

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse - WI

HLC ID 2029

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Visit Date: 4/11/2016

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Context and Nature of Review

Visit Date

4/11/2016

Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance
- On-site Visit
- Multi-Campus Visit (if applicable)

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UWL) is a public, comprehensive university. The University operates under three separate but related mission statements: one for the statewide University of Wisconsin System, a statewide “Core Mission” for all comprehensive “University Cluster” institutions in the system, and a Select Mission Statement for the University itself. The University’s Select Mission is consistent with the roles and values set forth in the UW System Mission and University Cluster Core Mission Statements. **These statements in turn are grounded in the “Wisconsin Idea” of higher education as serving the public good for the state in the search for knowledge and truth.**

Educating students is at the heart of UWL’s mission and operations. The implementation of the Growth, Quality, and Access (GQ&A) differential tuition program in fall 2008 resulted in hiring over 200 new faculty and staff members and success in reducing the student-to-faculty ratio from 24 to 1 in fall 2008 to 18 to 1 in fall 2015. In 2015-16, the UW System (and by extension, UWL) received the largest reductions ever in state support to its operating budget.

In addition to the ever decreasing support of higher education in the state UWL is addressing two other major challenges. First, Wisconsin Act 55 was signed into law in July of 2015. The new language modified the definition of shared governance. There is a lack of common understanding between the BOR, UWS and UWL which is causing significant morale issues. The second challenge that UWL is addressing is the preparation of a strategic plan by December of 2016.

Interactions with Constituencies

Leadership – Board, UWS and Chancellor’s Cabinet

President, Board of Regents

Member, Board of Regents

President, University of Wisconsin System

Vice President, University of Wisconsin System

Chancellor

Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Vice Chancellor for University Advancement & President of the UWL Foundation

Director of Affirmative Action

Other Leadership

Director of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning

Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Dean, College of Science and Health

Interim Dean, College of Science and Health

Dean, School of Education

Dean, College of Liberal Studies

Dean, College of Business Administration

Associate Dean, College of Liberal Studies

Associate Dean, College of Business Administration

Chair, Archaeology and Anthropology

Chair, Accountancy

Chair, Economics

Chair, English

Chair, Chemistry and Special Assistant to the Provost

Chair, Communication Studies

Chair, Education Studies

Chair, Health Professions

Chair, Psychology

Chair, Management

Chair, Math & Statistics

Chair, Sociology

Chair, Theatre

Internal Audit

Registrar

Director of Records and Registration

Director of Online Education, Center for Advancing Teaching & Learning

Director of Residence Life

Assistant Director of Residence Life

Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion

Assistant Director Campus Climate

Director of Multicultural Student Services

Interim Director, Upward Bound

Assistant Director – The ACCESS Center

Director of Human Resources

Assistant Director of Financial Aid

Director of Research & Sponsored Programs

Director of Graduate Studies

Director of Student Support Services

Director of Murphy Library

Director of Murphy Learning Center

Director of Academic Advising Center

Director of Center for Advancing Teaching & Learning

University Assessment Coordinator

College of Business Administration Assessment Coordinator (2)

College of Science and Health Assessment Committee, Chair

School of Education Assessment Coordinator

Chair - Faculty Senate

Chair – Academic Staff Council

Staff

Administration and Finance (1)

Administrative Program Specialist

Admissions (2)

Advisors and Senior Advisors (8)

Budget Director

Budget Planner

Budget Office (2)

Business Specialist for Murphy Library

Liberal Studies Budget

Career Services (2)

Class Lab Specialist

Classroom Specialist in Information Technology

Continuing Education and Extension (4)

Diversity and Inclusion

Facilities Staff

Financial Aid (2)

1st Year Experience Coordinator

Office of Graduate Studies Staff

Human Resources (4)

Information Technology Services (3)

Information Technology Services – Business Manager

Information Security Officer

Institutional Research (2)

Instructional Designer (Center for Advancing Teaching & Learning)

International Education and Engagement

International Student Advisor

Office of Graduate Studies Staff

Professional Studies in Education

McNair Scholars Staff

Murphy Library Staff (2)

Office of Multicultural Student Services (2)

Pride Center/Diversity and Inclusion

Recreational Sports Staff

Research and Sponsored Programs (2)

Residence Life (2)

Senior Academic Skills Specialist

Student Services Coordinator (4)

Student Support Services – TRIO

University Communications (2)

Web Coordinator

Committees

General Education Assessment Committee, Chair

General Education Assessment Committee (6)

General Education Committee, Chair (current and former)

Strategic Planning Committee, Chair

Strategic Planning Committee

UWL Joint Planning and Budget Committee

Faculty

Professor – Mathematics, Modern Languages, History, Geography, Computer Science

Associate Professor – Biology (2), History, Library, Information Systems, Geography and Earth Science, Women's Studies, Chemistry, Psychology, English, History, Microbiology

Assistant Professor – Computer Science, Mathematics, Sociology, English, Computer Science

Faculty - underdetermined rank – Chemistry, Political Science (2), Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies, Computer Science, Math and Statistics, Communication Studies, History, Nuclear Medicine Technology, Microbiology, Marketing (2), Biology (4), Chemistry and Biochemistry, Psychology, History, Educational Studies (7), Exercise & Sport Science, Health Education and Health Promotion, Psychology (2), Ethnic and Racial Studies, Management, Accounting, Economics, Sociology (4), Music

Lecturer – Economics

Academic Staff (2)

Students

Students were in attendance at Open Forum Discussions and special sessions addressing student advising/success, strategic planning, budgeting, and diversity and inclusion.

Monday – 12 students signed in for a variety of sessions

Tuesday – 8 students signed in

Additional Documents

No additional documents were reviewed other than those added to the addendum.

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.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

The University operates under three separate but related mission statements: one for the statewide University of Wisconsin System, a statewide "Core Mission" for all comprehensive "University Cluster" institutions in the system, and a Select Mission Statement for the University itself. The University of Wisconsin La Crosse (UWL) Select Mission is consistent with the roles and values set forth in the University of Wisconsin (UW) System Mission and University Cluster Core Mission Statements. These statements in turn are grounded in the "Wisconsin Idea" of higher education as serving the public good for the state in the search for knowledge and truth. The University's Select Mission Statement affirms its role as a regional comprehensive public university offering a range of undergraduate programs grounded in the liberal arts and a select number of graduate programs. The statement further acknowledges the University's commitment to supporting student success and preparing students for a "constantly changing world community."

The University's Select Mission was revised and approved by the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents in 2009, following a recommendation of the 2006 HLC Accreditation Team Visit Report. The Select Mission was further updated and approved in 2014, following a request from the UW System for the University to outline its programs within the Select Mission. Team discussions with administrators, faculty members, staff, and students verified that the current Select Mission Statement was developed through an inclusive process with input from the University community and external constituencies.

The range and scope of academic programs listed in the University's Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, as well as Fall 2015 enrollment data, further confirm the consistency of the University's operations with its Select Mission Statement, which specifically notes that the university offers

"undergraduate programs and degrees in the arts and humanities, health and sciences, education, and business administration . . . [and] graduate programs . . . including business administration, education, health, the sciences, and the social sciences."

The University's planning and budgeting priorities reflect the Select Mission, as evidenced by choices that the institution has made over the last several years. University planning documents and team meetings with administrators, faculty members, and students confirm that although UWL has faced a series of drastic budget cuts from the state over the last several years, it has responded by putting particular emphasis on preserving instruction. (See 5.C.1)

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The University's Select Mission and Vision and Values Statements are publicly shared through the campus website; through the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs; through handbooks, training materials, and other support material for faculty members, staff, and students; and through promotional and informational materials for prospective and current students and for external public audiences. Departmental bylaws, college websites and documents, and support office websites and documents also have individual mission statements, values statements, and/or statements of purpose that reflect key terms and concepts stated in the University's and system's mission statements and vision and values statements. Conversations and meetings of the Team with campus leaders and constituents confirmed broad understanding of and commitment to the concepts and values articulated in these documents.

As noted in Core Component 1.A, the most recent version of the University's Select Mission Statement was updated and approved by the system Board of Regents in 2014, following input and review by internal and external University constituents. This statement sets forth the University's purpose to provide "a challenging, dynamic, and diverse learning environment . . . [g]rounded in the liberal arts," that also offers select graduate programs and further acknowledges the institution's role as "a regional and cultural center." The University's Select Mission Statement, as well as the University of Wisconsin Mission Statement and the Cluster Institutions Core Mission, define the institution's role as a public university offering undergraduate and select graduate programs. These documents further attest that that the University and its System serve the needs of the state and region, including its diverse populations, through teaching, research, and service.

The University's Mission Statements are further supported by an institutional Vision Statement and Values Statement, both adopted by the University Joint Planning & Budget Committee (JPBC) in 2015. The Vision Statement affirms that "the skills of effective communication, critical thought, leadership, and an appreciation for diversity" are especially crucial to students' education. The Values Statement refers to principles first articulated by the University's early leaders, appealing to the

development of the “whole person,” including the “search for knowledge, truth, and meaning”; a safe environment that is committed to diversity while engaging all learners in that search, supported by practices that provide necessary personal and institutional resources; and commitment to the “Wisconsin Idea” articulated in the system’s Mission Statement and other documents. Since it is the JPBC that has been instrumental in reviewing and recommending budget and planning decision the decision to adopt vision and value statements has been a very important step in UWL's continued emphasis on linking mission to planning and budgeting.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

UWL publicly acknowledges its role in a multicultural society through its Mission, Vision and Values Statements. The University's website and various documents include, for example, the Core Mission Statement of the University of Wisconsin's University Cluster, which specifically charges each of these universities, including UWL, to "Serve the needs of women, minority, disadvantaged, disabled, and nontraditional students and seek racial and ethnic diversification of the student body and the professional faculty and staff." The 2006 HLC Peer Review Team commented that the University's Select Mission at that time did not "clearly note [UWL's] commitment to diversity . . . " The current, revised Select Mission Statement is somewhat more specific, promising to engage students in a "diverse learning environment" and to prepare students for "a constantly changing world community," although it does not strongly refer back to the diversity clause of the Core Mission Statement. "Diversity and Globalization," however, does constitute one of the four key components of the University's Values Statement, and "an appreciation for diversity" is cited as a "hallmark" of a UWL education in the University's Vision Statement.

In response to concerns about the University's commitment to diversity raised by the 2006 HLC Team in its accreditation report, UWL submitted a Monitoring Report in 2009 and a further progress report in 2010 on diversity efforts (as well as on assessment/review of general education). The Commission staff's analysis of the 2010 progress report concluded from data submitted by the University that concern about "confusion surrounding the University's diversity infrastructure has been successfully addressed"; however, the staff report also noted a continuing lack of "real data that demonstrates greater clarity relating to the diversity infrastructure." The institution's actions prior to and following the 2009 and 2010 progress reports confirm the University's growing understanding of and engagement with human diversity and a multicultural society. These actions include the establishment of an office of Diversity and Inclusion, overseen by an associate dean who reports to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The associate dean oversees offices dealing with Campus Climate, Disability Resource Services, LGBTQQA Services, Multicultural Student Services, Student Support Services, and Upward Bound. The University's diversity efforts are also served by a Diversity and Inclusion Council and a student Diversity Organization Council. A Joint Multicultural Affairs Committee with representatives from faculty, staff, and students, is part of the University's shared governance structure.

Across the University, academic programs and support offices are engaged in many individual efforts

supporting diversity and inclusion within the university and the communities that it serves. Examples include the establishment several years ago of the availability of health benefits for same-sex partners; the establishment and actions of a Hate Response Team, an Anti-Bullying Task Force, and a Trans Task Force; diversity goals set by some departments for their faculty members; and conducting periodic Campus Climate Surveys and responding to reported results. The University's many efforts toward supporting diversity and inclusion have won recognition from outside sources, including two consecutive times winning the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from *INSIGHT into Diversity* magazine. University handbooks and training documents cite diversity goals for support staff, as do some of the academic departmental bylaws. Because departmental bylaws are adopted independently by each unit in a decentralized process, there are inconsistencies in citing diversity and related values as departmental goals or as elements for consideration in faculty hiring and evaluation procedures or in making explicit reference to system and University statements about diversity. Nonetheless, many programs do affirm their commitment to diversity as part of their missions and/or require faculty to submit evidence of a commitment to such values for review and evaluation purposes.

