and Distance Learning](#). Prior learning assessment credit posted on transcripts from all other appropriately accredited institutions is accepted by the University as long as the credit was earned through one of the prior learning assessment mechanisms mentioned above.

OU's transfer credit regulations govern the acceptance of credits earned at other universities and colleges. Transfer credit earned by students at institutions accredited by a regional accrediting agency or by OSRHE is accepted for transfer at face value. Transfer credit from other institutions is accepted based on the accreditation information and recommendations listed in the [Transfer Credit Practices \(TCP\) of Selected Educational Institutions](#) section of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers. If an institution is not listed in the TCP, accreditation is checked in the latest [Accredited Institutions of Post-Secondary Education](#) which is published by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the American Council on Education, or the [Higher Education Directory](#) published by the U.S. Department of Education to see if the institution is accredited by a regional or national body. All OUHSC programs are governed by a [transfer credit policy](#) outlined in that campus's Student Handbook, as well any college-specific policies, although not every college accepts transfer students. The College of Dentistry does not, but the College of Medicine's [Admissions Policy for Transfer Applications](#) does allow transfer students to be admitted if they are in good standing at their current program and have successfully completed coursework of either the first year if seeking admission to the second year or have passed Boards Part One if seeking transfer for the third and fourth year.

For those programs subject to more stringent regulations by their specialty accreditor, such as many of the OUHSC health programs, each college evaluates all credit transcripts using a standardized process or service. For example, the College of Medicine transcripts all coursework for the professional program through the [American Medical College Application Service](#), the centralized medical school application processing service used by the Association of American Medical Colleges. Similarly, the College of Dentistry transcripts all coursework for its professional programs through the Associated American Dental Schools Application Service of the American Dental Education Association.

The University awards credit for educational experiences provided by certain business, industrial and governmental agencies in accord with our policy on [Noncollegiate Learning Experiences](#) (see also [OSRHE Policy 3.16](#)). Credit is awarded based on recommendations made in the American Council on Education (ACE) publications “The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs” and “College Credit Recommendations: The Directory of the National Program on Non-Collegiate Sponsored Instruction.” Students may present certificates of completion or a transcript from the ACE Registry of Credit Recommendations to the Office of Admissions for evaluation. All experiential learning opportunities are recorded under existing University-approved course numbers. OU’s Academic Programs Council evaluates these courses just as they do all other courses offered by the University. The grade of S (satisfactory) is assigned to all credit awarded in this manner. The dean of the appropriate college will determine how this credit applies toward the degree.

All prerequisites for a given course are specified when the course is first approved. The appropriateness of each prerequisite is considered by the Academic Programs Council (APC) during the [course request review and approval process](#). All prerequisites are explicitly stated as part of the course description published in the University [course catalog](#) and [class schedules](#), and prerequisites are enforced during the registration process. Any changes in course prerequisites must be reviewed in advance by the APC, which in turn suggests recommended actions to the Provost. Faculty oversee the rigor of courses they teach, articulate expectations for student learning, and are responsible for developing and implementing curriculum for their courses. OU’s dual credit policies are discussed in more detail in Section 3.A.

Many degree programs at OU are accredited by discipline-specific or specialized accrediting organizations. A complete listing of specially-accredited OU degree programs can be found in the [OU Fact Book](#). OU strives to provide an excellent, holistic educational experience to all its students. This is accomplished through both program-specific and institution-wide policies and initiatives designed to evaluate student success and, most importantly, ensure that all who graduate from the University have the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies, as well as values and dispositions, necessary to pursue advanced studies or seek employment in their chosen careers. Discussed next are examples of ongoing institution-wide processes and programs used to evaluate student success.

As part of maintaining program effectiveness, each academic department has processes in place to document assessment of student learning. Norman Campus degree programs submit [annual assessment reports](#) that should enumerate: *learning outcomes, methods for assessing learning outcomes, descriptions of actual results of student achievement for each learning outcome, and an action plan for continuous improvement*. Assessment of student learning in certificate programs is included in the regular program assessment process. [Student learning outcomes](#) for each degree program are published on the Office of Academic Assessment website. All OUHSC programs also have clearly delineated goals and outcomes for student learning. Assessment of student learning in those programs is conducted in accordance with prescribed learning outcomes and [required standards set by applicable accrediting bodies](#).

While some OU degree programs require Licensure or Certification Examinations prior to graduation, others emphasize the importance of ensuring that licenses are obtained prior to seeking employment opportunities. For example, prior to graduation undergraduate students in the College of Education's Teacher Education programs must [pass the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Exam](#), required to obtain an Oklahoma State Teaching License. The College of Nursing requires its graduating students pass the National Council Licensure Exam. Graduates from the College of Pharmacy must pass the North American Pharmacist Licensure Exam, and it displays markers of success from these test results as a [PharmD Program Quality Indicator](#) on its website as a publicly visible marker of student performance.

The Norman Campus [Career Services](#) center has significantly increased its capacity over the past three years, providing services to current students, alumni, faculty, and staff. These include classroom presentations, personalized career planning, mock interviews, on-campus interviews, and career fairs. Career Services also provides access to several online resources: [Optimal Resume](#) (resume writing program), [Going Global](#) (international job search resource), [Focus2](#) (career decision-making resource), and [Interview Stream](#) (virtual interview practice). The Career Center gathers placement data from the largest OU colleges and shares that information in [annual reports](#). Reports provide information about participation rates in events and services as well as any data gathered about first post-graduation plans and full-time job offers. OU is currently developing a centralized database for non-health-related graduate programs to track employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation in fellowships, internships, special programs. The Norman Campus Graduate College, in conjunction with the College of Arts and Sciences, is also conducting an analysis of current employment for master's and PhD students who graduated within the last five to ten years.

Sources

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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

OU performs assessment of student learning at the institutional, course, and program levels, measuring achievement of both institutional and discipline-specific goals defined at and for each level. Institutional-level assessment includes evaluation of the general education program. Faculty use a variety of assessments to determine students' acquisition of knowledge, and abilities/skills. Actual means of assessment vary by, among other things, type of course, instructor teaching the course, and discipline. In addition, assessments vary in terms of whether they are direct or indirect, formative or summative, qualitative or quantitative. The express goal of assessment of student learning at OU is continuous improvement. Therefore, activities and initiatives related to assessment of student learning are intended to result in findings that can be used for continuous improvement at all levels.

Institution-level assessment is conducted through several bodies, each responsible for examining a specific area requiring regular quality review. This would include groups such as the [Provost's Advisory Committee on General Education Oversight](#) (covered in more depth in section 3.B), examination of overall student satisfaction with University services (covered in more depth below), entry-level assessment (covered in more depth in section 3.D), and assessment of co-curricular activities (covered in more depth in section 3.E).

The Office of Academic Assessment administers the [OU Student Satisfaction Survey](#) to all enrolled students each Spring. The 20 question, five-point Likert scale survey was developed in Fall 2014 to measure five key areas of student experience: Academics, Campus Life, Advising, Services, and General/Other. OUHSC has a similar annual [student survey](#). OAA also administers the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) to first-year and senior students every three years. Institutional findings from both surveys are forwarded to the Provost, disseminated to all colleges, and provided to selected administrative units such as Student Affairs, Academic Advising, and Admissions and Recruitment.

Other institutional surveys administered by OU administration include the [Compass Survey](#), administered annually by the Graduation Office to all incoming freshmen, and the [New Student Survey](#), administered annually by the University College to assess new freshmen student backgrounds and attitudes. Results of the Compass Survey are used to identify students who might need help acclimating to college life. The New Student Survey is administered to all incoming freshmen, and results are used to create a profile of the class and track trends in the freshman class profiles over time. These profiles are provided to those on campus who may find the information helpful, including

instructors of freshman classes (e.g., Freshman Composition). The University College's [Assessment Center](#) also uses findings from the New Student Survey to make sure personnel duties are aligned with student need. For example, in April 2010 the Assessment Center started offering [Major/Career Exploration](#) consultations for students. Student usage rates and feedback from academic advisors is also used to assess the effectiveness of these programs.

Course-level assessment is performed by faculty, who are responsible for developing and implementing assessment of student learning in the courses they teach, with the expectation that they will define the goals of each course as well as strategies for realization of those goals. Documentation of overarching course goals and/or course-level student learning outcomes that describe knowledge and skills/abilities students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of each course is evident in most [course syllabi](#) submitted for general education approval and/or shared with the Office of Academic Assessment (OAA) during individual consultations with faculty. In addition, course syllabi reflect a variety of learning activities as well as *direct measures – intended* to provide observable evidence of the students' level of learning (e.g., homework, quizzes, case study analysis) – and *indirect measures – intended* to seek student perceptions regarding their learning experiences (e.g., course evaluations, student surveys, exit interviews).

Faculty, whether individually or in teams, are actively involved in making curricular adjustments in their courses based on evidence of student achievement. For example, faculty review of student performance in ECE 3723, a core course in the Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) program, led to changes both in the course description and assignments that were aimed at enhancing student performance in technical writing and report organization. Further, faculty in ECE have partnered with the Writing Center to provide out-of-class writing sessions to help students improve their written communication skills.

Program level assessment has undergone significant changes since our last HLC review. Since Fall 2014, OU has been shifting the emphasis from conducting assessment for compliance purposes to designing assessments intended primarily for continuous improvement of student learning and programmatic improvements. At the same time the University must address [state mandates](#), accreditation criteria of the Higher Learning Commission, and discipline-specific assessment standards from specialty accrediting agencies. Improved institutional processes for program level assessment were particularly vital for those academic programs without specialty accreditors, such as English, History, Sociology and Anthropology. Goals and specific learning outcomes for specially accredited programs such as Engineering, Education, Business Administration, and Social Work, as well as professional health programs such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing and Dentistry, are prescribed by those accrediting agencies.

All OUHSC programs have clearly delineated goals and outcomes for student learning. These goals and associated outcomes are defined by the various accreditation bodies whose standards must be met by each discipline as a condition of continuing its professional program. Because goals for student learning must rapidly evolve to keep up with contemporary practice expectations for all health professional disciplines, each accreditation body also specifies the need for effective assessment of student learning as an important standard for accreditation. For example, the College of Medicine has well-developed [goals](#) for student learning across the curriculum as specified by the Liaison Committee for Medical Education. Dentistry also has clearly defined [competencies for the professional program](#) as defined by the Commission on Dental Accreditation as well as a diverse set of assessment tools to measure student achievement of curriculum and co-curricular outcomes, including board examination scores, senior surveys, competency self-assessments by students, clinical competency examinations, and dental chart audits. Core learning outcomes for the College of Pharmacy professional program are adopted from outcomes of the [Center for the Advancement of](#)

[Pharmacy Education](#) and the standards of the [Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education](#) and are coupled to a detailed assessment map of these outcomes.

Key among the newest program assessment initiatives is implementation of a four-step [Program Assessment Process](#) for degree programs, as well as the development of a [program assessment template](#) designed to gather annual program assessment information based on the components of the assessment process. As part of this initiative, all degree programs must now submit annual assessment reports that reflect: articulated student learning outcomes, appropriate direct and indirect assessment methods, description of actual student performance in aggregate, and documentation that assessment results are used for continuous improvement. Student learning outcomes for all levels of degree programs are published on the Office of Academic Assessment website.

To make the assessment process easier for less-experienced departments to understand, the OAA developed a [color-coded program assessment report review rubric](#) to provide specific, detailed feedback regarding the quality of their annual assessment reports. [Analysis by the Office of Academic Assessment](#) shows steady progress in each part of the process. The latest analysis shows that student learning outcomes in 91% of assessment reports *met or exceeded expectations*, 86% of reports identified appropriate direct assessment methods, and 79% reported actual student performance information. We are, of course, working toward achieving 100% in each of these areas. Beginning Fall 2017, all assessment reports will be submitted via TracDat, an online software that will serve as a repository for all program assessment reports. To improve awareness of assessment initiatives, the Provost Advisory Council for Learning Outcomes Assessment (PACLOA) was formed, with membership consisting of faculty and academic administrators. This group serves as an advisory body for the Office of Academic Assessment.

Below are specific examples of how individual colleges are using program assessment results for improvement in their departments:

- **College of Architecture:** Reviewing samples from the undergraduate Interior Design program's Sophomore Portfolio lead the department to take corrective measures to improve the content and delivery method of courses students take just prior to the Sophomore Portfolio review – including identifying how Pre-Design and Programming Skills are being incorporated into the Design II, Design III and Design and Human Factors Studios.
- **College of Journalism & Mass Communication:** Faculty in the Journalism and Mass Communication doctoral program have determined that Comprehensive Exit Exam results will be shared with all faculty in the college to encourage comparative discussions about college programs with the goal of reinforcing current course objectives.
- **College of Business:** To boost students' ability to complete original research in their primary area of study, as well as improve presentation skills when defending their research in a public forum, faculty in the College of Business doctoral program developed an innovative series entitled "Intro to Academe" that is now required of all new doctoral students. The goal is to ensure the students understand the expectations of the program "beyond the classroom."
- **College of Medicine:** Faculty changed delivery of care to a comprehensive patient-centered care model, delivered in practices by seniors supervised by Group Practice Directors. As a result, students are getting more clinical experiences and care is delivered to patients in a more efficient and comprehensive manner. Surveys of students and patients show positive feelings about the changes.

- **College of Dentistry:** Faculty conducted an in-depth review of their professional program, resulting in the implementation of the [Legacy Project in 2011](#). This project included modification of the academic calendar, curricular revision and re-organization, incorporation of electronic health records and digital radiography into student practice, adoption of clinic management and tracking software, development and implementation of a comprehensive care model for clinical care, and renovation of facilities to support improved student learning.

As discussed in more detail in Section 3.E, OU's Division of Student Affairs has a robust co-curricular [assessment program](#) designed to ensure continuous improvement of services and programs that relate, directly or indirectly, to student learning. For example, Student Affairs administered Project Co-Curricular Experiences Outcomes Survey (Project CEO Survey) to all Norman Campus students in 2016, and has used the results of that survey to communicate how co-curricular experiences have impact students' skills such as communication and leadership. The results are currently being used to enhance student employee training. Further, assessment has been used for change such as Career Services' increased sharing of outcomes information with other staff members to maintain cohesive student career advisement, while Fitness and Recreation added Wellness Coaching and Nutritional Consultation programs, enhancing opportunities for health and wellness improvements. The Gender and Equality Center plans to improve LGBTQ Ally Training, and OU Health Services will expand tobacco cessation referrals.

As part of OU's increased focus on and investment in assessment of institutional programs and services, we prioritize seeking out best practices identified by research and in national discussions and put them into practice on all campuses. Office of Academic Assessment staff frequently present on OU's assessment-related research projects at conferences, as well as leading and participating in assessment workshops at the Higher Learning Commission annual meeting. They also regularly attend and contribute to national and international assessment conferences, including the [Assessment Institute](#) and the Association for Institutional Research. Since 2014, Academic Assessment staff have presented a total of 20 assessment sessions (including two workshops) at HLC, AIR, and Assessment Institute. Examples of how these best practices have been put into place at OU include:

- [Assessment Workshops](#): Conducted every semester by the Office of Academic Assessment, these workshops cover each step of the assessment process in more depth.
- [OU Assessment Forum](#): This annual conference provides University faculty with an opportunity to engage in deep conversations and share best practices regarding assessment of student learning. The event allows faculty to discuss challenges they face in effectively measuring and improving student learning, as well as providing possible ways to address those challenges. Assessment Forums have been held every year since 2014. Faculty participation has been good, typically about 75-90 people each year. 86% of participants in the 2015 Assessment Forum reported they were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the Keynote presentation. In 2016, 90% reported that they were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the overall experience. The Office of Academic Assessment plans to propose a biannual Assessment Forum that would discuss both degree program assessment and assessment of the general education curriculum.
- **Assessment Report Feedback:** A simple, [color-coded rubric](#), based upon each component of the four-step assessment process, is used to provide constructive feedback to faculty regarding the quality of annual program assessment reports. 97% of Assessment Liaisons have reported that this feedback has been very helpful in providing clarification regarding what constitutes a good program assessment report. Having completed rubrics also enhances documentation of the assessment process.

- **Assessment Management System:** *To* streamline and systematize documentation of assessment activities, OU recently purchased [Nuventive's Improve](#) (formerly known as TracDat), a software that functions as the official repository of all annual program assessment reports. The software has been configured to reflect OU's four-step program assessment process: Plan, Assess, Analyze, and Adjust. The [TracDat Training Manual](#), developed by Office of Academic Assessment staff, contains practical information on how to use the system. In addition, 18 hands-on TracDat workshops were conducted in Spring 2017. 95% of Assessment Liaisons attended TracDat Training workshops, and most of them have begun using the system to submit their 2016-2017 program assessment reports. 88% of those who attended TracDat training sessions reported they were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the overall experience, and 100% believe the software will significantly enhance program assessment reporting.
- [Provost Advisory Committee for Learning Outcomes Assessment](#) (PACLOA): This group was formed three years ago to provide institutional oversight of assessment at the University. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Academic Assessment and comprises 12 faculty and administrative staff members. For the first two years, members held monthly meetings during Spring and Fall semesters. In Spring 2016, the Committee was instrumental in developing OU's [Policy of Academic Assessment of Student Learning](#). PACLOA also played a key role in discussions regarding findings of the 2015 and 2016 OU Student Satisfaction Survey and coordinating annual Assessment Forums in 2015 and 2016. PACLOA is currently being reconfigured into two groups: Institutional Effectiveness and College Representatives.
- [Office of Medical Education](#): This department in OU's College of Medicine is nationally recognized for their work to promote and advance medical education through effective and innovative educational programs, quality improvement, and educational research.

College of Dentistry: This college regularly gathers input from faculty, staff, students, alumni, and patients in an organized outcomes assessment program as indicated in the College of Dentistry Outcomes Assessment Process report (Goals [1](#) and [2](#)).

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- Program-Assessment-Template
- TracDat-Training-Manual

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

The University of Oklahoma has a long tradition of promoting and investing in institutional initiatives aimed at student success. These include a [variety of programs focused on student retention](#), educational attainment, academic achievement, student advancement, and holistic development.