Despite the advances cited, organizational challenges regarding the University's diversity and inclusion efforts continue. There is a lack of clarity regarding the relationship between the office of Diversity and Inclusion, which is part of the Student Affairs structure, and the office of Academic Affairs and the Provost. The "Inclusive Excellence Appendix" to the Academic Affairs Year End Report for 2014-2015 notes shortcomings in relation to "Inclusive Excellence UW System Central Goals," in particular a lack of specific goals regarding "improving access" and a lack of focus on "closing equity gaps." In addition, the End of the Year Report for 2013-2014 of the office of Campus Climate and Diversity (now called Diversity and Inclusion) notes among its existing challenges that confusion remains about the relationship of that office to the Human Resources and Affirmative Action offices. The report calls for the establishment of a Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion as a senior administrator who would report directly to the Chancellor.

The 2014 UWL Inclusive Excellence Report to the university system describes three goals set by the office: improved access for underrepresented students, increased retention of undergraduate students, and continued assessment of and focus on improving the campus climate. However, the report also describes these goals as being too broad and calls for greater integration of such efforts internally with Academic Affairs and other campus offices and for clearer direction from the UW system. The report's data for 2009-2013 indicates declines or no significant enrollment growth for identified minority populations except for students identifying as Hispanic or as "two or more races," and both of those two categories grew by significant amounts during that period. It is noted that race/ethnicity categories changed in 2009 such that many more students would report as "two or more races". The campus Affirmative Action report for 2015 indicates slight increases in the percentage of faculty of color and of overall employees over the last decade.

Team meetings with administrators, support staff, and faculty members involved in campus diversity efforts underscored a strong sense of commitment and pride in what is being accomplished through the various offices and programs related to diversity. However, those meetings also conveyed a widely-shared sense of frustration at the lack of overall coordination among and leadership for these efforts. Several comments expressed a desire for greater communication and coordination especially between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. While acknowledging specific instances when senior University officials reacted quickly and positively to overt acts of racism or discrimination, a number of people also expressed the hope that those officials would become more proactive in exemplifying the importance of diversity at UWL and more active in promoting existing efforts. While creating a new administrative position to oversee and coordinate diversity efforts on campus might be difficult in an era of increasingly tight budget constraints, the University should consider ways in which these

offices and efforts might be able to operate in a more efficient and productive manner to meet the goals and values of the institution. The University's new strategic planning efforts might offer a forum for such consideration.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

As noted in relation to Core Components 1.A and 1.B, UWL is a part of the University of Wisconsin System; its mission, values, and visions documents affirm its status as a public institution that serves its constituents and the state of Wisconsin.

The University's IPEDS Data Feedback Report documents that for FY 2013, 52% of the year's core expenses were for direct support of instruction and another 15% were for academic support. Those figures are equivalent to the percentages for other public institutions in the University's comparison group. The 2014 IPEDS report also indicates that a total of 11% of core expenses were for institutional support and "other core expenses," as compared to 22% for the University's comparison group. While only 3% of these expenses was dedicated to public service, that figure is also consistent with the comparison group.

In keeping with the University's and UW System's mission, values, and vision statements, faculty members and students are actively engaged with the institution's external constituencies. The University's Accountability Brief document for 2015-2016 lists many examples of such engagement, including the River Studies Center, Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center, American Democracy Project, and Small Business Development Center, among others. One especially noteworthy effort that reflects the specific academic focus of UWL is its role in the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium, in partnership with Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare and Gundersen Health System, Viterbo University, Western Technical College, the La Crosse County Health Department, and the School District of La Crosse, founded in 1993. The Consortium is located next to the UWL campus in the Health Science Center and serves a twenty-county area in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa.

According to the University's "Federal Priorities" document for 2015, the University is also involved with its communities through a number of academic, research and service programs that receive Federal funding, including the Upper Mississippi Environmental Science Center, TRIO programs (including McNair scholars, Student Support Services, and Upward Bound), Mathematics & Science

Partnerships funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

Despite the institution's budgetary constraints, University officials, faculty members and students engage with the greater La Crosse community through a variety of programs and forums, reflecting the institution's role as a regional educational and cultural center. Such efforts include the examples cited above, as well as student internships and service learning. Data from the 2014 National Survey of Student Engagement for "High-Impact Practices" indicate that by their senior year, 96% of UWL students had engaged in at least one of the following activities: learning community, service learning, research with faculty, internship or field experience, study abroad, or culminating senior experience. 79% of seniors reported engaging in two or more such activities. These percentages are well above the figures for other UW comprehensive universities and for all institutions in UWL's Carnegie Classification. The Service Learning and Internship/Field Experience categories also exceed the figures for other institutions that shows an outstanding commitment to students' understanding of their role in society.

There are also ongoing meetings, as well as informal communication, between University and regional leaders through local and regional service organizations, the University Foundation, business and government forums, and other venues. This shows a commitment to engaging the community and serving the public good.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Evidence

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is directed by a set of mission statements for its own institution, for similar universities in the University of Wisconsin system, and for the system as a whole. In addition, the University has a Vision Statement and a Values Statement that further reinforce the institution's identity as a public regional comprehensive university with a curriculum grounded in the liberal arts. The University's own website, as well as internal and external documents, often refer to elements of these various statements. HLC team meetings with various administrators, faculty members, staff, students and other constituents reaffirm that the University community understands, appreciates, and is committed to its mission, values, and vision in its planning and budgetary considerations.

As a public institution of higher learning, the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse uses and refers to elements of its missions, values, and vision in guiding its program and curriculum development, its emphasis on instruction and on research that involves student learners, and its service to and collaboration with its larger communities. Although the decentralized nature of the University's departmental structure does not always allow for clarity or communication about the precise role of each program in relation to the overall mission, its review processes for academic programs and for faculty members are placing increasing emphasis on such clarity.

Since its last review for accreditation, the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse has made great strides forward in understanding, articulating, and engaging with issues of diversity and its role in a multicultural society. These efforts include redrafting language in the University's mission, values, and vision statements; increased emphasis on those values in its curriculum, teaching, and extracurricular activities; and revision of its administrative structure in offices that oversee or promote diversity efforts. Like many other public universities, however, the institution faces ongoing challenges in its diversity efforts, most obviously in the form of cutbacks in state funding for higher education and demographic and economic changes in the state's population and the University's traditional base for student recruitment. It is also clear that many of the university's constituents involved in addressing and promoting diversity issues still feel a sense of frustration from a lack of coordination among their efforts and clear, proactive leadership in promoting and sustaining those efforts. As the University launches a new process of strategic planning, it would do well to have a set of goals that examine how best to sustain, coordinate, and promote its diversity efforts.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

UWL is a member of the University of Wisconsin (UW) System and reports to the UW System Board of Regents (BOR). As such, UWL subscribes to and follows BOR policies related to fair and ethical behavior on the part of faculty, staff, and students. This commitment to integrity and ethical conduct is reflected in the UWL Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Values Statement, and employee and student handbooks. Fiscal operations at UWL follow state-mandated guidelines. UWL is annually audited by the state of Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) and adheres to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The state of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report includes UWL's financial statement which is published on the UWL and UW System websites for public view. UWL's federal grant funds are annually audited and are included in the State of Wisconsin's single audit report. In addition, UWL provides external reporting to the U.S. Department of Education and the Wisconsin Legislature on auxiliary account funds and contractual relationships.

All internal auditors for UW System academic institutions, including the internal auditor for UWL, report to the UW System Office of Internal Audit. In turn, the UW System Chief Audit Executive reports directly to the BOR Audit Committee (which is responsible for all internal and external audit-related matters). Through this design, the BOR promotes independence and objectivity for internal auditors at all UW System academic institutions. The UW System FY-16 Audit Plan includes continuous monitoring and auditing of certain higher risk financial areas such as purchasing card expenditures, travel reimbursements, and payroll. In addition, UWL provides training and oversight for purchasing cards, travel, expense reports, and other financially-related matters. For example, approval and review policies are in place related to purchase cards, travel, and purchase orders. In addition, UWL Business Services must review such expenses prior to payment.

UWL promotes integrity through shared governance. The Faculty Senate, various Faculty Senate committees, and the Graduate Council are integral components in the creation and review of academic policies (such as admissions, advising, retention, and program reviews). UWL publishes the agendas, minutes, and other such reports on the Faculty Senate webpage in an effort to promote shared governance and transparency.

UWL reports operational data directly to the UW System through the Central Data Request (CDR). This system affords review by UWL and UW System staff prior to being reported to the state legislature, the US DOE, or required reports such as IPEDS submissions.

UWL maintains an Affirmative Action Officer responsible for compliance with federal and state law. The university also provides in-person and online training for faculty and staff as needed. Past training sessions covered FERPA, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, Affirmative Action, NCAA compliance, and other such rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Similarly, UWL provides training related to integrity of research and scholarship and publishes these and similar policies in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs on the university website.

UWL employees are notified of the terms and conditions of employment at the time of appointment, and each appointment letter includes details of the appointment, notice of personnel rules and guidelines, and a link to the employee handbook that includes information on performance evaluations, grievance procedures, and conflict of interest policies. These guidelines, as well as UWL's code of ethics, are in accordance with Wisconsin law and Board of Regents policy.

Academic department bylaws, employee handbooks, graduate and undergraduate catalogs, and the UWL student handbook are published on the UWL website. Through these publications, employees are made aware of workplace policies and procedures, and students are made aware of guidelines related to academic and non-academic misconduct, student rights, and grievance procedures. UWL also publishes required Clery Act information on the university website. Shared governance processes are in place for allocation of resources collected through segregated fees, room and board fees, textbook rental, and parking and user fees. UWL annually reports Program Revenue Fund Balances to UW System.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

UWL promotes transparency through publication of policies, procedures, catalogs, programs, admission requirements, staff information, and accreditation requirements on its website and through various hardcopy and electronic documents. This transparency is enhanced in that UWL is part of the UW System, and the system publishes similar information on its website.

UWL evidence files demonstrate clear and complete publication of information related to its programs, admission requirements, faculty and staff contact information and qualifications, tuition, fees, housing, administrative operations, and currency of accreditation relationships. However, it is difficult to determine exact fees as different UWL websites can give different answers and some students voiced confusion regarding course specific fees, select fees, D2L fees, and differential fee structures. As such, it is recommended that UWL review publication of the fee structures in light of student input from the student governing body.

A review of several evidence files, such as admission policies, specialized accreditation, institutional data, and housing information, indicate a high level of transparency and clarity in presenting such information for public view by students and the general public. Examples include:

- The UWL Office of University Communications coordinates internal and external university communications and oversees publication activities such as university-wide alumni pieces, a semiannual magazine, monthly e-newsletters, alumni newsletters, and the Campus Connection. This office also manages the university website and social media presence.
- The UWL organizational chart, as published in student catalogs on the UWL website, reflects UWL's commitment to shared governance. The Faculty Senate and the Academic Staff Council report directly to the UWL Chancellor. In addition, the student governing body also enjoys direct access to the Chancellor. These relationships further serve to promote clear communication of UWL policies and enhance shared-governance.
- UWL regularly reports data to UWS as required by state legislation. UWL participates in the Voluntary System for Accountability (VSA), publishes the College Portrait of Undergraduate Education, and reports student learning outcomes, graduation and retention rates, and student progress rates for UWL students.

The Admissions Office coordinates recruiting and admission of students, including international students. This office adheres to the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Counselors (AACRAO) statements for ethics and practice.

UWL publishes information related to academic programs and class information on the university

website. This information is also published on the University of Wisconsin Higher Education Location Program (HELP) website and in UWL undergraduate and graduate catalogs. These documents contain requirements for admission to UWL's undergraduate and graduate programs. Similarly, UWL publishes faculty contact information and faculty credentials on the university website.

The Cashier's Office publishes information related to tuition, fees, and housing on the university website. UWL also provides an online net cost calculator that assists in calculating costs of attending UWL. This is supplemented with information posted on the Admissions, Financial Aid, and Residence Life websites related to annual cost of attendance. In addition, consolidated Consumer Information and required disclosures for students related to Title IV Financial Aid are published on the Financial Aid website.

Accreditation relationships are listed clearly in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs under the heading of Accreditation.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

As noted in Core Component 2A, UWL is a member of the UW System and is governed by the UW System BOR (which oversees legislatively-mandated aspects of higher education). Each Regent is appointed by the Governor subject to confirmation by the Wisconsin Senate. The Board of Regents appoints a president for the UW System and a chancellor for each member institution. It also allocates funds, approves budgets, establishes admission policies, and maintains uniform transfer of credit hours among UW System institutions. As evidenced by files linked to UWL's Assurance Argument, the BOR annually reports to the state legislature and serves to ensure that all member institutions, including UWL, are in compliance with appropriate policies and procedures (such as policies related to sexual assault, harassment, discrimination, approval of new degree programs, faculty tenure appointments, and capital expenditures).

Oversight by the BOR and the UW System serves to promote independence from undue influence on the part of elected officials, donors, or external parties. Appointment of UWL's Chancellor by the BOR serves to promote independence from undue influence and enhance UWL autonomy. This independence and autonomy is reflected in the Wisconsin Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Employees and is overseen by the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board.

Both the BOR and UW System are in frequent contact with UWL. Several UWL employees serve on BOR and UW System committees, thereby securing communications among not only the UWL Chancellor, but also UWL faculty, staff, and administration. A recent example is a faculty member serving on the BOR Tenure Task Force.

Wisconsin state statute 36.09(1)(f) requires the Board of Regents to "*delegate to each chancellor the necessary authority for the administration and operation of the institution within the policies and guidelines established by the board.*" Chancellors, including the chancellor for UWL, are statutorily designated as the "*executive heads of their respective faculties and institutions.*" Consequently, the

UWL Chancellor maintains sufficient autonomy to govern daily operations in finances, personnel, and academic activities at the institutional level.

Wisconsin statute section 36.09(4) further states that the faculty, *subject to the responsibilities and powers of the board, the UWS president, and the UWL chancellor* have the primary responsibility for “advising” the chancellor regarding academic and educational activities and faculty personnel matters." Even though this language is "*subordinate to the responsibilities and powers*" of the Board of Regents and the UWL Chancellor, conversations with the BOR and UW System reveal a strong commitment to shared governance and faculty guidance related to academic and educational activities as well as personnel matters related to retention, tenure and promotion.

Open forums with faculty revealed concern that the recent legislative changes (Wisconsin Act 10 and 55) have diminished shared governance, diminished faculty responsibilities related to academic and educational activities, threatened tenure and promotion platforms, and diminished academic freedom and freedom of expression. Faculty expressed concerns that they were defeated, powerless, scared, and even terrified. Several expressed concerns that they no longer enjoy ownership of academic and educational curriculum or participation in the tenure process. Some faculty referred to the changes as "fake tenure" because they are not sure what the new tenure policy means. As a result, it is recommended that extensive, ongoing dialogue continue on the UWL campus related to the future impact of Wisconsin Act 55.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Evidence

The UW System Mission Statement and UWL's Principles Regarding Freedom of Speech and Inclusion evidence commitment to freedom of expression. Statements in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs further evidence UWL's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Policies are in place whereby faculty and staff may appeal a negative decision related to promotion or tenure. These policies were developed by the UWL Faculty Committee on Complaints, Grievances, Appeals, and Academic Freedom (CGAAF) as approved by the UWL Faculty Senate. In addition, the Board of Regents (BOR) adopted a statement on academic freedom and freedom of expression in December 2015.

UWL is committed to collegial (shared) governance. This is evidenced by a high degree of involvement by the Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate committees in designing policies and procedure for the university; faculty and staff participation in various sets of departmental bylaws; and joint committees that report directly to the chancellor.

UWL has policies regarding computer and network use policy. UWL routinely removes password access for terminated employees or students who are not actively enrolled at UWL.

Tenure for all UW System faculty was removed from Wisconsin statute chapter 36. With passage of the 2015 Wisconsin Act 55, it is now a part of UW System BOR policy. As noted in **Core Components 2C and 5D**, faculty raised grave concerns during open sessions regarding these changes. The Regent Tenure Policy Task Force met in late 2015 to address these and other Act 55 concerns. Conversations with the BOR indicated that Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) policies are driven by each academic institution within UW System, and that the policies are even driven by each institutional department, thereby preserving integrity of the RTP process. However, as this change only took place one month ago (March 2016), the full impact of Act 55 is yet to be revealed. Conversations with both the BOR and UW System indicate the intent and design of RTP is to preserve the process at the university-level within guidelines provided by the BOR. As noted in prior components, continued dialog regarding budget, tenure, retention, promotion, and academic implications implicated by Act 55 are merited.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Several entities, including the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs, Administration & Finance, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs, provide oversight and support services that promote the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by faculty, staff, and students. UWL's Institutional Review Board and Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (accredited by the Association for Assessment & Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care) oversee research involving human or animal subjects. The Institutional Biosafety Committee oversees biohazardous procedures. UWL also adheres to the NSF Responsible Conduct of Research regulations and provides training materials as well as online training related to integrity in research and scholarship and potential financial conflict of interests. These and other such policies are published on the university website.

All undergraduate students are required to take Communicating Effectively (CST 110). As part of CST 110, students are required to complete the Murphy Library Information Literacy unit. The class also includes a plagiarism tutorial that explains plagiarism, provides examples, and directs students to campus resources such as the Writing Center, library, or online videos for guidance. UWL subscribes to the motto, "Academic integrity matters. Earn your degree" and promotes the motto in a university-wide poster series campaign.

UWL also provides guidance in the ethical use of information resources in required freshman classes. The UWL library offers in-person classes, video tutorials, webinars, and online guides that cover topics such as library resources, research, citation formats, copyright, and plagiarism.

Although the uniform course syllabus contains standard language on academic misconduct, conversations with faculty, administration, and staff reveal that the uniform course syllabus is not required, but rather only recommended to be used by faculty. As such, review of syllabi revealed a lack of consistency and omission of standard language in numerous syllabi. Consequently, one recommendation is that UWL review its current policy regarding a standardized syllabi template, especially in terms of URL links to information regarding academic misconduct, the American Disabilities Act, Title IX, release of confidential information (FERPA), the student handbook, the Teach Act, and textbook information. In addition, it is recommended that UWL also review policies related to inclusion of student learning objectives in standardized, course specific syllabi.

However, these federal policies and guidelines are published in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. They are also reinforced through timely emails, meetings with department chairs, new faculty training sessions, and through a dedicated poster series campaign. In addition, the Student Life Office publishes the policy related to academic honesty and integrity on the university website and sends an e-mail each semester containing a link to the Academic Misconduct Guide. These policies are in accordance with Chapter UWS 14, Wis. Adm. Code which outlines student academic disciplinary procedures.

UWL has published guidelines related to academic honesty and integrity. As a tool to detect plagiarism, UWL provides faculty with access to plagiarism software such as Turnitin. Similar to most academic institutions, UWL faculty enjoy a certain degree of discretion when enforcing individual incidents of academic misconduct. However, many departmental bylaws are clear as to faculty protocol regarding student academic misconduct. As such, individual UWL colleges and departments should review respective bylaws to determine if they effectively address tracking and the handling individual situations of student academic misconduct.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Evidence

UWL's Assurance Argument reveals that UWL acts under the guidance and oversight of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents, and the state legislature. The Assurance Argument and Evidence File indicates the institution acts with integrity and conducts daily operations in an ethical and responsible manner.

More dialogue is recommended regarding legislative changes and how they affect academic and educational matters. Faculty and staff are unsure what the ultimate impact might be upon academic freedom, retention, promotion and tenure.

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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

Undergraduate and graduate catalogs were examined to assess the appropriateness of programs and associated courses to the degree or certificate awarded. Based on a random sampling of several programs from each college or school, the program and course descriptions seem appropriate for the level of the degree or certificate. An examination of the Student Learning Outcomes for Departments and Programs as derived from 2014 biennial assessment reports demonstrates clearly articulated learning outcomes appropriate to the level of the degree as well as their relevancy to the specific programs.

A sample of some of the many programs that were reviewed in the catalogs is presented here.

- 1) Management Department (Management Major - Bachelor of Science (BS), Master of Business Administration Program (MBA) and Marketing Major - Bachelor of Science (BS))

The programs follow the requirements set by Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB International). This accreditation body is recognized internationally for the high standards it imposes on its member institutions. In addition, the programs are accredited by AACSB International.

- 2) Biology Department (Biology Major - Bachelor of Science (BS), Biology Major - Bachelor of Arts (BS))

The two programs require students to take appropriate courses in biology, general chemistry and organic chemistry. There are several tracks available to students within the biology major.

3) College of Liberal Studies (World History Major - Bachelor of Arts (BA))

The world history major is considered the most comprehensive of the history majors, with requirements that diversify the degree to cover as much of the world as can be done in a 40-credit undergraduate degree. The level and content of the courses are appropriate to the degree.

4) School of Education (Early Childhood-Middle Childhood Education Program (ages birth - 11) - Bachelor of Science (BS))

This program prepares teacher candidates to become teachers who ground curriculum in the lives of students; who embrace multicultural perspectives and uphold just teaching practices; value academically rigorous curriculum; and are culturally sensitive. Candidates completing this program earn a regular classroom teaching certification at the Early Childhood through Middle Childhood (EC-MC) developmental range (ages: birth through 11). An examination of the syllabi reveals appropriate number and level of courses for the program.

Although only a few programs are listed here, at least 20 more programs from the various colleges and schools were reviewed and found to have met the criteria with regard to level of courses as well as in terms of breadth and depth.

Dual-Credit courses have the same syllabus as regular courses by policy and these courses are taught by qualified high school instructors. High school instructors are required to possess a master's degree in an appropriate field to qualify as dual-credit instructors. A review of CV's provided indicated that dual credit instructors were qualified to teach the courses to which they were assigned.

Academic expectations and standards for online courses are clearly articulated in the UWL Online Education Handbook and are equivalent to face-to-face courses. Where feasible, online courses are offered in a hybrid mode whereby students come to the campus for a face-to-face instruction on a prearranged schedule. Online courses recognize the need for accessibility and the Desire2Learn (D2L) learning management system has accessibility compliance standards. Faculty teaching online courses are required to undergo three weeks of online training on the use and of D2L for course management. A course syllabus template is required for on-line courses and is available in the handbook. This template requires inclusion of course objectives and applicable program learning outcomes.

The Office of the Provost/Vice Chancellor, has issued a guide for preparation of course syllabus separate from the UWL Online Education Handbook and it recommends inclusion of Student Learning Outcomes for each course. A review of course syllabi provided indicated that many course syllabi do not list the learning objectives of the course or the specific learning outcomes

It is

recommended that UWL adopt a standard template for all course syllabi, that will assure consistency and benefit the students.

Although the institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate programs in the catalog the consistency at the course level is not there. All course syllabi should include learning outcomes. In addition it is also not clear as to how the students are evaluated in courses that enroll both graduate and undergraduate students. It is imperative that courses that include credit for both undergraduate and graduate students have learning outcomes and assessments consistent and appropriate to the level of education.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The goals of the General Education (GE) Program at UWL are to develop: communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, skills in analytical, logical and critical thinking knowledge of the development and interaction of human cultures, understanding of concepts, ideas, and systems of thought that underlie human activities, understanding of and sensitivity to cultural diversity in the United States, understanding of the social, political, and economic frameworks of societies within the global context, understanding and appreciation of the arts, understanding of nature, including the role of science and technology in environmental and social change, knowledge and skills essential to physical well-being and a healthy lifestyle

The GE program includes required coursework in both fundamental skills and liberal studies (a survey of essential areas of academic inquiry):

- Fundamental Skills: i) tools for skilled communication (speech and writing); and ii) tools for structured analysis and communication (mathematics and modern languages).
- Liberal Studies: iii) multicultural perspectives, iv) global understanding, v) natural sciences, vi) social sciences, vii) humanistic studies, viii) aesthetic appreciation and ix) personal well-being.

All undergraduates who complete a degree from UWL complete the GE program and students who transfer to UWL must demonstrate completion of equivalent coursework. The GE program serves as the basis for the UWL Associate Degree. The General Education Committee (GEC) is the oversight

body for the Associate Degree curriculum. The general education goals, program and coursework align with the UWL mission, vision and value statements providing a solid framework for students into the future.