In 2014 OU's leadership set two goals for undergraduate retention, graduation and persistence:

- Improve first-year retention to 92%. At the time this goal was set, the most recent cohort, 2014, had a one-year retention rate of 86.2%. The average for cohorts 2005 to 2010 had been 83.7%. While this goal seemed daunting, University leadership was fully committed to dedicating a range of resources – including significant amounts of staff time – to meeting it. [These efforts resulted in an impressive increase to 90.4% for the 2015 cohort, an all-time high for OU's freshman-to-sophomore retention](#). Retention tracking and efforts continue for the Fall 2016 cohort (presently enrolled at 91.6% for Fall 2017), and this initiative has expanded to include increased tracking and individual-outreach efforts past freshman year as well.
- Increase six-year graduation rate to 72%. [OU's six-year graduation rate for the 2010 cohort was 67.5%. This is higher than the average rate of 66.9% over the 2005 to 2010 cohorts](#), but OU is not satisfied with this performance given the quality of our student body. This increased graduation rate goal makes sure that our efforts on behalf of first- and second-year retention do not result in neglecting the progress of upperclassmen toward graduation. OU is committed to improving success for all our students.

None of the programs at OUHSC admit freshmen, but students who progress from the Norman Campus to OUHSC programs are included in overall retention and graduation rates. All programs at OUHSC have defined goals for student retention, and, in the case of professional programs accredited by agencies specific to the discipline, the ideal is that all students admitted to a professional program complete it. OU recognizes that life circumstances and other stressors may modify this ideal, however. The College of Dentistry seeks to graduate 90% of those admitted within four years and has [achieved this goal](#) in each of the past four years. The College of Medicine seeks 100% completion of

its MD program, and [current data](#) indicates their four-year graduation rate is 90%, as compared with a national four-year graduate rate of 82%; their overall graduation rate is 97%, the same as the national average eight-year graduation rate.

As part of the University's commitment to improvement, several key administrative positions responsible for different aspects of student success were either refilled or created over the past few years, including: a Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives (2014), an Associate Provost for Academic Advising (2015), and an Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Planning (2016). At OU, the collection, analysis, and reporting of information regarding student retention, persistence, and completion is further shared by several interrelated groups, including:

- [President's Graduation and Retention Task Force](#): Created by President Boren after the 2001 HLC site visit, this group works to increase student success and persistence at OU. The group comprises interested individuals from across campus and is charged with identifying impediments to student learning and success and implementing policy changes, programs, and initiatives to increase student learning and success.
- Weekly Retention Action Group: Uses up-to-the-minute fall-to-fall retention rates and other data analytics to identify students at risk. Once identified, interdepartmental teams conduct coordinated call campaigns seeking to contact non-returning students and help them overcome immediate obstacles to re-enrollment and provide information intended to ease the re-enrollment process once the student is ready.
- Elite Retention (ER) Squad: A group of over 100 faculty members who regularly teach large entry-level courses work together on instructional strategies to improve retention.
- [Compass Network](#): This initiative helps students overcome personal challenges to their success at OU. Students are either referred by instructors or staff, or they are identified as being potentially vulnerable based on analyses of risk factors. Experts work one-on-one with students to create an action plan to address issues impacting their success, such as academic performance problems, homesickness, or financial concerns.
- University College Dean's Retention Research Team: This team consists of faculty and graduate and undergraduate quantitative psychology research assistants, a data analyst, and the Dean of University College. The team conducts high-level data analytics to identify factors affecting retention. Analyses are used to inform admissions and retention-programming decisions, and are regularly presented at the annual National Symposium for Student Retention.

OU has many resources dedicated to improving student persistence. The [Sooner Success Program](#) provides regular coaching and mentoring to conditionally admitted students, while the *Graduate Sooner Call Campaign* takes place immediately after enrollment periods open and helps students find resources to handle current balances and financial holds. Other programs include:

- A special retention committee that reviews admission applications and matches at-risk admitted students with resources to help them succeed.
- Improved freshman advising and coach-oriented Advising Plus.
- The [EDIFAR](#) (Early Detection and Intervention for Financially At-Risk Students) program, administered by Student Financial Services and designed to identify and outreach to students at risk of financial problems. Representatives identify additional sources of support and create financial plans for the students.
- The [Center for Student Advancement](#) contacts students with midterm grades of Cs or lower to help them connect with offices that can assist them with whatever problems they may be dealing with that have contributed to poor academic performance.
- Academic advisors and other student connection points now have access to midterm grade reports and can now reach out to students facing early academic struggles.

All OUHSC programs collect data about student progression, and some specialty accrediting agencies require professional programs to make these data available for public view, especially to potential students. For example, the College of Pharmacy [publishes](#) its on-time, four-year graduation rates, NAPLEX national licensure exam pass rates for first attempts, MJPE jurisprudence first time pass rates, and the results of internally developed and administered examinations.

OU has a renewed focus on making sure to close the loop on various areas impacting student retention. One example is the recent change to [Math Assessment](#); ALEKS, a web-based, artificial-intelligence assessment and learning system, is now used to help place students in the appropriate level of math. ALEKS is designed to quickly and accurately determine incoming students' math knowledge. OU's Mathematics Department also developed the [Sooner Math Program](#), created in partnership with a local community college to better serve students entering without sufficient preparation for college-level math. Another example of increased monitoring of student progress was a [midterm grade outreach](#) pilot conducted in Fall 2015. This program was intended to provide first-year students with a better sense of their academic performance during the first semester. As part of the pilot, the Provost required midterm grade reporting for all entry-level classes; prior to the pilot, entry of midterm grades was entirely up to the discretion of individual faculty. Results from the pilot showed entry of midterm grades increased from 25% in 2013 to 73% in 2015, resulting in 1,683 student contacts logged, 428 referrals to campus services, and congratulation emails sent to 3000+ students with A/B mid-terms during the Fall 2015 semester. The midterm grade pilot led to a permanent requirement that all faculty teaching entry-level courses report midterm grades. Other policy changes also implemented as a result of student-retention analyses include: fine-tuning of holistic admission, adoption of holistic advising, and moving late-semester outreach and interventions up to mid-semester.

All OUHSC programs use data to identify improvements needed in curriculum delivery and assessment facilitating student performance and progression. For example, the College of Dentistry tracks several competency assessments and documents programmatic changes identified as needed for improvement whenever benchmarks are not achieved as reflected in College of Dentistry Outcomes Assessment Process ([1&2](#)). The College of Medicine uses a similar process on its Medical Education Committee within the Office of Medical Education. Another example of an OUHSC program collecting and using data to improve its programs is the College of Allied Health's Academic Program Council, which evaluates all its programs and uses relevant data to stimulate changes in teaching and assessment. All OUHSC programs refer students to either the Disability Resources Center or OUHSC Student Counseling Services when academic performance may be compromised by a learning disability or emotional and social stressors.

OU's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. Official data on student retention and graduation is produced by the Office of Institutional Research & Reporting (IRR). IRR follows federal and state guidelines and methodologies, as well as following national discussions of the topic. OU has developed internal guidelines for identifying specific student populations (e.g., [new freshmen](#), undergraduate transfers) and provides information to administrative units about larger populations, as well as [college- and department-specific information](#) to individual academic units. [Analyses](#) include retention/graduation by major, by students' academic characteristics at entry, by demographic groups, as well as many other subgroups defined during broader analyses. IRR also provides qualified research groups within OU with sets of official data they may use to conduct specialty analyses, as designated by the Provost.

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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 Oklahoma strives to continuously promote student success by providing the best possible educational experiences to all students. Institutional mechanisms to accomplish this include periodic Academic Program Review, documentation of program assessment activities reflecting use of assessment results for programmatic improvement, and maintenance of specialized accreditation – all designed to provide support for high quality educational programs, learning environments, and support services.

OU is committed to continuous improvement in student retention, persistence, and completion through a variety of initiatives designed to boost students' academic achievement, advancement, and holistic development, and it regularly monitors student retention and graduation rates to guide future actions.

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

The University of Oklahoma has three campuses, governed by the OU Board of Regents (OU Regents). OU's Norman Campus is located on some 3,500 acres in Norman, Oklahoma. It has approximately 27,300 students enrolled in 16 colleges. [Financial and administrative management of the Norman Campus](#) resides with the Executive Vice President and Vice President of Administration and Finance, who reports to the President and OU Regents. The Norman Campus Chief Financial Officer reports directly to the Vice President for Administration and Finance. From FY 2006 to FY 2016 on the Norman Campus:

- The operating [budget](#) grew over 44% to \$915 million;
- [Cash balances](#) grew 138% to \$396 million;
- Full-time [faculty](#) grew over 28% to 1,575 and full-time [staff](#) grew nearly 7% to 4,093;
- [Annual credit hour production](#) grew 4.5% to 694,130;
- Net [assignable square feet](#) dedicated to instruction and research increased nearly 27% to 1,238,682 and over 31% to 984,824, respectively; and
- [Net capital assets](#) have increased 112% to \$1.6 billion, including a 464% in gross capitalized software/IT infrastructure to \$64 million.