Within the nine categories of the GE program 28 SLO's were originally articulated. Such a large number of outcomes created logistical issues when it came to monitoring and the GEC recognized the need to manage more efficiently the outcomes associated with the nine categories. During the 2013-14 academic year, the General Education program reorganized the nine categories to six and then rewrote each of the six categories to read as a SLO. Specifically, the recommendation was to adopt the following six student learning outcomes. The recommendations are documented in "Policies and Procedures for Assessment of the General Education Program." Students will demonstrate knowledge and abilities relating to: 1. human cultures and the natural world; 2. critical and creative thinking; 3. aesthetic perspectives and meaning; 4. effective communication; 5. interaction in intercultural contexts; 6. individual, social, and environmental responsibility. The steps taken by the GEC and General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) are in the right direction and allows for efficient management of the GE program.

UWL ensures that each degree program engages student in collecting, analyzing and communicating information in two primary ways: Writing in the Major and undergraduate research/apprenticeship programs. Students are required to refine their writing skills through completing either the Writing in the Major program or Writing Intensive courses. This requirement requires the students to collect, analyze and communicate information. UWL has a robust undergraduate program supported by budget allocations (over \$200,000/year since FY12), undergraduate and graduate research courses listed in the catalog, faculty and adequate infrastructure. The UWL NSSE data indicate a high rate of participation in undergraduate research (29%) while 62% of seniors report participating in a culminating senior experience. The Eagle Apprenticeship program and the Veteran Research Scholars programs match incoming first-year students with faculty mentors to introduce the students to the concept of undergraduate research. The Policy Research Network gives undergraduates the opportunity to analyze real-world problems and provide common sense solutions for civic leaders. The Undergraduate Research and Creativity Committee (URCC) provides grants to UW-L students to present their research at annual events including National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), the UW-System's Annual Symposium for Undergraduate Research and Creativity, and Posters in the Rotunda.

The General Education program includes courses that expose the students to understand and appreciate cultural diversity of the world. All students take at least one course that focuses on minority cultures in the United States or women in the United States from a multiracial perspective. The study abroad program at UWL also promotes the appreciation of cultural diversity among the participating students.

In summary, UWL meets all the requirements of this core component and in many areas, UWL excels in providing needed services and required facilities to assure a good learning experience for its students.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

According to the Faculty Senate Articles of Faculty Organization and the Faculty Senate Policies Amended November 2015 the Academic Policies and Standards Committee formulates policies concerning student evaluation (grading system, honors status, probation etc.), although course grades are the responsibility of the instructors. The Graduate Council handles all academic policies related to graduate studies and students. The Academic Planning Council is responsible for reviewing proposals for new programs, minors, majors and concentrations. The General Education Committed reviews and approves proposals for curricular changes in general education and has oversight responsibility for the Associate Degree requirements. The Graduate and Undergraduate Curriculum Committees review and approve proposals for curricular and course changes from academic departments. The process was confirmed during conversations on campus with faculty, staff and administrators.

In order to maintain its record of excellence and provide access for more students, the University of Wisconsin La Crosse (UWL) received Board of Regent's approval to implement an undergraduate differential tuition that simultaneously grew undergraduate enrollments and resulted in hiring additional faculty (170) and staff (36). The initiative speaks to GROWTH (more graduates), QUALITY (decreased student-faculty ratios) and ACCESS (maintain or slightly increase the university's ability to take on new students as well as retain and graduate those who arrive) and is called the GQ&A differential tuition fee. New students started paying the slightly higher tuition beginning in the 2008-2009 academic year resulting in a final total annual differential tuition of \$1,000 per student. This has had a significant impact on UWL. Student to faculty ratios decreased

from 24:1 to 19:1. Retention and graduation rates have held steady or improved. This action has allowed UWL to have sufficient numbers of staff to serve the increasing enrollments over the past several years.

Faculty qualifications for all academic positions are determined by the faculty in consultation with the Chancellor. An examination of faculty qualifications reveals that most faculty have the appropriate terminal degree in their field. A review of faculty CV's showed that some teaching faculty do not have a terminal degree do possess extensive professional experience in their field. By policy, faculty who teach graduate courses must apply for graduate faculty status. According to Senate by-laws, high school teachers, who teach UWL dual credit courses, must have a Master's degree in the discipline or equivalent discipline related coursework, or a Master of Education and equivalent coursework in the discipline to be taught. This requirement was verified by examining a sample of the credentials of dual credit instructors.

A review of the Guide to Faculty Promotions and Portfolio Development at UWL, UWL bylaws concerning merit evaluation, retention, promotion, tenure and post-tenure review and Guide to Instructional Academic Staff (IAS) Promotions indicated that all faculty are reviewed regularly. Merit review and post-tenure review for instructors are determined at the departmental level in accordance with departmental bylaws. IAS are reviewed annually as a requirement for continued employment. Annual merit reviews factor into retention and promotion decisions for faculty and retention decisions for IAS. Tenure-track faculty are reviewed for retention purposes annually; tenured faculty who are eligible for promotion participate in an additional peer review. Tenure-track faculty are considered probationary for the first seven years of employment and retention decisions are made at the departmental level in consultation with the Dean and the Provost.

Promotion guides for both faculty and IAS outline the process and criteria by which each group is evaluated for promotion. The Provost's website provides additional resources for candidates to review, including successful portfolios; the teaching effectiveness worksheet used by the committee; and a service appraisal worksheet for the candidate to use. Faculty promotion decisions are made by the Joint Promotion Committee, comprised of tenured full professors and academic administrators; instructional academic staff promotion decisions are made by the IAS Promotion committee.

Grants to support professional development are provided through several peer reviewed grant programs. Faculty Research Grants support scholarly efforts to advance knowledge and understanding in the academic disciplines. Faculty Development Grants support teaching innovations. Curricular Redesign Grants support groups of instructors to develop or redesign and implement curricula and teaching practices in academic programs. The UWL Foundation provides grants to enhance instruction, research and public service through its Small Grants Program. The Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning (CATL) supports improvement of teaching and student learning at UWL. Its primary goal is to help instructors improve the design and implementation of instructional materials, teaching practices, and assessment of student learning. CATL provides opportunities for instructors to improve their practice through workshops, conferences, seminars, training courses, programs, grant projects, and individual consultation. These examples show that UWL values and supports all faculty and IAS as they seek to remain current in their disciplines.

All instructors are required to include office hours that are posted on-line and in course syllabuses and where appropriate post them near their offices. Additionally students are provided with email addresses of course instructors.

Staff are supported through such activities as Employee Enrichment Day or through workshops such as Administrative Support Workshop held in Aug 2015. In special cases funds are provided for travel

support. A handbook is available for performance evaluation of non-instructional academic staff.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

UWL provides support for student learning and effective teaching. Many student support services are supported by a student fee which is allocated by the Academic Initiatives Differential Allocation Committee. Categories eligible to receive funding through the Academic Initiatives differential tuition programs include: advising, diversity, internationalization and research. The Academic Advising Center and the Access Center receive funding through this program. Meetings were held with these groups to determine whether there was good, consistent advising available to all students as the student survey indicated that there might be some inconsistencies. Primarily the team learned that everyone at UWL takes their advising responsibilities very seriously. Examples of student support services include the following examples.

- The Academic Advising Center (AAC) is an important resource for students. Most undeclared students in the Colleges of Science and Health and Liberal Studies are assigned an advisor from the AAC. The AAC also serves as a resource for students who wish to change majors; or transfer to UWL; and those who are uncertain about their current major and seeking new options; or for students with general questions who need additional help or direction to resources. For convenience student advising is provided in the residence halls. All instructional staff and faculty provide advising to students. Students and faculty confirmed the value of the AAC during open forums.
- The ACCESS Center provides support services for students with disabilities. ACCESS advisors work with each student served to develop an individualized plan of accommodations according to the student's needs. These resources provide valuable help to students at UWL and was confirmed during open forums.
- Learning resources include the Murphy Library, computer labs, and online resources such as Desire2Learn (D2L) and library databases. Tutoring is provided through the Murphy Learning

Center housed in the library. Students typically rent their textbooks and are assessed a fee each term for this service. Oversight of these services takes place through various committees on campus including the Library Committee, the Individuals with Disabilities Advocacy Committee (IDAC) the Textbook Rental Services Policy Oversight Committee and the Academic Technology Committee (ATC).

- The Murphy Learning Center (MLC), Writing Center, and Public Speaking Center are led by faculty members who work with trained peer tutors to provide support to students. Activities in the MLC go beyond tutoring resources. The Writing Center provided both in-person and on-line tutoring, besides conducting workshops throughout the academic terms. Students and faculty commented on the value of these resources.
- The First Year Experience (FYE) programming supports all new students in their transition to UWL and acts as a resource for new students and family members. FYE has implemented the use of Eagle Guides, current students to act as resources for incoming students.

There are many other support services offered to students that are not specifically supported by the fee noted above. Examples of services that support the needs of the UWL student population include the following.

- The Counseling & Testing Center (CTC) provides client-centered mental health and academic skills services to the UWL campus community. Services provided to students include individual and relationship counseling, group counseling, crisis counseling, consultation, workshops, various assessments, and academic skills counseling. Services provided to the faculty and staff include consultation, service through joint committee membership, and outreach. Nearly 900 students received direct services from CTC during the period 2014-15.
- UWL also has a Student Health Center that provided services to more than 4000 students during the 2014-15 year. Recreational Sports provide employment and leadership opportunities for over 250 students annually in positions including planning and implementing programs, repairing equipment, and officiating for intramural activities.
- Through the Violence Prevention Center, the violence prevention specialist provides free and confidential advocacy and support to students, faculty, and staff who are victims of sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking.
- The Campus Assessment and Response Team (CARE) contributes to the maintenance of a safe campus environment by providing a proactive and supportive multidisciplinary team approach to the prevention, assessment and intervention of situations or individuals that may pose a physical or psychological threat to the safety and well-being of the university community.

The Quality Initiative Final Report (Aug 2015) emphasizes allocation of resources for student success. Three task forces were employed: 1) development and implementation of an early alert system, 2) review of current academic advising practices, and 3) promotion and coordination of academic student success resources. Each task force consisted of a broad representation of faculty and student support services staff. These initiative has helped UWL to better communicate, coordinate and support their students. It will help with inconsistencies in advising noted in the student survey.

UWL provides the infrastructure and resources to support effective teaching and learning. A campus tour and conversations with faculty confirmed that facilities are adequate for effective teaching and learning. Capital projects, \$400 million over the past eight years, have made a significant impact on teaching and learning facilities and UWL has done a great job in advocating for this pool of money from the state which is separate from the operations allocation.

UWL has an Institutional Review Board (IRB). Training is provided to faculty and students on many issues including the use of human subjects in research, citations, integrity, and plagiarism to name a

few. The IRB is overseen by the campus Research Integrity Officer, currently the Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The team heard from the sponsored research staff and those involved with research compliance at UWL. Students and faculty have access to resources and training to ensure that everyone follows policy.

According to students staff at Murphy Library are always there to help find appropriate resources for their work. Murphy Library staff do many trainings annually to help students find resources. Faculty support this process through undergraduate research mentoring. The quantity of undergraduate research presentations both on campus and at conferences is evidence of outstanding work by all to support this endeavor.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The curricular and co-curricular activities that students engage in directly addresses the mission of UWL as a regional academic and cultural center that prepares students to serve their role in a constantly evolving world community. Examples of UWL activities that accomplish this goal include:

- There are opportunities for international and domestic students interested in gaining a cross cultural experience in the Eagle Gray Global Village and Reuter Global Village. Programs focused on diversity awareness and knowledge allow students to build personal relationships and gain a greater understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures. Programs include: A Walk Around the World, Pumpkin Painting Event, UWL American Football Practice, and many more.
- Living Learning Communities integrate topic-driven learning within a dedicated living community of fellow students. Within the LLC, students strive to apply knowledge outside the classroom, creating a true partnership of academics and real-world application. Living with a group of 28-38 other students will expand the overall residence hall experience to the furthest degree of education. One example is the Social Justice Living and Learning Community (LLC) is an inclusive and accepting community that has a focus on social justice and diversity. The Social Justice community actively explores equality, peace and genuine respect for others.
- The First Year Experience (FYE) in Coate Hall, Laux Hall and White Hall is designed for incoming first year students who want dedicated support and enhanced opportunities for their first year in college. A full-time Academic Advisor is available two days a week for appointments and coursework consultation, and there is also a student Learning and Enrichment Coordinator (LEC) who will create social, developmental and learning events throughout the year.
- The Reuter Hall Upper class Student Experience (UE) is designed for students seeking to remain in an on-campus living environment, while developing their leadership skills and life-skills.

Student Affairs (SA) has developed and adopted a division-wide set of five learning outcomes for all student employees (1000+) in SA. Annually student employees are asked to assess their personal &

professional growth through their employment experience in relation to the established learning outcomes. Some of the noted areas of growth include: increased teamwork and leadership skills, ability to make decisions effectively, confidence in their interpersonal skills, and gained efficacy in the classroom which clearly show that co-curricular learning is valued and supported at UWL.

UWL also has more than 196 registered student organizations including pre-professional, academic organizations. Many of the organizations are involved in community activities. The NSSE Survey indicates a rich experience for UWL students both inside and outside the classroom. UWL seniors report participating in community service and volunteer work at a statistically significantly higher rate than students from other public universities.

UWL also participates in “Ugetconnected” program in partnership with United Way, Western Technical College and Viterbo University. Students are involved in many volunteer activities throughout the community giving them the opportunity increase leadership and teamwork skills in a variety of activities.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Evidence

UWL meets all the core components of criterion 3: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support.

- Full-time faculty have terminal degrees in their field or appropriate experience relating to their discipline. Dual-Credit course instructors have at least a master's degree in the appropriate field. The institution has adequate numbers of faculty to carry out their overall teaching responsibilities. Staff support is adequate.
- Courses and programs are current and appropriate to the level of the degree or certificate. Learning goals are articulated for all their academic programs including undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs.
- The general education program is appropriate to the mission and degree levels of UWL.
- Course syllabi are available and these include course topics, office hours, grading schemes. In many cases the learning outcomes associated with the courses are also included. However, there is no university policy on inclusion of learning outcomes in course syllabi and there were several course syllabi that did not include learning outcomes.
- Courses that enroll both graduate and undergraduate students did not clearly articulate the assessment processes that are consistent and appropriate to the level of education.
- UWL has the facilities including teaching laboratories, technological infrastructure, libraries and adequate space to support student learning. Co-curricular activities serve to enhance and enrich the learning experience of its students.

In summary, it is recommended that UWL adopt a standard template for all course syllabi, that will assure consistency and benefit the students. Although the institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate programs in the catalog, the consistency at the course level is not there.

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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

UWL has an established process for the seven-year review of current programs. New programs are reviewed after five years. The Academic Program Review (APR) committee, a standing Faculty Senate committee, is involved in the review of the full APR program report and the feedback process. The APR submits a written report to Faculty Senate and the Provost. In response to the 2006 HLC visit report, the review process has been revised with a focus on program assessments that are clearly linked to student learning outcomes. An Academic Program Review Task Force was formed in spring 2015 to provide recommendations for a more effective review of externally accredited and graduate programs. These recommendations are being implemented during the 2015-2016 academic year. Annual program review summaries are submitted to the UW System. This information is shared with

the Board of Regents Education Committee. Interviews with the faculty and administrator members of the APR and Assessment committees confirmed the level of faculty involvement and ownership of this process.

UWL has a process articulated in the Faculty Senate Bylaws for undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees to evaluate the credit that is transcribed for its new courses and significantly revised courses. According to the worksheets submitted in the Federal Compliance documents, UWL has defined the credit hour requirements for face to face, online, co-op, and internship courses. Internship/co-op experiences are offered in undergraduate programs. Programs with internship opportunities have to monitor the number of credit hours assigned for the internship in relation to the total 120 credit hour degree requirement.

UWL follows the UW System policies for the transfer of undergraduate credit. The information for the transfer of credit is provided in the university catalog and on the university's Admissions webpage for transfer students. Information on receiving credit for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and CLEP is clearly stated. The respective UWL department determines the courses within their department that will be equivalent for credit. UWL also participates in the UW System's Transfer Information System, which provides an online tool to determine course equivalencies between UW System and the Wisconsin Technical College System. Military credit follows the American Council of Education (ACE) guidelines for awarding credit for experiential learning. International transfer or graduate students must submit transcripts with a course-by-course evaluation through an international credential service such as World Education Services (WES) or Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE). Transfer policies for graduate programs are provided in the graduate catalog. Programs have the discretion to determine whether or not proposed transfer credits meet the requirements of the respective program.

There are processes in place to ensure the rigor, expectations for student learning outcomes, access to learning resources and faculty qualifications for courses and programs. The Academic Planning Committee (APC), the General Education Committee (GEC) the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC), and the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) review new course and program proposals for rigor, content, qualified staff, learning resources, appropriate facilities, and financial support for the implementation of the course and/or program. These committees consist of faculty representatives from the colleges, the registrar, and a recorder from the Records Office. An electronic curriculum inventory management system (CIM) is in place to track the workflow. Course prerequisites are determined by the respective department and are reviewed by the department's curriculum committee. Approval is required from the college dean and the university's Undergraduate or Graduate Curriculum committee. Prerequisites are entered into the university catalogs and the online registration system, WINGS.

The respective program determines expectations for student learning. It is not required, but recommended that course syllabi outline expected student learning outcomes. Faculty are not required to use a standardized syllabus template. As a result, the syllabi format may vary from department to department. It is recommended that UWL adopt a standardized format for syllabi. Ongoing review of student learning outcomes is the responsibility of the respective academic college and departments. New programs or significant changes to existing programs must be submitted to the UCC or the GCC for review. In the interviews with curriculum committees, the GEAC and the APR, the committee members shared that they are currently working with programs to clearly differentiate undergraduate and graduate learning outcomes, but it is still a work in progress.

Learning resources include the Murphy Library, computer labs, and online resources such as Desire2Learn (D2L) and library databases. Faculty members also serve as a resource through

mentoring and guidance during office hours. Tutoring is provided through the Murphy Learning Center housed in the library and Disability Services are provided through the ACCESS Center. Students typically rent their textbooks and are assessed a fee each term for this service. Oversight of these services takes place through various committees on campus including the Library Committee, the Individuals with Disabilities Advocacy Committee (IDAC) the Textbook Rental Services Policy Oversight Committee and the Academic Technology Committee (ATC).

Faculty qualifications are aligned with the HLC Faculty Qualifications Expectations. These expectations are listed in the Faculty Senate By-Laws. In addition, dual credit faculty qualifications are also aligned with this document and the UW System guidelines. A review of submitted faculty CV's confirmed that UWL is following policy.

High school teacher candidates for dual credit who meet these eligibility requirements participate in either a 1:1 interview with the UWL dual credit faculty instructor or a group interview which may include school district, UWL academic department, and/or CEE representatives. Final selection of high school dual credit instructors is made by the academic department. A review of the CVs of the high school dual credit teachers confirm that they meet the eligibility requirements.

Eleven external accreditors for programs are listed on the university website. There are 15 programs listed in the Assurance Argument as having external accreditation. The School of Education is accredited by the state of Wisconsin, but not CAEP/NCATE. While records from the specialty accrediting bodies show that programs have been out of compliance with criteria and/or standards at the time of review/re-review, in each case the program has come into compliance within the prescribed period of time. These efforts suggest that UWL is able to maintain its relationships with external accrediting bodies.

The university collects data on the employment and continuing education of its graduates. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) guidelines inform this process. Data are collected through direct surveys, appointments with Career Services, and reviews of graduates' LinkedIn sites. This process started with the Career Services Office in 2014, but has transitioned to Institutional Research in 2015. This information is shared with programs to inform program improvement and revisions. Several programs also have advisory boards consisting of employers and alumni. These advisory boards provide feedback on the quality and preparation of graduates of the programs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

In response to the 2006 HLC visit report, UWL addressed the concerns listed for the general education outcomes through the formation of the General Education Committee (GEC) and the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) in 2011 to address the assessment of student learning. In 2013-2014, the learning outcomes for general education were aligned with UW System's Shared Learning Goals and the AAC&U LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. Review of assessment results of the general education outcomes is done through the GEAC. This process was confirmed through interviews with the GEAC and the college assessment committees. In an effort to streamline the process, UWL is piloting the use of TaskStream to submit and evaluate General Education (GE) Student Learning Outcome (SLO) artifacts. Faculty administer the General Education assessment in alternating years and reflect and implement changes in the following year. Forms are made available to faculty to document the student learning outcome, the assessment task, the metric(s) for evaluating student performance, data on student performance, and actions taken as a result of student performance.

Assessment of student learning within the academic programs is conducted by the respective program and when applicable, an external accreditor. All programs submit biennial assessment reports that are reviewed by college committees, the college Dean, and Provost. The university Academic Program Review committee also reviews programs on a seven-year cycle. The biennial assessment reports submitted with the Assurance Argument require programs to identify targeted student learning outcomes. Data on these outcomes are provided along with actions taken as a result of the data findings. A sampling of reviews from each college indicated reports that meet the guidelines along with documentation of actions taken based on assessment of student learning outcomes.

Additional data are collected through the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Collegiate Learning Assessment. Data is reported to the AAC&U Voluntary System of Accountability. Data from the NSSE and CLA are used by many of the programs as part of their program assessment reports. These reports showed that the data is used by each unit to improve

student success at UWL. The Library will be involved in assessment of student learning outcomes in instruction and information literacy activities in the 2015-2016 academic year.

In order to enhance and improve the assessment process and create a culture of assessment, UWL implemented a very successful Assessment Commons forum in January 2016 to highlight assessment activities and implemented a grant program through the Provost's Office to support assessment activities. TaskStream is now being piloted to facilitate the collection and review of assessment documents. A webpage to highlight assessment reports, activities and findings is being discussed for development in the future.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

Retention, persistence and completion goals for UWL are identified in the university's Growth, Quality and Access Plan. IPEDS data are used to track progress in retention, persistence and graduation rates. Data are reported in the UWL Fact Book. UWL also submits progress reports on meeting the system's goals for the institution in the UW System Accountability Report. This is now reported in an interactive dashboard that allows for comparison among the campuses of the UWS. Based on the data presented, UWL has the highest first to second year retention rate (85.6%) for the regional comprehensive universities. UWL also has the highest four-year (35.9%) and six-year (68.4%) graduation rates for first-time, full-time students for the UW regional comprehensive universities. As confirmed during the interviews, UWL recognizes the need to examine closely the persistence, retention and graduation rates for subpopulations such as transfer students, students of color, and international students. This is currently being done through strategies and metrics identified in the Quality Initiative Firm Footing: Foundations for Student Academic Success. These strategies have financial support through the Growth, Quality and Access (GQ&A) initiative, which is funded by differential student tuition. Data are collected through the student information system WINGS at the institutional level and through the Central Data Request (CDR) at the system level.

Completion rates for graduate programs are tracked through the Office of Graduate Studies and the Office of Institutional Research. These rates are determined through consultation with the program directors. Some graduate programs use cohorts and others admit students throughout the academic year. The data are shared through the UWL Fact Book and an online dashboard for the entire campus community to review.

UWL has implemented several initiatives to address the achievement and graduation gaps for underrepresented students, such as the First Year Research Exposure (FYRE), the Eagle Mentoring Program for sophomores, McNair Scholars, and the UWS and UWL Lawton Minority Undergraduate Grant Programs. These initiatives have been recently implemented, so there are limited data on program effectiveness. It is recommended that UWL continue to monitor the effectiveness of these programs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Evidence

UWL has processes in place to ensure rigorous expectations for student learning outcomes, access to learning resources and faculty qualifications for courses and programs. The Academic Planning Committee (APC), the General Education Committee (GEC) the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC), and the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) are actively involved in the assessment process and the review of new program and course proposals. Review of assessment results of the general education outcomes is done through the GEAC. Assessment of student learning within the academic programs is conducted by the respective program, reviewed by the dean and when applicable, an external accreditor.

Consistency in syllabi format and content needs to be addressed. It is recommended that UWL adopt a campus-wide policy for implementing a standardized format for syllabi to clearly articulate expected outcomes to students and other university constituents.