Funding instructional, research, public service, and academic support are fiscal priorities at OU. From [FY2006](#) to [FY2016](#), OU's spending on instruction and academic support increased by 49% (over \$106 million). In [FY2016](#) alone, expenditures on instruction, research, public service, and academic support combined represented 51.3% (over \$473 million) of all Norman Campus expenditures. In the [most recent credit profile](#) released by Standard & Poor's Rating Services (S&P) in August 2015, the Norman Campus earned an investment grade rating of A+. The report highlighted S&P's:

- “Continued belief that OU’s enterprise profile remains very strong.”
- “View of OU’s sound governance by the Board of Regents, a strong management team with good stability, generally stable student demand, and an adequate financial profile.”
- Identification of a “strong and diverse revenue stream...while financial performance is positive on a full-accrual basis for each of the past two years and on a cash basis for a much longer time frame.”
- Consideration of “strong philanthropic support, with slightly more than \$155 million raised on an average annual basis for each of the past five years.”

The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) is located in Oklahoma City and is the state’s major educational resource for training physicians, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, public health specialists, and a wide range of allied health professionals. OUHSC has approximately 3,500 students enrolled in seven colleges. The [financial and administrative management of OUHSC](#) resides with the Vice President of Administration and Finance, who reports to the OUHSC Senior Vice President, the President and the OU Regents. The OUHSC Chief Financial Officer reports directly to the Vice President for Administration and Finance. From FY 2006 to FY 2016, OUHSC’s:

- [Operating budget](#) grew 72% to over \$1.0 billion;
- [Cash balances](#) grew over 203% to \$599 million;
- Full-time [faculty](#) grew over 35% to 1,257 and full-time [staff](#) grew nearly 29% to 3,830;
- [Annual credit hour production](#) grew 3.6% to 112,378;
- [Net assignable square feet](#) dedicated to instruction increased over 6% to 479,034; and
- [Net capital assets](#) have increased 130% to \$581 billion.

In [FY 2016](#), excluding clinical operations, 79.5% of all OUHSC expenditures were made in instructional, research, public service, and academic support areas, representing more than \$373 million. In the [most recent credit profile](#) released by Standard & Poor’s Rating Services in July 2015, OUHSC earned an investment grade rating of AA-. The report highlighted S&P’s:

- “View that OUHSC’s enterprise and financial profiles are strong and very strong, respectively.”
- Understanding of “the organization’s strong governance and management-with the senior management team exhibiting good stability.”
- Identification of “good revenue diversity, consistently profitable operations on a full accrual basis and financial resources that are particularly strong relative to the HSC’s relatively low debt and debt burden.”
- View of “slightly rising research awards running counter to the national decline.”

The Schusterman Center (OU-Tulsa) is located in Tulsa and offers both Norman Campus and OUHSC programs. The financial and academic management of Norman-based and HSC-based programs resides with the Senior Vice President and Provost’s office in Norman and at HSC, respectively. The [financial and administrative management](#) of OU-Tulsa, including Central Services, resides with the OU-Tulsa President, who reports to the OU President and OU Regents. The Associate Vice President of Finance and Administration reports directly to the OU-Tulsa President. OU-Tulsa’s budget and finances, faculty and staff counts, credit hours, and square footage are included in the Norman Campus and OUHSC counts above, as appropriate to their “home” campus, as OU-Tulsa campus houses both Norman Campus and OUHSC operations. OU-Tulsa was created as a budgetary agency by the Legislature in 2004. The OU-Tulsa agency budget includes Norman-based academic programs and central operational services including Information Technology, Operations, Human Resources, and the Schusterman Center Library. OUHSC-based academic programs remain part of the OUHSC budget.

OU continues to demonstrate its commitment to maintaining a high-quality learning environment by continually investing in faculty as student enrollment has continued to grow. The combined OU student-to-faculty ratio for all campuses has decreased from 17.5 in Fall 2008 to [17.3 in Fall 2016](#), despite enrollment growing by 4% over the same period. It should also be noted that the percentage of full-time instructional faculty across all campuses with terminal degrees increased from 82.7% to [84.7%](#) during that time.

External support is an important source of funding for higher education institutions in today's economy. The University of Oklahoma Foundation (OU Foundation), a public foundation organized to receive and administer gifts for the benefit of OU, serves as the primary means for donors to provide financial support to the University. The OU Foundation is governed by an independent Board of Directors. As of June 30, 2016, net assets of the OU Foundation were \$1.39 billion, a nearly 87% increase from the fiscal year ending [June 30, 2010](#). For FY 2016, the OU Foundation expended on behalf of OU over \$105 million for facilities and equipment, salary supplements, general education assistance, faculty awards, and scholarships. While substantive, it should be noted OU Foundation support represented only 5.6% of the total operating and non-operating revenue for all of OU in FY 2016.

OU's Information Technology (OU IT) department is led by the Chief Information Officer and University Vice President for [Information Technology](#), who reports directly to the President and coordinates with all campuses to ensure a common strategic planning process for information technology across the university. OU IT develops and maintains over 150 centrally-scheduled classrooms by providing the latest technology and upgrades to ensure an effective teaching environment, supports over 40 computer labs, and provides other digital resources to students, faculty, and staff that directly support the academic mission of the University. Investments in support of OU's IT infrastructure include:

- New main portal for student services (one.ou.edu), a new mobile-friendly and personalized platform that guides students through critical university processes. The new portal incorporated direct student feedback and was developed in partnership with students and frontline staff.
- Implementation of [OU IT's Net2020 plan](#), which examines both the current network and emerging technologies – including relevant technologies emerging from its Research Computing Arm – and will inform creation of a feasible investment plan for OU's Network of the Future, with the goal to have one of the best campus networks in the country by 2020.
- Over the last five years, OU IT has made several foundational investments in platforms to help faculty and students in the classroom, including Qualtrics (research survey tool), MyMedia (campus video hosting), Lynda.com (online training), and [Canvas](#) (learning management system).
- Significant upgrades in 2016 to OU's fiber backbone to support access in key buildings and replace decades-old cable.
- Successful migration in 2015 to [Office365](#), which provided increased mobility and innovation tools for students, faculty, and staff.
- Release of an OU mobile application as part of a move toward providing students responsive mobile access to enterprise applications they use every day.
- High-speed WIFI at all three campuses and regular refreshes of IT support systems.
- Implementation of the fastest [high-speed supercomputer](#) in Oklahoma, which is made available at no cost to faculty, staff, students, and other academic institutions in the state.
- Annual Technology Expo, an event offering workshops ranging from next generation learning to new classroom technologies.

OU's Academic Affairs uses a hybrid budget model that helps ensure funds are allocated in a way that supports the University's educational mission, balancing incremental and production-driven funding methods. As part of the incremental budget process, colleges receive a portion of their budget as an annual allocation of Education and General (E&G) funding, representing the receipt of state appropriations and tuition revenue. These funds are adjusted incrementally for changes in appropriations and tuition revenue. As part of the production-driven budget process, colleges receive a portion of their budget through college-level fees and shared tuition/ instructional support that varies based on credit hour production. A balanced use of these two funding sources allows colleges to more adequately adjust to funding fluctuations and student trends. For example, increases in enrollment will result in an allocation of more revenue under the *production-driven* budget component, and reductions in state appropriations will be diminished in overall impact compared to a traditional, fully incremental model.

The Senior Vice President and Provosts on the Norman and OUHSC campuses, along with the Vice Presidents and Deans, follow a set of historic principles for budgeting: consideration of a unit's entire budget and revenue sources when addressing E&G funding reductions; and mission-based prioritization of E&G funds for education, performance measures, sustained quality, and selective growth. These principles are applied via a budgeting process that is comprehensive, structured, transparent, participatory, and strategic. Budget issues are discussed with a variety of constituencies, including the Faculty Senate, the Budget Council, and the Deans Council. OU's focus on administrative and operational efficiencies, coordinated decision-making, and revenue generation allowed us to make smaller cuts to academic programs during the FY 2017 budget process and to shift those reductions to non-core services. For example, the Norman Campus, along with all higher education institutions in the state, received a 16.4% (\$21.6 million) appropriation reduction in FY 2017. However, in implementing the FY 2017 budget, and considering the principles discussed above, the Norman Campus academic colleges only received a 1.12% (\$1.56 million) reduction in their E&G budget. These funding decreases were largely offset by small fee adjustments in the production-driven budgets of most colleges.

The Budget Office maintains an operating budget [timetable](#) outlining the University's budget process. The President works closely with each campus's financial and administrative team and the OU Regents in all aspects of financial administration, including annual review and [approval of the budget](#) and long range physical planning, including approval of the [All Campus Master Plan](#). At the direction of the Executive Vice President and Vice President for Administration and Finance, Architectural and Engineering Services is responsible for organizing, periodically evaluating, and updating the All Campus Master Plan, which prioritizes capital improvement projects across OU.

Tuition and mandatory fee rates are discussed annually by the President, the Executive Vice President and Vice President for Administration and Finance, the Senior Vice President and Provosts of each campus, and the Chief Financial Officers of each campus in relation to expected appropriations from the state, overall enrollment and retention, and changes to fixed and variable costs. Once proposed rates are set, the President holds a town hall, open to students and employees, to explain the reasoning behind any changes and to address any concerns raised by attendees. Any change to tuition and/or mandatory fees must be approved by the OU Regents at their [June meeting](#). If approved, new tuition and mandatory fees are presented in June for final approval by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE).