Policies addressing transfer of credit and credit for prior experience are clearly posted on the university's webpage and catalog. Faculty qualifications are aligned with the HLC Faculty Qualifications Expectations. Learning resources, such as tutoring, computer labs, and library resources, are readily available to students to support their learning.

Retention, persistence and completion goals for UWL are identified in the university's Growth, Quality and Access Plan. IPEDS data are used to track progress in retention, persistence and graduation rates. Data are reported in the UWL Fact Book. UWL also submits progress reports on meeting the system's goals for the institution in the UW System Accountability Report. Completion rates for graduate programs are tracked through the Office of Graduate Studies and the Office of Institutional Research.

UWL has implemented several initiatives to address the achievement and graduation gaps for underrepresented students. It is recommended that UWL put into place measures to assess the effectiveness of these programs.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The institution has the fiscal resources to support its operations although it is clearly one of the most efficient (or underfunded) comprehensive institutions in the UW System as evidenced by their FTE state appropriation per FTE which is 10/11 institutions. This is partially due to the recruitment and retention successes at UWL which has led to more students which was not met with additional state funding. This has been challenged further in recent years with significant budget cuts from the state. The recommendations on how to take cuts are made by the Joint Committee on Planning and Budget (JCPB) with recommendations to the chancellor. The minutes of JCPB were reviewed for 2014-2015. The process for making cuts appears to be inclusive and transparent in the recorded minutes. It is clear from the minutes that the administrative leaders and the JCPB work together to make decision. Conversations in open forums with a variety of faculty and staff affirm that this has been an open, although painful process and retaining the educational mission has been the highest priority. That fact, unfortunately, means that there are support staff that have multiple roles or struggle to keep up with their workload.

Capital resources are funded separate from operations at the state level. UWL has been extremely successful in securing funding for capital projects - \$400 million over the past eight years. These capital projects have been funded with a combination of state dollars and student fees (approved by

the students). These funds have been used for projects such as a new classroom building (Centennial Hall), Roger Harring Stadium, residence hall (Eagle Hall), and the new student center that will open within the next several months. Faculty, staff and students confirmed during the campus visit the importance of these infrastructure additions to campus. Capital project priorities are set based on student success and the university's mission.

The university has the technology infrastructure to offer the current online offerings, support blended offerings, and videoconferencing. The team experienced the videoconferencing capabilities as we met with members of the Board of Regents and UW System President and Vice President. Information Technology Services (ITS) has a mission-driven work plan documented to support the entire campus community although it will be challenged to fully implement the plan under the current funding model.

The 2014 Customized IPEDS report shows that UWL is spending an appropriate portion of funding on instruction and academic support. (52% of expenses are for direct support of instruction while another 20% of expenses are for research, public service and academic support; 17% for student services; 11% for institutional support and other core). This compares well to peer institutions as noted in the report.

In order to maintain its record of excellence and provide access for more students, the University of Wisconsin La Crosse (UWL) received Board of Regent's approval to implement an undergraduate differential tuition that simultaneously grew undergraduate enrollments and resulted in hiring additional faculty (170) and staff (36). The initiative speaks to GROWTH (more graduates), QUALITY (decreased student-faculty ratios) and ACCESS (maintain or slightly increase the university's ability to take on new students as well as retain and graduate those who arrive) and is called the GQ&A differential tuition fee. New students started paying the slightly higher tuition beginning in the 2008-2009 academic year resulting in a final total annual differential tuition of \$1,000 per student. This has had a significant impact on UWL. Student to faculty ratios decreased from 24:1 to 19:1 since 2008. Retention and graduation rates have held steady or improved during this time period.

Job descriptions for staff indicate appropriate qualifications for each position. Hired staff are qualified and offered training as they begin their employment at UWL. Examples of professional development available to employees include diversity training and opportunities to learn and understand benefit changes led by human resources staff. Conversations with staff indicated that constant mentoring and on the job training were available to help them serve the campus community.

In conversations with faculty and staff it was clear that if a unit on campus had a budget request that it would filter up to their unit head. A prioritization would be made at various levels with final recommendations being made to the JCPB. This group analyzes the funds available along with the needs to determine appropriate allocations. For academic positions the department heads make recommendations to the deans. Deans may allocate or reallocate faculty lines based on enrollment and other data. Members of the JCPB indicated that this process is transparent and that it allowed them to see how all units are important to the success of campus. Each unit on campus is assigned a budget planner to help the unit director allocate and manage resources. Conversations with campus constituents indicated that they had appropriate access to balances to make sound financial decisions.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The Board of Regents is the governing body for the UW System. The BOR has standing committees that monitor various aspects for which they have responsibility to include: business and finance, audit, capital planning and budget, education, research and economic development and personnel matters. Each institution hosts a BOR meeting every 3-5 years. UWL hosted the BOR in April 2013. The chancellor attends all BOR meetings and UWL presents regularly to various committees. UWL submits annual accountability reports to the UW system that are shared with the BOR. Conversations with two BOR members indicated a knowledge of UWL - especially of their strengths in the region. They indicated that they heard regularly from the chancellor, provost and business office.

The UW System has a president who serves the BOR and is president of all faculties across the state. Conversations with the president and a new vice president (one month on the job) indicate that there is regular communication between the president and UWL chancellor. In addition there is regular communication between UW System staff with the provost, vice chancellor for student life, vice chancellor for administration and finance, and director of institutional research, assessment and planning. There are clear lines of communication available between UWL and the UW System and BOR.

UWL has a long-standing commitment to shared governance. Faculty, staff and student organizations all have regular access to the chancellor through Academic Staff Council, University Staff Council, Faculty Senate and Student Senate. All governance groups on campus are represented on a variety of joint committees that significantly inform the chancellor and his cabinet as they make institutional decisions. Conversations with members of these organizations and joint committees affirmed this commitment to shared governance.

2015 Wisconsin Act 55 was signed into law in July of 2015. The new language modified the definition of shared governance especially with respect to faculty. The BOR and UW System

president understand the change to be a minor modification while UWL faculty and staff understand this change in state statute to be a significant and detrimental change to shared governance. This lack of common understanding is causing significant faculty morale issues. Junior faculty indicated they are meeting to support one another to leave Wisconsin. Many senior faculty feel defeated. If all constituents cannot come to a common understanding UWL and the state of Wisconsin may lose a significant number of faculty. UWL faculty have a strong loyalty to the institution and the students they serve. That loyalty and commitment is driving many to work toward the common understanding rather than leave. The lack of common understanding will challenge UWL.

UWL administration, faculty, staff and students work together to set policies and procedures. There are student policies, departmental bylaws, and academic policies as articulated in the catalog and more. When faculty were asked where to go for a specific policy there was sometimes a hesitation in open meetings. It was clear that someone in the room always knew but individuals did not always know. In fact there is an ombudsman for faculty who might have questions regarding policy. The ombudsman is knowledgeable about policies. Student Life has an office that advocates for students and helps them to find answers to policy questions. Department heads serve as a resource as it relates to departmental bylaws and Human Resources answers policy questions about employment. In forums and discussions faculty and staff suggested a policy website that could link to all policies which might make a search easier. The registrar indicated that she is already combining all academic policies into one place for ease of use. Great idea, UWL!

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met With Concerns

Evidence

UWL has realized cuts from the state since 2004 which is also the date of the last adopted strategic plan. The 2006 HLC team voiced concern and indicated that the institution needed to plan for the future. The immediate plan was to adopt the GQ&A \$1000/student/year differential tuition (approved by 81% of the students in a vote). This plan has allowed UWL to drop the Faculty to Student ratio from 24:1 to 18:1 - a mission critical issue. UWL is monitoring the impact of GQ&A with a dashboard that includes retention and graduate rates which are key to student success - a core mission of UWL. The institution continues to receive cuts from the state (UW System) - including 81 FTE in 2015-2016.

There has been no strategic plan at UWL in recent history but the goals of GQ&A program have been the driving force since 2008. Budget cuts every two years has made it difficult to plan for the future or align budgets. Core values and shared governance through the Joint Committee on Planning and Budget (JCPB) have allowed UWL to make progress through the last several years. Student success and the educational mission at UWL are top priorities. The JCPB is an advisory committee that represents the university community in regards to planning and budget decisions. The committee has bylaws and is made up of 26 members as defined in the bylaws. A review of the minutes of this group indicates that the JCPB meets regularly to carry out its duties. It is evident based on many conversations that UWL is using data for continuous improvement as it strives for excellence. This is great but UWL must have a strategic plan in order to face the challenges of the future.

Recognizing the need for a strategic plan the mission, vision and values were revised and adopted in 2015. The chancellor appointed a strategic planning committee in December of 2015 and UWL hired a consultant to help guide the committee. The goal is to have a strategic plan by December of 2016. In May a large group of faculty, staff and students (representatives of all constituencies will gather in an attempt to determine 3-4 main priorities. Out of the priorities action teams will form over the

summer. The priorities and action plans will be vetted by all constituencies in the fall prior to adoption. This is an aggressive timeline but there is a healthy sense of urgency that is driving the process. There is also conversation that this requires a thoughtful process and that the timeline may be too aggressive.

When asked in an open forum about their assumptions as the campus begins this strategic planning process several were noted: participation will be broad, communication will be open, the process will result in specific action plans that will help the university move forward in good times and respond appropriately in tough times, data will be used to make decisions, strong shared governance will be key to success, will visit the plan regularly (annually), will allow for mission/budget/planning alignment, not an end point but a journey, plan will have accountability in it, and that it will provide the framework for the next capital campaign. There is enthusiasm and hope for the future as the campus community works toward this new strategic plan.

Individual units such as ITS have written plans for the future to help guide their decisions. It is imperative that the current strategic planning process result in a plan with actions that is monitored annually. That is great but all individual plans must be combined into one and then prioritized.

UWL currently does not have a strategic plan. It is imperative that the current strategic planning process end with a plan.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

UWL currently does not have a strategic plan. It is imperative that the current strategic planning process end with a plan.

The institutional plan must align with UWL mission, vision and values statements. The plan must anticipate emerging factors such as technology, demographics and globalization.

The plan must include metrics to measure success.

Interim Report must include the following:

- Final draft of strategic plan
- List of metrics that will be used to monitor success of the plan
- Timeline for monitoring metrics and success

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

As the GQ&A differential fee was adopted in 2008 a dashboard to monitor nine outcomes was developed. These nine outcomes include enrollment of undergraduate students, retention rate, number of undergraduate degrees awarded each year, student to faculty ratio, undergraduate research support, graduation rates, financial aid distributed to students, percent of students with financial need on campus and how is UWL addressing the financial need of its students. This dashboard is reviewed by the Joint Committee on Planning and Budget at UWL annually. The information in the dashboard is then shared in the Central Data Request (CDR) which flows into the Accountability document to the governor and legislature from UW System which clearly articulates an annual summary of performance. Conversations on campus mentioned continuous improvement toward a path to excellence on several occasions affirming the UWL commitment.

Examples that the university is watching data and responding to changes in data include:

- An Academic Program Review Task Force met (2015) to review the process. In addition to affirming the value of APR two recommendations were made and adopted. 1) The new process will include separate reports and reviews for graduate and undergraduate programs. This recommendation stemmed from a charge given to the task force regarding graduate education. 2) After a program undergoes their external accreditation process they complete the APR Checklist for Accredited Programs in which they indicate in what section/page of their external accreditation report particular self-study items can be found. The process at this point is the same is the same as the for other programs but does lessen the burden if the external accreditation report can be used for many items on the checklist.
- Three Campus Climate Surveys have been done since 2004 and the next will be done in the approximately two years. Data is presented and reviewed after each survey is completed in open campus forums. Working groups are formed after open forums to determine priorities for action. One recent task force formed was the Trans Task Force. The committee drafted a preferred name policy in 2015.
- Exit Interviews are conducted for all employees who leave UWL. There is also an offer of a face-to-face exit interview. The information collected is reviewed by Human Resources and the Director of Affirmative Action to inform future retention efforts for all faculty and staff.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Evidence

The institution has the fiscal resources to support its operations although it is clearly one of the most efficient (or underfunded) comprehensive institutions in the UWS system as evidenced by their FTE state appropriation. Fortunately, capital resources are funded separate from operations at the state level and UWL has been extremely successful in securing funding for capital projects - \$400 million over the past eight years. These capital projects have been funded with a combination of state dollars and student fees (approved by the students). In 2008 UW System approved a plan for differential tuition at UWL - \$1000/student/year which was also approved by a vote of the students. The differential tuition has allowed UWL to drop the Faculty to Student ratio from 24:1 to 18:1 - a mission critical issue - even with a significant increase in undergraduate enrollments. The institution manages the dollars allocated and collected very efficiently but continued decreases in state support will challenge the quality of education at UWL into the future.