Each academic year, the Provost's Offices of the Norman Campus and OUHSC distribute a "[Academic Service Fee – Call for Proposals](#)" that provides the timeline for non-mandatory fee proposals, the approval process, and guidelines for submitting budget-to-actual and pro forma fee expense reports. Proposed changes to these fees are submitted for approval at the OU Regents [January](#)

[meeting](#). If approved, changes to non-mandatory fees are presented to the OSRHE for final approval in June of each year.

Auxiliary units, such as Athletics, Housing and Food Services, Health Services, Fitness and Recreation, and Real Estate Operations, are defined in [Section 4.8](#) of the OU Regents' Policy Manual as business-type activities that charge fees to recover the cost of the goods or services provided. As such, they are designed to be self-sufficient (i.e., no E&G funding is provided) and are monitored in accordance with said policy by the Vice Presidents for Administrative Affairs. Norman Campus was one of 13 universities in FY 2016 that did not [subsidize](#) their Athletics Department. In fact, OU's Athletics Department [contributed \\$5.3 million back to the University](#) through cash transfers and other subsidies, some of which was used to support free admission at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, as well as other general operations of the University.

OU's organizational structure was created to help us efficiently serve students and faculty in a variety of disciplines across three campuses. A challenge of supporting three physical campuses is effectively allocating resources in aid of strategic planning that can be adjusted to respond to opportunities and challenges in a timely manner. As demonstrated by our organizational structure, OU's fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructures are realistic to achieve its mission.

OU's Human Resources department serves all campuses, and it is charged with providing resources to hiring departments to ensure only appropriately qualified candidates are hired. Their Recruitment and Hiring [website](#) provides step-by-step guidance on topics such as creating a clear, detailed job description for each position, how to adequately screen job candidates, and how to conduct a successful interview.

In accordance with OU's [staff learning and development policy](#), Human Resources' Learning & Organizational Development office provides many services designed to help employees improve their individual and organizational performance. Learning & Development has [online registration for classes](#) about University systems (e.g., travel, hiring, purchasing), professional skills (e.g., Microsoft Office, personnel management, financial statement reconciliation), and other relevant topics (e.g., Affordable Care Act, federal overtime rule changes). Learning & Development also provides [resources](#) to supervisors to help them develop a strong workforce committed to the University's mission. Learning & Development recently established a [Leadership Council](#) on each campus that engages 20 participants per year in an eight-month program of workshops and events allowing them to enhance their leadership skills, connect with leaders across campus, and broaden their understanding of the University's operations.

In accordance with [Section 3.19](#) of the Staff Handbook, each staff member is required to receive an annual performance evaluation from their supervisor. These evaluations provide a regular opportunity for supervisors to coach employees on professional development, to address any performance problems, and to help them develop additional knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for job advancement. Human Resources provides supervisors with information on [best practices](#) in performance evaluations via regular training sessions and resources on their website.

In accordance with [Section 3.5.2](#) of the Regents' Policy Manual, OU's Internal Audit Department develops an annual Audit Plan and submits it to the OU Regents. Internal Audit reports directly to the OU Regents to ensure independent audits of management. The detailed Audit Plan for FY 2017 was discussed with the Finance and Audit Committee, included 41 departmental, functional, and information technology audits, and was [approved by the OU Regents in June 2016](#). Completed audit reports are submitted by Internal Audit to the Finance and Audit Committee and include management's response and a remediation plan, if needed. Remediation plans are examined by

Internal Audit to verify identified deficiencies have been adequately addressed.

OU uses the PeopleSoft Budget System, which requires separate coding at the department, function, and fund level; this ensures that funds are properly segregated and any proposed transfer between departments must be approved by the appropriate Dean/Director, Provost/Vice President, and the Budget Office. Each month, in accordance with [Financial Services' policy](#), all departments must perform a [reconciliation](#) of their financial balances. Monthly revenue and expense reports are available within PeopleSoft, allowing departments to reconcile and monitor transactions and provide department directors with a timely and accurate picture of their departments' finances. Additional financial reports are issued by Financial Services on a monthly basis to provide a high-level snapshot of each department and its performance relative to budget. Monthly reconciliation reports, signed and dated by the preparer and approver, must be retained for examination by Internal Audit.

Each quarter the Norman Campus and OUHSC present a [Quarterly Financial Analysis](#) and a [Quarterly Report of Purchases](#) to the OU Regents, for their review. The [Quarterly Financial Analysis](#) highlights key financial metrics and trends designed to identify unusual or unexpected variances relative to prior year for the same period and budget item. The [Quarterly Report of Purchases](#) lists all purchase obligations between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000, and all purchases greater than \$1,000,000 require OU Regents' approval. OU has a purchasing policy, codified as [Section 4.11](#) of the Regents' Policy Manual, designed to ensure proper approval by the appropriate director, vice president/dean, president, and OU Regents, as appropriate. The University's purchasing system, Crimson Corner, contains electronic approval controls designed to ensure compliance with the purchasing policy.

Financial statements of [Norman Campus](#) and [OUHSC](#) are audited every year, most recently by the independent accounting firm Eide Bailly. OU-Tulsa operations and central services are included in the audits of Norman Campus and OUHSC. The most recent annual financial statements audits as of and for the year ending June 30, 2016 were unmodified in opinion. Both campuses were also audited in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Circular A-133. The opinions for those audits from Eide Bailly were unmodified and did not identify any material weaknesses in internal control. The OU Regents' Finance and Audit Committee are responsible for appointing the external, independent accounting firm used for these audits and review the firm appointment via a request for proposal process at least every five years.

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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

All OU Campuses are governed by the OU Board of Regents (OU Regents). The OU Regents comprise seven citizens appointed for a seven year term by the Governor with the advice and consent of the State Senate. The Board meets seven times per year at different locations throughout the campuses with an annual board retreat in June. The OU Regents also serve as the governing body for two separate, public higher education institutions: Cameron University and Rogers State University. The OU Regents have six standing committees that meet as part of each regularly scheduled board meeting: the Finance and Audit Committee, the Norman Campus Committee, the Health Sciences Center Committee, the Athletics Committee, the Cameron University Committee, and the Rogers State University Committee. Division of the standing committees by campus allows the OU Regents to become more familiar with the academic enterprise on each campus. The OU-Tulsa President participates in the Norman Campus Committee and Health Sciences Committee on an as-needed basis.

The [OU Regents' Policy Manual](#) prescribes the responsibilities of the OU Regents as well as its general policies, including administration, academics, general operations (personnel, equal opportunity, retirement, public relations, compliance, and conflict of interest), finance and management, community, athletics, and development. The *Regents' Policy Manual* is reviewed regularly and updated as necessary, with the most recent update occurring in March 2017. Newly-appointed Regents meet with members of the leadership teams at each campus as part of new member orientation to better understand the enterprise and financial structure of each campus. Additionally, in accordance with [Section 1.2.3](#) of the Regents' Policy Manual, each person appointed as a member of the OU Regents is required to attend a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education during the first two years of their term of office; at least two of the hours must be in ethics.

The OU Regents and its standing committees provide effective oversight over OU's financial and academic policies and practices by reviewing and approving:

- Annual budget plan for Norman Campus and OUHSC;
- Tuition and fees;
- Annual Audit Plan from the Chief Audit Executive;
- Plans for the issuance of debt;
- All Campus Master Plan;

- Property acquisitions;
- The creation of any new auxiliary units;
- Appointment of the independent auditor; and
- Substantive academic program changes, including the addition and deletion of programs (non-substantive changes are presented for informational purposes to the Board).

As discussed in more detail in section 5.A, each quarter the Norman Campus and OUHSC present a [Quarterly Financial Analysis](#) and a [Quarterly Report of Purchases](#) to the OU Regents for review. In accordance with Regents' Policy [Section 3.1.1](#), the OU Regents approve all personnel actions for regular faculty at all salary levels and temporary faculty and staff at the full-time equivalent annual salary of \$60,000 or more. As prescribed by Regents' Policy [Section 2.3.3](#), all tenure and promotion cases for faculty are presented to the Board for review and approval each May. [Minutes](#) from OU Regents meetings are posted publicly on the OU Regents' website. Meeting [agendas](#), including meeting times of the Board and its standing committees, are also posted on the website at least 48 hours before each meeting as a courtesy to the public and press. Each June, the OU Regents organize a retreat, during which they engage senior administration across all campuses and provide updates on key initiatives and programs.

OU's administrative [structure](#) is designed to ensure efficient and effective decision making across all service areas. The President has direct reports on each campus as well as eight direct reports operating across all three campuses, including the offices of Equal Opportunity Office/Title IX, Development, Public Affairs, Athletics, Information Technology, and Student Affairs. Weekly meetings are held between the President and direct reports, allowing for collaboration across departments and campuses.

The administrative organization of the University exists to provide leadership and facilitate academic programs. Fulfillment of these goals can best be achieved in an atmosphere of shared governance, mutual planning and implementing of decisions, and the recognition and encouragement of contributions of members of the University community. The faculty handbooks of the Norman Campus and OUHSC document major policies regarding faculty and academic matters, along with policies and information about the University's general organization.

The Norman Campus and OUHSC each maintain separate faculty and staff senates that liaise with the President, the Senior Vice President and Provost, and the Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration for their campus. OU-Tulsa has a Staff Senate and Academic Council that report to the OU-Tulsa President. These senates maintain committees designed to engage faculty and staff on a variety of issues and provide actionable recommendations to senior administration. Some committees are specific to faculty and their campus (e.g., Academic Programs Council, Campus Tenure Committee, Budget Council, and Committee on Committees), some are specific to staff and their campus (e.g., Staff Initiatives, Staff Week, Shared Leave), and some committees, due to their University-wide focus, comprise faculty and staff from all campuses (e.g., Athletics Council, Employment Benefits Committee, Retirement Plans Management Committee). Meeting minutes from senate committees are posted online, along with [annual reports](#) that are summarized and provided to the President.

One example of such senate committee work is an analysis of OU faculty compensation as compared to peer institutions completed by the Committee on Faculty Compensation of the Faculty Senate in 2015. That committee's Chair met with the Senior Vice President and Provost and the President to discuss their findings. The resulting discussion led to [revision](#) of the faculty promotion policy that included salary increases received upon promotion of over 14% for those moving to Associate Professor and 15% for those moving to Full Professor. Another example is action taken on information compiled in 2015 by a joint project including the Faculty Senate Faculty Welfare

Committee, the Provost's Advisory Committee on Women's Issues, the Office of Legal Counsel, and many other stakeholders. These groups collaborated on [new guidelines](#) for the application of leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The new guidelines provided for the guaranteed extension of the tenure clock for full-time regular faculty and one semester of modified teaching load and relief from very demanding service duties when FMLA is taken under University policy.

As mentioned above, due to their university-wide focus many senate committees comprise a mix of faculty and staff representatives and include ex-officio members from senior administration. Meeting information and resulting minutes are publicly posted for faculty, staff, and student review. These include:

- The [Budget Council](#) is charged with advising the President on matters concerning fiscal policies and resources.
- The [Employment Benefits Committee](#) advises the President and the Chief Human Resources Officer on employment benefits programs and recommends programs and changes in existing programs.
- The [Retirement Plans Management Committee](#) meets most months to ensure OU's retirement plans are managed in the best interest of plan participants and in compliance with applicable regulations.
- The [Information Technology Council](#) provides input on policy and planning related to information technology resources and issues an [annual report](#) to the Faculty and Staff Senates.
- The [Research Council](#) is charged with the promotion and development of research and creative activity through the University community. The Council serves as adviser to the President, the Senior Vice President and Provost, the Vice President for Research, and Faculty Senate in matters regarding research. The Council also makes recommendations to the Vice President for Research on the allocation of internal funds in support of the research and creative activity of the faculty.

To ensure students are provided with opportunities to engage with administration, every regularly enrolled student is automatically a member of their campus's Student Government Association (SGA). At OU-Tulsa, their SGA works closely with administration to ensure that student's needs are met. At the [last meeting](#) of the past academic year, OU-Tulsa's President presented to the students for discussion a draft of the revised campus strategic plan. Legislative powers are provided to this group through an Undergraduate Student Congress and Graduate Student Senate. The Undergraduate Student Congress consists of 48 members who serve one-year terms representing academic districts. The Graduate Student Senate consists of nearly 100 graduate students elected by graduate students in their respective departments. At OUHSC, these powers are provided to the Student Government Association.

In addition to the SGAs, the University includes dedicated student members on key committees and councils, including the [Academic Programs Council](#), the Budget Council, the Information Technology Council, and the [Athletics Council](#). Students may also participate in faculty searches. In accordance with Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost's [policy](#), all searches for academic chairs and directors must include one or two students, reflecting both undergraduate majors and graduate students.

A prime example of OU's commitment to including the whole campus community in University governance is the creation of the [Office of University Community](#) in 2015. After discussions with students, faculty, and staff, the Office of University Community was established to better integrate equity, inclusion, and diversity into every part of OU life. An important early example of the Office of University Community responding to feedback was the creation of a 24-hour, independently-managed

reporting [hotline](#) in September 2016. This hotline allows students, faculty, and staff to anonymously report incidents or concerns relating to:

- Equal opportunity, Title IX, discrimination or harassment
- Campus climate and bias
- Financial matters involving suspected fraud or misuse of University resources
- Conflicts of interest
- Public or environmental health and safety
- Research or scientific misconduct
- Human resource issues
- Student conduct

Both the [Norman Campus](#) and [OUHSC](#) maintain an Academic Programs Council (APC) that reports to the Senior Vice President and Provost of each campus and that advises the President and Faculty Senate on matters concerned with instructional programs and curricula on each campus. The main responsibility of APC is the evaluation of existing or proposed programs with regard to their educational value. The Graduate Councils of both the [Norman Campus](#) and [OUHSC](#) are faculty members appointed as responsible for all policies relating to graduate education at OU. The Norman Campus [Provost Advisory Committee on General Education Oversight](#) includes members from faculty, administration, and academic staff (e.g., advisors, registrar, assessment, student affairs, etc.) responsible for overseeing OU's undergraduate general education requirements in compliance with policy of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Meeting schedules and minutes for all these groups are available through several different access points.

Sources

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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

Evidence of OU's commitment to aligning resources to our [mission](#) and priorities can be seen clearly in actual annual expenditures by function. Excluding self-supporting auxiliary units (e.g., Athletics and clinical operations) for the year ending [June 30, 2016](#), [spending](#) reflected OU's commitment to our mission: 38% on instruction, 16% on research, 6% on public service, 10% on academic support, 6% on student services and student aid, 7% on institutional support, 13% on operations and plant, and 4% on other.

OU's [annual budget process](#), as prescribed by the Budget Office, engages various internal constituencies to ensure funding is allocated in a manner that supports the teaching, research and creative activity, and service missions of the University. In late fall and early spring, as next year's operating budget is crafted for each campus, college and unit-level spending requests are evaluated by the President and his executive team, comprising the Senior Vice President and Provost of both the Norman Campus and OUHSC, the Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration of both the Norman Campus and OUHSC, and the OU-Tulsa President. Funding requests are considered in light of their fit with OU's mission and the University's strategic goals as well as the expected available budget for each campus. OU's capital budget, including long range physical planning, is also reflected in the [All Campus Master Plan](#). Architectural and Engineering Services organizes, periodically evaluates, and updates the All Campus Master Plan in consultation with the President and his executive team. The Master Plan prioritizes capital improvement projects across OU and is approved by the President and OU Regents annually.

A recent example of how OU engages internal constituents in crafting budget priorities is Project Threshold, a grant-funded program providing academic advising, financial aid information, enrollment assistance, computer lab access, and tutoring services to first generation, economically disadvantaged and/or disabled students. Project Threshold recently lost federal funding and is ineligible to apply until FY 2020. After discussions with students, the Senior Vice President and Provost, and the Vice President of University Community about the value of this program to student success, the President committed to providing [bridge funding](#) for Project Threshold until the program is eligible to apply for federal funding again. Further discussion of OU's investment in our mission can be found in Section 5.A.

Coordinated planning and processes center on the mission documents defining vision, values, goals, and strategic priorities for each campus. OU's assessment and planning links to budgeting and long-range strategic planning processes allows for reprioritization of goals when necessary. Planning documents also give evidence of the University's awareness of the interconnectedness of educational quality, student learning, and the diverse, complex, global, and technological world. OU's planning processes involve internal constituents, and, where appropriate, external constituents.

One example of the link between assessment and planning is the restructuring of assessment at OU since the last HLC site visit. In 2014, OU created the Office of Academic Assessment (OAA). The OAA reports directly to the Vice Provost for Faculty Development, the person responsible for [Academic Program Review](#), and it received additional recurring funding to better support operations at all levels of assessment (e.g., entry-level students, general education, program outcome, and student satisfaction). That additional funding led to the acquisition of TracDat in 2016, a web-based platform used to document academic assessment process and to help link planning to quality improvement efforts.

This new office, and its position as a direct report within the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost, provides more opportunities for program assessment to be included in institutional planning and budgeting decisions. For example, assessment discussions with the School of Visual Arts revealed to the Provost's Office that Wi-Fi speed problems were making it hard for students and faculty to effectively use cloud-based computer programs used to enhance instruction. Once this issue was communicated to the Associate Provost for Academic Finance, he was able to work with the Chief Financial Officer to identify approximately [\\$250,000 in funding to upgrade Wi-Fi in the Visual Arts and adjoining buildings](#). The upgrade is planned for implementation prior to the start of Fall 2017.

OU has a state regents' mandated cycle of Academic Program Review (APR) that serves as a form of institutional self-study, encouraging units to be forward thinking and to have a "living" strategic plan involving both teaching and research/creative activity. Coordinated through the Provost's Office, this review process results in a long-term action plan that is usable by the unit, Dean, and Provost. APR helps the central administration with long-range planning by providing data on the overall health of a unit, including its faculty resources, student demand, and facilities needs, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the unit. For the unit, the review provides a structured method for identifying and implementing needed improvements. Externally, the reviews help the University be accountable to students, taxpayers, donors, funding agencies, accreditation organizations, and state government.