The institution has developed metrics to systematically monitor a number of metrics related to the GQ&A Plan that was adopted with the differential tuition. These metrics are reviewed annually to improve performance.

The one item that UWL lacks is a strategic plan. A steering committee has been formed but the process is not beginning until May of 2016. It is imperative that a strategic plan be adopted for UWL to meet their challenges.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.D	Core Component 1.D	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	Met
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	Met
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.E	Core Component 3.E	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	Met
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	Met
5	Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met With Concerns
5.D	Core Component 5.D	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	Met With Concerns

Review Summary

Interim Report(s) Required

Due Date

12/14/2018

Report Focus

Strategic Planning

The current strategic planning process must end with a plan that aligns with UWL mission, vision and value statements. The plan must anticipate emerging factors such as technology, demographics and globalization. The plan must include metrics to measure success.

Interim Report must include the following:

- Final Draft of the Strategic Plan
 - Clear documentation of approval of the strategic plan by all campus entities.
 - List of metrics that will be used to monitor success of the plan.
 - Timeline for monitoring metrics and successes.
-

Due Date

12/16/2016

Report Focus

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

The institution will develop a single clear institutional policy for student complaints along with a tracking mechanism as indicated in the Federal Compliance Report.

- Currently there is no single student complaint policy or collection point for complaints but there are many. The institution's new policy must combine/collect student complaints (as defined in the institution's policy) such that an analysis can be made on a regular basis as to the following three items: 1) timeliness of responses; 2) trends in types of complaints to review for patterns or important information for institutional learning; 3) trends in acceptable responses or resolutions of complaints.
- The institution indicated that it would have a systematic complaint collection system in place in student affairs but that it would need to be modified to collect a broader range complaints.

The review in four years should include a log as well as a report of the analysis of the log as noted above.

Conclusion

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met With Concerns

Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose



Federal Compliance Worksheet for Review Panels and Evaluation Teams

Effective September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2016

Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components

The panel reviews each item identified in the Federal Compliance Guide and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. The panel should expect the institution to address these requirements with brief narrative responses and provide supporting documentation, where necessary. If the panel finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues with the institution's fulfillment of these requirements, it should document them in the space provided below.

This worksheet outlines the information the panel should review in relation to the federal requirements and provides spaces for the team's conclusions in relation to each requirement. The panel should refer to the Federal Compliance Guide for Institutions and Evaluation Teams in completing this worksheet. The Guide identifies applicable Commission policies and an explanation of each requirement. **The evaluation team will review the areas the panel identified for further review and will consider the panel's work in light of information gained in the on-ground visit.**

Institution under review: **University of Wisconsin-La Crosse**

Panel Members:

Julio Rivera, PhD

Linda Samson, PhD

Panel Recommendations for Further Review

Team Findings

*The team should identify its findings in following up on the areas identified by the panel. The team should also identify any findings it made related to Federal Compliance over the course of the visit. **The final version of the worksheet should reflect the findings of the team. It should not contain findings from the panel with which the team does not concur.***

DETAILED REVIEW OF FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Address this requirement by completing the “Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution’s Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours” in the Appendix at the end of this document.

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.

1. Review the process that the institution uses to manage complaints as well as the history of complaints received and processed with a particular focus in that history on the past three or four years.
2. Determine whether the institution has a process to review and resolve complaints in a timely manner.
3. Verify that the evidence shows that the institution can, and does, follow this process and that it is able to integrate any relevant findings from this process into its review and planning processes.
4. Advise the institution of any improvements that might be appropriate.
5. Consider whether the record of student complaints indicates any pattern of complaints or otherwise raises concerns about the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices.
6. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team’s conclusions:
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission’s requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Access to complaint processes can be accessed from the Consumer Information Page (University of Wisconsin-La Crosse 2016) under Resources-Policies-Consumer Information. This page contains the required information as well as a number of other helpful links to the UWL community.

A web search on ‘student complaint’ will yield a number of sites that direct the user to the UW System Complaint Process (<http://www.uwlax.edu/finaid/UW-System-Complaint-Process/>) (University of Wisconsin-La Crosse 2016). The process is outlined on the page and two links for complaints are available. One is a complaint about

program integrity issues. The other simply says complaint form. The **program integrity link was broken** (<http://www.wisconsin.edu/vpacad/PIR/PIR.htm>). The re-direct page said a login may be required. The second link (<https://www.wisconsin.edu/student-complaints/>) does go to a program integrity complaint site for the UW System (University of Wisconsin System 2016). The site outlines the process and identifies external agencies that may have jurisdiction. It also outlines the process for such complaints.

A web search on 'complaint' leads to similar pages and UW System statues about complaints, but does not lead to the campus climate or violence complaints. It is recommended that these be highlighted on searches using these and other common search terms.

The team verified that there is no single student complaint policy or collection point for complaints but there are many. Student Life sees many students and refers them to appropriate offices. Students indicated that a search of the UWL website or a visit to an advisor would lead to the discovery of an appropriate resolution of a complaint or situation. Many offices – even the UW System – receive student complaints. Currently the only log in the evidence file is the one received from the Hate/Bias Response Team.

The institution responded by indicating that it would have a systematic complaint collection sytem in place soon. This system is in place but would need to be modified in order to accommodate student complaints. In addition, currently this system is used only by the Student Life division.

A clear institutional policy along with a tracking mechanism should be implemented immediately. The policy must include a review of the complaints for patterns or important information for institutional learning, response, or correction.

Additional monitoring, if any: The institution should develop a policy to include the procedures noted above and submit to HLC within 180 days of IAC action. The review in four years should include a log as well as a report of the analysis of the log as noted above.

Publication of Transfer Policies

The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.

1. Review the institution's transfer policies.
2. Review any articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and program-specific articulation agreements.
3. Consider where the institution discloses these policies (e.g., in its catalog, on its web site) and how easily current and prospective students can access that information.

Determine whether the disclosed information clearly explains the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions and any articulation arrangements the institution has with other institutions. Note whether the institution appropriately lists its articulation agreements with other institutions on its website

or elsewhere. The information the institution provides should include any program-specific articulation agreements in place and should clearly identify program-specific articulation agreements as such. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution under Commission review: 1) accepts credit from the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; 2) sends credits to the other institution(s) in the articulation agreements that it accepts; or 3) both offers and accepts credits with the other institution(s).

4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
- The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: The transfer policies are clearly articulated in the UWL 2015-2016 Catalog in the section on Admission to the University. This was provided as Appendix 3 to the Federal Compliance material. A search of the UWL web site easily located transfer admission processes and articulation agreements at: <https://www.uwlax.edu/admissions/transfer-student/>. The team verified that transfer courses and articulation agreements are reviewed and updated regularly by department heads and the provost's office.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Practices for Verification of Student Identity

The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education and appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students and to protect their privacy.

1. Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams, and earns a final grade. Consider whether the institution's approach respects student privacy.
2. Check that any fees related to verification and not included in tuition are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance courses (e.g., a proctoring fee paid by students on the day of the proctored exam).
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

____ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: UWL has a robust system for verifying student ID based on the use of password access to its LMS. Passwords must be changed every 120 days and cannot be reused. Strong passwords are at least eight characters in length using a combination of letters and numbers with capitals and special keys. The next number in a sequence cannot be used to change the password.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Title IV Program Responsibilities

The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program.

This requirement has several components the institution and team must address:

- **General Program Requirements.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Financial Responsibility Requirements.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion Five if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)*
- **Default Rates.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its three year default rate. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. Note for 2012 and thereafter institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012; if the institution does not provide the default rate for three years leading up to the comprehensive evaluation visit, the team should contact Commission staff.*
- **Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*
- **Student Right to Know.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion One if the team determines that disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)*
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and*

that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students. In most cases, teams should verify that these policies exist and are available to students, typically in the course catalog or student handbook. Note that the Commission does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.

- **Contractual Relationships.** *The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships (If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the change request form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Contractual Change Application on the Commission’s web site for more information.)*
 - **Consortial Relationships.** *The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a consortial relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Consortial Change Application on the Commission’s web site for more information.)*
1. Review all of the information that the institution discloses having to do with its Title IV program responsibilities.
 2. Determine whether the Department has raised any issues related to the institution’s compliance or whether the institution’s auditor in the A-133 has raised any issues about the institution’s compliance as well as look to see how carefully and effectively the institution handles its Title IV responsibilities.
 3. If an institution has been cited or is not handling these responsibilities effectively, indicate that finding within the federal compliance portion of the team report and whether the institution appears to be moving forward with corrective action that the Department has determined to be appropriate.
 4. If issues have been raised with the institution’s compliance, decide whether these issues relate to the institution’s ability to satisfy the Criteria for Accreditation, particularly with regard to whether its disclosures to students are candid and complete and demonstrate appropriate integrity (*Core Component 2.A and 2.B*).
 5. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team’s conclusions:
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission’s requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

The documentation in the Federal Compliance filing substantiates the requested Title IV requirements. A review of the audit completed by the Legislative Audit Bureau reveals no issues with compliance. A review of sites listed in the filing confirms that links provide necessary information to the UWL community and that the links function properly.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Required Information for Students and the Public

1. Verify that the institution publishes fair, accurate, and complete information on the following topics: the calendar, grading, admissions, academic program requirements, tuition and fees, and refund policies.
2. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: UWL publishes information about its calendar, grading, admissions, academic program requirements, tuition and fees, and refund policies in its Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs. The materials have been aggregated in Appendix 6 to the Federal Compliance report, however all sources were validated. An area of possible confusion for students is in the area of differential tuition. Although the tuition table is annotated it is somewhat difficult to distinguish applicable programs for various tuition rates. UWL may wish to consider clarifying these rates to more accurately reflect actual tuition charged each student. Students indicated that although there may be some initial confusion they always get accurate and complete information if they have questions. This is also addressed in 2B.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information

The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.

1. Review the institution's disclosure about its accreditation status with the Commission to determine whether the information it provides is accurate and complete, appropriately formatted and contains the Commission's web address.

2. Review institutional disclosures about its relationship with other accrediting agencies for accuracy and for appropriate consumer information, particularly regarding the link between specialized/professional accreditation and the licensure necessary for employment in many professional or specialized areas.
3. Review the institution's catalog, brochures, recruiting materials, and information provided by the institution's advisors or counselors to determine whether the institution provides accurate information to current and prospective students about its accreditation, placement or licensure, program requirements, etc.
4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
- The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional monitoring, if any:

Review of Student Outcome Data

1. Review the student outcome data the institution collects to determine whether it is appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs it offers and the students it serves.
2. Determine whether the institution uses this information effectively to make decisions about academic programs and requirements and to determine its effectiveness in achieving its educational objectives.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional monitoring, if any:

Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies

The institution has documented that it discloses accurately to the public and the Commission its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.

The team has considered any potential implications for accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of sanction or loss of status by the institution with any other accrediting agency or loss of authorization in any state.

Important note: If the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action (i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial, or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this action. In addition, the team must contact the staff liaison immediately if it learns that the institution is at risk of losing its degree authorization or lacks such authorization in any state in which the institution meets state presence requirements.

1. Review the information, particularly any information that indicates the institution is under sanction or show-cause or has had its status with any agency suspended, revoked, or terminated, as well as the reasons for such actions.
2. Determine whether this information provides any indication about the institution's capacity to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. Should the team learn that the institution is at risk of losing, or has lost, its degree or program authorization in any state in which it meets state presence requirements, it should contact the Commission staff liaison immediately.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
 - The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: UWL maintains numerous specialty accreditations for programs in a variety of disciplines. While records from the specialty accrediting bodies have shown that programs have been out of compliance with criteria and/or standards at the time of review/re-review, in each case the program has come into compliance within the prescribed period of time. These efforts suggest that UWL is able to maintain its relationships with external accrediting bodies without Commission oversight.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments. Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.