OU's processes for linking assessment, planning, and budgeting, can best be demonstrated through the revised Norman Campus [faculty hiring process](#) that became effective for searches conducted in the 2016 academic year. Each spring units now complete a [Regular Faculty Recruiting Application](#) (RFRA) for each faculty search requested. The contents of this application are used to consider where the proposed faculty hire fits into OU's commitment to excellence as a comprehensive university as well as the unit's own strategic plan and goals. The application asks the unit to describe the desired attributes of a successful candidate's teaching and service, scholarship (research and creative activity), and areas of expertise and specific indicators of excellence. A successful application must link the requested hire to academic program review findings and department/college strategic plans. RFRAs are reviewed and ranked by each college's dean, submitted to the Senior Vice President and Provost for review, then sent to the President for final approval. The Senior Vice President and Provost and others within the Provost's Office, including the Vice President for Research, review the RFRAs and rate them based on:

- The strategic plan of the University and areas of national and international recognition

- The needs of individual units, considering faculty and student enrollment, and
- Cross-college partnerships (e.g., split appointment, cluster hires, etc.) that may be evident when evaluating all RFRAs.

OU has a unique and dynamic culture of planning with all levels of planning and budgeting aligning with its mission. Subsidiarity best captures this culture, with the President laying out the broad vision for the University, leaving the planning, budgeting, and implementation to the smallest unit within the organization with the competence and authority to make the decision.

Planning at the college level is accomplished by creating a strategic plan in consultation with faculty, staff, students, and that college's external board of visitors or advisors, and in alignment with the overall mission and goals of the University. These strategic plans inform discussions with the Senior Vice President and Provost. For example, the Gallogly College of Engineering's [strategic plan](#) was developed with involvement of students, faculty, staff, and administration of the college and the college's [Board of Visitors](#). This plan articulates an ongoing, strategic investment in Biomedical Engineering, and in turn informed the faculty hiring RFRAs prepared by the college, as discussed above. The ability to demonstrate how the requested hires would fit into both the college and the University's priorities, as well as their relation to national trends and market demands, led to approval of a staggered nine-faculty hiring cluster by the President and the Provost. These thoughtful, strategic planning discussions resulted in the establishment of the [Stephenson School of Biomedical Engineering](#) in 2016.

At OUHSC, high-level overview of strategic and operational planning is conducted through monthly Deans Council meetings. The OUHSC VPR developed, with broad faculty input, a [Research Strategic Plan](#) for 2016-2020 and implements this through monthly HSC Research Council meetings. Each college and department perform annual strategic planning, which are integrated into Deans Councils and twice-yearly retreats.

Another example of this planning process is OU-Tulsa's Strategic Plan, which was recently updated for 2017-2020. Both internal and external stakeholders were consulted throughout the development of the plan. Ideas generated by these consultations resulted in the Strategic Plan, which was reviewed and approved by a steering committee led by the OU-Tulsa president and with representatives from faculty, staff, and administration.

Last year, in the midst of an expected cut in state appropriations of nearly 16%, President Boren held a [town hall meeting](#) open to all faculty, staff, and students. The budget and priorities of the University were discussed to inform internal and external constituents and solicit their feedback on the planned approach to address the funding shortfall. In addition to this special session, the President also holds [yearly meetings](#) with students to discuss planned changes to tuition and fees, providing clear communication about how the increased revenue will be used and anticipated impacts on students. Additional information about OU's planning process can be found in section 5.A.

On the Norman Campus, bi-weekly meetings are held between the Senior Vice President and Provost, Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration, the Registrar and Vice President for Enrollment and Student Financial Services, and the Executive Director of Admissions and Recruitment to discuss freshman enrollment expectations (e.g., applications, admits, enrollments), capacity, and tuition revenue implications; academic background of the projected freshman class; demographic make-up of the projected freshman class; and tuition discounting strategies, in partnership with third-party consultants. Institutional Research and Reporting issues a [First-Time College Student Weekly Report](#) to various administrators and deans providing counts of applicants, admits, and enrollments, and includes information about demographic, quality, and degree program

interest trends. Data from IRR reports, along with analyses from Admissions and Recruitment and from the University College, assist in planning sufficient course offerings and class sections to accommodate students in the upcoming academic year.

After performing analyses to determine OU's capacity to absorb a larger freshman class, the Norman Campus expects to start adding 50-100 new freshmen each year for the next five years as part of a plan to slowly and strategically grow freshman enrollment. This timing of planned growth corresponds with OU debuting two new [residential colleges](#) in Fall 2017. These colleges will house 600 upperclassmen; continuing students are being encouraged to move from current University housing to the new residential colleges. These new residential colleges will free up space for the expected growth in future freshmen classes, as well as provide a more engaging and stimulating residential environment for continuing students.

FY 2017 state appropriations to OU were cut by approximately 16%. This decrease is in addition to mid-year cuts of 3.5% received during FY 2016. A global decline in the price of crude oil and natural gas has had a significant negative impact on the state's budget in over the last couple of years. Taxes on oil and gas producers represent a significant portion of direct and indirect tax revenue collected by the state, as well as a significant source of donor funding for the University. While donations to the University have remained strong even considering the state's economy, OU has implemented a number of measures to address the appropriation shortfall while still keeping the University an affordable option among peers and regional competitors and allowing core mission-initiatives to continue. Efforts to address the shortfall strategically, coordinated with internal and external constituents include:

- A 7% and 5% tuition and mandatory fee increase on the Norman Campus and OUHSC, respectively, for FY 2017. No change to tuition and fees were made for the College of Law due to enrollment considerations.
- Announcement of a two-year, \$500 million [campaign](#) to raise private funds in celebration of the University's 125th anniversary. The quiet phase of the campaign raised \$388 million in FY 2013 and FY 2014. In FY 2015, an additional \$334 million was raised, bringing the total-to-date to \$722 million (currently confidential).
- A [voluntary retirement incentive program](#) on the Norman Campus announced in FY 2016, resulting in 144 early retirements. This incentive program was [re-authorized](#) for FY 2017.
- New employees now have a one year waiting period before they can participate in the OU-funded defined contribution plan, effective FY 2017.
- Administrative, non-academic units had a 3% budget reallocation, and there was an average 1% budget reallocation for Academic Affairs units.
- A [public-private partnership with Balfour Beatty plc](#) to develop additional student housing on the Norman Campus. This partnership will monetize existing, underutilized land and property on campus.
- Moving to a self-insured model for managing our preferred provider organization health claims. Under this arrangement, OU was able to realize savings on profit, risk, and state premium taxes and benefits from reduced fees and taxes under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA).
- Creation of a new [9-10 month staff position](#), freeing up salary and benefit costs over the summer for more seasonally utilized positions.

Despite recent tuition and fee increases, we believe OU continues to provide a cost-effective option for students in our target group. Other universities experiencing declines in state funding have also increased their tuition and fees, so OU has been able to maintain the relatively good position on price

compared to peer institutions even through this period of economic downturn. Our Fall 2017 new freshman applicants increased (to date) over 15% over the prior fall, setting a new high for the Norman Campus. Given the decline in state appropriations over the last two years, OU strategically analyzes enrollment data and demographic trends to inform its expanding recruitment reach. The freshman class grew [from 3,724 in Fall 2010 to 4,198 in Fall 2016 while simultaneously increasing in academic quality and diversity](#). The [average ACT composite score for new freshmen has risen from 25.9 to 26.4 during those years, and their average unweighted high school GPA has increased from 3.60 to 3.62](#).

OU enjoys a very strong reputation in the state, and we continue to have a strong presence in nearly every high school in Oklahoma. The majority of the Oklahoma recruitment team is located in Norman, and includes individuals who focus on Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest regions of Oklahoma. Additionally, several members of the team focus on Central Oklahoma high schools. Our [Diversity Enrichment Programs](#) (DEP) team focuses on connecting with diverse applicant populations, and their territories include the most diverse high schools in the state. Increasing student body diversity remains a top University priority, and the DEP team's success is evident in our increasingly diverse student body. We also have three recruiting team members who office at OU-Tulsa and focus on the entire Northeast quadrant of the state; they work in collaboration with the DEP team on our particularly diverse high schools.

Because optimizing tuition revenue, enrolling high achieving students, and expanding diversity are key campus priorities, OU has expanded national recruitment strategies and hired regional representatives across the country. Examples of this include:

- 1997: OU hired its first Dallas representative. Today, we have three representatives in the North Texas region; this part of Texas currently provides approximately 20% of the OU freshman class.
- 2004: OU hired its first Houston-area representative. Another Houston representative has recently been hired that also covers Austin.
- 2009: OU hired a Wichita-area representative; this position moved to Kansas City in 2011, and now focuses on both metro areas.
- 2011: OU hired a Denver regional recruiter, a California regional recruiter (covering the entire state), and a part-time representative in Chicago. This Chicago position expanded into a full-time role in 2014, and now includes St. Louis.
- 2014: OU systematically expanded its international recruitment reach. We currently have a team of international admissions and recruitment professionals who travel to recruit in strategic locations around the world, including India, China, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and South America. OU also opened international locations in Arezzo, Italy; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Puebla, Mexico; with a new center opening in Izmir, Turkey in the coming year. Admissions and Recruitment works closely with these study center directors to recruit students in these countries.
- 2015: OU combined the offices of Admissions and Recruitment Services into a new Office of Admissions and Recruitment. Combining these offices – responsible in total for admission and recruitment of undergraduate domestic, international, and graduate students – and cross-training between functions has allowed the newly combined office streamline its operations. OU is better able to implement recruitment strategies as well as to decrease the time between application and admission decision. These significant changes in operations enabled OU to have the most diverse, most academically qualified freshman class in our history in Fall 2016, and we are projected to have an even larger freshman class in Fall 2017 without reducing student quality.
- 2016: OU implemented a new customer relationship management software, Slate, that provides

Admissions and Recruitment with more comprehensive and actionable information about student interest. This allows them to recruit potential students in a more cost efficient manner and to provide targeted information regarding OU's offerings based on students' major interests.

Since 2014, the Norman Campus has implemented a more coordinated, strategic approach aimed at making existing high excellence, high demand master's programs available online. The [Online Master's Programs History](#) details our new programs over the last three years as well as launches planned for the next two academic years. OU is partnering with a third-party, Elsmere Education Inc. (selected via a Request for Proposal process) who provides marketing and recruiting support during the new programs' launch phase.

Sources

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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

Internal academic program review and external reviews by accrediting agencies each contribute to continuous improvement at OU. All OUHSC programs are externally accredited. On the Norman Campus, many programs are externally accredited and all academic programs undergo periodic Academic Program Review. All OU-Tulsa programs are affiliated either with the Norman Campus or OUHSC and are included in the overall program accreditations. More detailed information about Academic Program Review can be found in Sections 3.A and 4.A.

The Office of Institutional Research and Reporting (IRR) provides data to academic and administrative units for use in monitoring and improving programs. IRR supports the [Academic Program Review process](#), provides regular [enrollment](#) and [freshman class updates](#), tracks [student retention and graduation rates](#), and is able to provide specialized analyses for urgent topics that may arise. IRR also produces the [Annual Profile of the University of Oklahoma](#). This document, more commonly known as the Fact Book, serves as a comprehensive source of data about students, faculty, staff, finances/budget, and research activity for all campuses. IRR provides a [Data Center](#) on their website that is a repository for enrollment statistics, credit hour reports, admissions reports, and various other annual reports and accountability measures. In an effort to better organize and deliver these data in a more real-time, user-friendly format, IRR acquired a license for SAS Visual Analysis and Office Analysis. Internally, this web-based dashboard is known as [Minerva](#) and will allow for a more comprehensive and cross-cutting analysis of student, faculty, and financial information at the university, college, and department level.

The Office of Academic Assessment plans, assesses, analyzes, and seeks to improve academic performance through their [assessment process](#). Documentation of Program Outcomes Assessment is maintained centrally, and that information is used to provide summary reports and broader university analyses provided to departments, colleges, and central administration for use in planning and continuous improvement. The Office of Academic Assessment also conducts [student satisfaction surveys](#) to gather feedback on students' educational experience at OU. Survey results are provided to several areas of campus operations so any problems identified can be addressed. [OU participates in the Higher Education Research Institute \(HERI\) faculty survey](#) every three years. This survey provides important data about faculty satisfaction and experience that are [shared with the Provost and Deans](#) to inform future planning.

In 2016, OU began using an online tool called Activity Insight – a software system developed by Digital Measures and used by over 400 college campuses – to start a centralized database of faculty teaching, research, publication, presentations, awards, creative and service activities, and accomplishments. Our implementation of this tool, called [Faculty Activity System](#) (FAS), is used to generate Annual Faculty Mini Vitae, National Science Foundation and National Institute of Health bio-sketches, and other reports that are provided to directors, deans, and the Provost's

Office. Implementation of FAS will reduce the number of requests faculty, departments, and colleges receive for data about professional activities and increase the accuracy and consistency of reported information.

Evidence of OU's efforts to learn from past practices can be seen in our efforts to improve the mission-critical goal of student retention. As discussed in more detail in section 4.C, the University established two committees, the [President's Graduation and Retention Task Force](#) and the Elite Retention (ER) Squad, solely focused on using data-driven analysis to improve OU's retention rates. These efforts led to an increase in the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate from 84.4% for the Fall 2011 cohort to [90.4%](#) for the Fall 2015, an all-time record for the Norman Campus. Based on pre-enrollment data as of July 2017, the Fall 2016 cohort's fall-to-fall retention rate already exceeds the 90.4% achieved last year.

Another example of OU leadership seeking out performance information is recent work done by the Associate Provost for Academic Advising. In speaking with various academic advisors across campus through the [Provost Advisory Committee on Academic Advising](#), she identified an opportunity to enhance advisors' ability to more meaningfully connect with students juggling school, work, and family schedules. In 2016, a select group of advisors began an accredited Academic Life Coaching training program, design to help them better connect to and advise students. These trained advisors will return to campus and teach other advisors the life coaching skills they learned.

In 2015, OU established a Provost Task Force on Graduate Education Funding and Competitiveness. It was chaired by the Provost with membership including the Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives, the Dean of the Graduate College, the Vice President for Research, three representatives named by the Faculty Senate Chair, and representatives of other academic colleges with academic programs. The task force developed a set of sub-teams tasked with identifying key questions related to institutional value, structure, market, and funding of graduate education. Throughout 2016, they studied how graduate education is currently financed at OU and explored what improvements would help OU attract and retain the best talent. The task force's [final report](#) concluded that OU should:

- Reduce Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) fees by \$3,000 per year to match the out-of-pocket costs for students at peer institutions and increase GTA stipends. Both changes would require cost-shifting or new investment.
- Increase Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) tuition remission rate on grants at a rate equal to peer institutions. This change would decrease the amount of fees paid by GRAs down to the average of our institutional peers.
- Institute a graduate assistant pool budgeting process that reflects true costs, is strategic and responsive to institutional priorities, and incentivizes graduate program innovation and excellence.

The task force's findings were shared with the Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, Graduate Student Senate leadership, Graduate and Research Liaisons, Budget Council, college deans, and various other groups in Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. Copies of the final report were distributed to all regular graduate faculty and administrative officers in April 2017.

Each month, Financial Support Services prepares and delivers the [Monthly Information for Financial Officers](#) report to financial officers across campus. This report highlights key items of interest and provides data on college-level and university-wide finances. A separate [monthly director report](#) is provided by Financial Support Services to each unit director and vice president summarizing key budget-to-actual financial data for their unit(s). Additionally, each quarter the Norman Campus and OUHSC present a [Quarterly Financial Analysis](#) to the OU Board of Regents that highlights key

financial metrics and trends to identify unusual or unexpected variances relative to prior year for the same period and budget. Each month, all departments on all campuses perform [reconciliations](#) of their financial balances. This process is described in more detail in Section 5.A.

Using monthly reports provided by Financial Support Services, combined with separate reports from the OU Foundation, the Provost's Office and the Scholarship Office undertook a joint effort in 2015 to [analyze](#) endowed chairs, professorships, and scholarships on the Norman Campus. Their analysis resulted in realigning endowed budgets with actual income generated from the endowment, leading to more efficient management of available resources. These changes resulted in identification of about \$430,000 in permanent funding for endowed chairs and professorships and increased scholarship awarding by \$1.5 million as compared to the same period in 2014.

In 2016, OU released [The University of Oklahoma: A Leader in Higher Education Efficiency](#) to highlight our comprehensive efforts to realize administrative savings and efficiencies without compromising the University's ability to fulfill our primary mission of providing students with an outstanding education that also is accessible and affordable. This document is made available to the public and is used to communicate to internal and external stakeholders the efforts made to efficiently and effectively manage the resources of the University. Each year, OU releases a [Community Impact Report](#) which provides examples of research, creative, scholarly, service, and economic activity occurring on our campuses as well as their impact on local communities and within the state. OU also created a [Savings, Efficiencies, and Sustainability](#) report highlighting our many sustainability efforts. Our institution is committed to progress toward sustainability goals enumerated in the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, of which the Norman Campus was a charter signatory in April 2007.

In summer 2017, the Norman Campus engaged Huron Consulting Group to analyze two areas in which the University wants to improve decision-making and develop potential strategies to improve operational efficiency:

- [Shared Services](#): assess of the feasibility of restructuring financial/payroll, human resource, and pre- and post-award work currently residing within various academic and non-academic departments across the campus.
- [Lab Space](#): assess research and instructional lab space to better understand how current capacity and utilization of lab space aligns with current and projected future demands.

As demonstrated above, OU is committed to continuous improvement guided by input from administrative offices, reporting tools, and external partnerships. We recognize that true excellence is only obtained – and maintained – by utilizing information gained by constituent feedback and regular, comprehensive reviews.

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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

OU has multiple systems and reporting structures in place to provide regular constituent feedback and allow for comprehensive internal reviews. Examination of recent history shows many instances in which OU identified a problem, gathered necessary input, then implemented changes designed to address the problem for the long term. OU's leadership is constantly looking forward, keeping an eye on local, state, national, and global trends that may impact its long-term operations. The current economic and political environment is challenging, but we believe OU can help make a positive difference in the future.

Sources

There are no sources.