1. Review information about the public disclosure of the upcoming visit, including sample announcements, to determine whether the institution made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public and seek comments.
2. Evaluate the comments to determine whether the team needs to follow-up on any issues through its interviews and review of documentation during the visit process.
3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.
- The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.
- The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: UWL used a variety of modalities to reach out to communities of interest to solicit feedback about itself as a part of the comprehensive review process.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Panel

Provide a list materials reviewed here:

UWL_201516_Graduate_Catalog.pdf
UWL_201516_Undergraduate_Catalog.pdf
UWL_Student_Handbook.pdf
UWLAppendix1.pdf
UWLAppendix2.pdf
UWLAppendix3.pdf
UWLAppendix4.pdf
UWLAppendix6.pdf
UWLAppendix7.pdf
UWLAppendix8.pdf
UWLAppendix9.pdf
UWL_Federal_Compliance.pdf
UWLAppendix_5A_to_5J.pdf
UWLAppendix_5K.pdf
UWLAppendix_5L_to_5R.pdf

Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team

Provide a list materials reviewed here:

Appendix

Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Program Length and Tuition, Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours

Institution under review: University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse

Part 1: Program Length and Tuition

Instructions

The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).

Review the *"Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours"* as well as the course catalog and other attachments required for the institutional worksheet.

Worksheet on Program Length and Tuition

A. Answer the Following Questions

Are the institution's degree program requirements within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

Yes No

Comments: Information contained in the new Appendix A clearly documents the types of credit offered for on-campus, on-line, and co-op, internship programs. The team evaluated the number of high credit hour repeatable internship/co-op experiences within undergraduate programs and determined that they have appropriate checks and balances with the registrar and department to monitor this.

Are the institution's tuition costs across programs within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

Yes No

Comments:

B. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's program length and tuition practices?

Yes No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

Part 2: Assignment of Credit Hours

Instructions

In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps:

1. Review the Worksheet completed by the institution, which provides information about an institution's academic calendar and an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats, and the institution's policy and procedures for awarding credit hours. Note that such policies may be at the institution or department level and may be differentiated by such distinctions as undergraduate or graduate, by delivery format, etc.
2. Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level. The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:
 - Associate's degrees = 60 hours
 - Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours
 - Master's or other degrees beyond the Bachelor's = at least 30 hours beyond the Bachelor's degree
 - Note that one quarter hour = .67 semester hour
 - Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.
3. Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution.
 - At semester-based institutions courses will be typically be from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14-16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The description in the catalog should indicate a course that is appropriately rigorous and has collegiate expectations for objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.
 - Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a full-time load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)
 - Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode, and types of academic activities.

- Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the above federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution. Commission procedure also permits this approach.
4. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course. Pay particular attention to alternatively-structured or other courses with particularly high credit hours for a course completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor.
 5. **Sampling.** Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.
 - At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.
 - For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.
 - Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.
 - For the programs the team sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several of the courses in the program, identify the contact hours for each course, and expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.
 - The team should pay particular attention to alternatively-structured and other courses that have high credit hours and less frequently scheduled interaction between the students and the instructor.
 - Provide information on the samples in the appropriate space on the worksheet.
 6. Consider the following questions:
 - Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?
 - Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?
 - For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe allotted for the course?
 - Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)
 - If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?
 7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:

- If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently-detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and evidence of implementation.
- If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or single department or division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.
- If the team identifies systematic non-compliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify Commission staff immediately and work with staff to design appropriate follow-up activities. The Commission shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team (see #5 of instructions in completing this section)

Courses reviewed are below:

Undergraduate Catalog

ACC 221 Cr.3
Accounting Principles I
Offered Fall, Winter, Spring,
Summer.

+ANT 102 Cr.4
Introduction to Physical Anthropology
Lect. 3, Lab. 2. Offered Annually.

+ART 102 Cr.2
Art Appreciation
. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring,
Summer.

+AST/PHY 160 Cr.4
Stars, Galaxies and the Universe
Lect.3, Lab. 2. (Cross-listed with AST/PHY; may only earn credit in one
department.) Offered Spring.

+BIO 103 Cr.4
Introductory Biology

Lect. 3, Lab 2. Offered Fall, Spring.

CHM 104 Cr.5

General Chemistry II

. Lect. 3, Lab. 3, Disc. 1. Prerequisite: grade of "C" or better in CHM 103. Offered Fall, Spring.

CST 230 Cr.3

Interpersonal Communication

Offered Annually.

CS 225 Cr.3

Discrete Computational Structures

Offered Fall, Spring.

ECO 305 Cr.3

Offered Fall, Spring.

+EFN 205 Cr.3

Understanding Human Differences

Offered Fall, Winter, Spring.

ENG 357 Cr.3

World Literature

Offered Annually.

+ENV 201 Cr.3

Introduction to Environmental Studies

Offered Fall,

Spring.

+FIN 207 Cr.3

Personal Finance

Offered Fall, Spring.

+HP 105 Cr.3

Analysis of Health, Wellness and Disease for the Health Care

Consumer

Offered Fall, Spring.

+HIS 202 Cr.3

Contemporary Global Issues

(Cross-listed with ANT/ECO/GEO/HIS/PO)

IS 220 Cr.4

Information Systems for Business Management

Offered Fall, Spring.

MGT 308 Cr.3
Behavior and Theory in Organizations
Offered
Fall, Spring.

MKT 309 Cr.3
Principles of Marketing
Offered Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer.

+MTH 145 Cr.4
Elementary Statistics
Offered
Fall, Spring, Summer.

+MIC 100 Cr.4
Microbes and Society
Offered Fall, Spring.

MIC 230 Cr.4
Fundamentals of Microbiology
Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

PHL 349 Cr.3
Asian Philosophy
Offered Alternate Years.

+PHY 106 Cr.4
Physical Science for Educators
Offered Fall, Spring.

POL 201 Cr.3
Introduction to Political Science
Offered Fall.

POL 350 Cr.3
American Political Theory
Offered Alternate Years.

PSY 241 Cr.3
Social Psychology
Offered Fall, Spring.

+PSY 318 Cr.3
Psychology of Women
Offered Fall, Spring.

PUB 330 Cr.3

Public Policy

Offered Fall.

+SOC 225 Cr.3

Racial and Ethnic Minorities

Offered Annually.

+SPA 201 Cr.4

Intermediate Spanish I

Offered Fall,

Spring.

SPE 207 Cr.3

Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

+THA 120 Cr.3

Acting for Non-Majors

Offered Spring.

THA 231 Cr.3

Stagecraft

Offered Spring- Odd Numbered Years.

RTH 330 Cr.3

Therapeutic Recreation and Mental Health

Offered Spring.

Graduate Catalog (several are grad/undergrad)

ACC 418/518 Cr.3

Business Law for Accountants

Offered Fall, Spring.

BIO 408/508 Cr.4

Developmental Biology

Offered Spring.

BIO 419/519 Cr.3

Offered Fall.

BIO 466/566 Cr.3

Human Molecular Genetics

Offered Fall.

CS 418/518 Cr.3
Mobile Application Development
Offered
Occasionally.

CS 451/551 Cr.3
User Interface Design
Odd Numbered
Years.

CI 461/561 Cr.3
Leadership for Elementary/Middle Science Education
Offered Fall.

CI/EFN 715 Cr.1-3
Issues and Trends in Education
Offered Fall, Spring,
Summer.

DS 780 Cr.3
Data Science and Strategic Decision Making
This course examines how data science relates to developing strategies
Offered Fall,
Spring.

ECO 409/509 Cr.3
Econometric Methods
Offered Occasionally.

FIN 456/556 Cr.3
Real Estate Principles
Offered Spring.

GEO 485/585 Cr.3
Advanced Geographic Information Science
Offered Spring.

OT 544 Cr.1
Biomechanics and Kinesiology Applications in Occupational
Therapy
Offered Fall.

OT 630 Cr.2
Occupational Therapy Practice: Wellness Perspectives
Offered Spring.

BIO/PAS/PTS 510 Cr.3
Applied Human Gross Anatomy
Offered Summer.

PTS 523 Cr.2
Physical Agents
. Offered Fall.

PTS 701 Cr.1
Applied Adult Clinical Practice
Offered Fall, Spring

PTS 741 Cr.2
Evidenced Based Practice in Physical Therapy
Offered Fall.

PAS 709 Cr.1
Emergency Medicine
Offered Spring.

PSY 434/534 Cr.3
Clinical Neuropsychology
Offered Annually.

RDG 702 Cr.3
Offered Summer.

SAA 715 Cr.3
Student Development Theory II
Offered Spring

B. Answer the Following Questions

1) Institutional Policies on Credit Hours

Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

Yes No

Comments: The institution has two policy statements – the credit hour policy statement in the catalog and the credit hour policy for online/blended classes as articulated in the Online Education Handbook.

Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

Yes No

Comments:

For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

Yes No

Comments: This is in the Online Education Handbook

Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes No

Comments:

2) Application of Policies

Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes No

Comments:

Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

Yes No

Comments:

If the institution offers any alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, were the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

Yes No

Comments: In 2014-2015 the institution offered just over 100 hybrid/blended courses. A review of three syllabi - ENG308, ENG335 and PSY370 – was conducted which indicate that they are following policy.

If the institution offers alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonably capable of being fulfilled by students in the time allocated to justify the allocation of credit?

Yes No

Comments:

The review of the syllabi outline that the institution is in compliance and works with faculty to build syllabi with learning outcomes and important information required by state and federal policies. Some exceptions were uncovered and are listed below. It is recommended that the University follow up with these instructors/departments and continue to work with faculty on these requirements. In particular the UG/GR courses should come under particular attention to differentiate learning outcomes for the differenced between graduate and undergraduate expectations.

Other courses reviewed indicate:

Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes

No

Comments:

C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Review the responses provided in this section. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign Commission follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

Yes

No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

D. Identify and Explain Any Findings of Systematic Non-Compliance in One or More Educational Programs with Commission Policies Regarding the Credit Hour

Part 3: Clock Hours

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs in clock hours?

Yes No

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs that must be reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs?

Yes No

If the answer to either question is “Yes,” complete this part of the form.

Instructions

This worksheet is not intended for teams to evaluate whether an institution has assigned credit hours relative to contact hours in accordance with the Carnegie definition of the credit hour. This worksheet solely addresses those programs reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes.

Complete this worksheet **only if** the institution offers any degree or certificate programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs. Non-degree programs subject to clock hour requirements (an institution is required to measure student progress in clock hours for federal or state purposes or for graduates to apply for licensure) are not subject to the credit hour definitions per se but will need to provide conversions to semester or quarter hours for Title IV purposes. Clock-hour programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.

For these programs Federal regulations require that they follow the federal formula listed below. If there are no deficiencies identified by the accrediting agency in the institution’s overall policy for awarding semester or quarter credit, accrediting agency may provide permission for the institution to provide less instruction provided that the student’s work outside class in addition to direct instruction meets the applicable quantitative clock hour requirements noted below.

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8)

1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
 1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution’s requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour include at least 20 semester hours.

Worksheet on Clock Hours

A. Answer the Following Questions

Does the institution’s credit to clock hour formula match the federal formula?

Yes

No

Comments:

If the credit to clock hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class?

Did the team determine that the institution's credit hour policies are reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that if the team answers "No" to this question, it should recommend follow-up monitoring in section C below.)

Yes

No

Comments:

Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes

No

Comments:

B. Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit to clock hour conversion?

Yes

No

(Note that the team may approve a lower conversion rate than the federal rate as noted above provided the team found no issues with the institution's policies or practices related to the credit hour and there is sufficient student work outside of class as noted in the instructions.)

C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

Yes

No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:



STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS WORKSHEET

INSTITUTION and STATE: University of Wisconsin-La Crosse WI

TYPE OF REVIEW: Comprehensive Evaluation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW: Comprehensive evaluation includes a federal compliance panel.

DATES OF REVIEW: 04/11/2016 - 04/12/2016

No Change in Statement of Affiliation Status

Nature of Organization

CONTROL: Public

RECOMMENDATION: NO change

DEGREES AWARDED: Associates, Bachelors, Doctors, Masters, Specialist, Certificate

RECOMMENDATION: No change

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS:

Accreditation at the doctoral level is limited to the Doctor of Physical Therapy and the Doctor of Education Ed.D.) in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership; accreditation at the Specialist degree level is limited to the Educational Specialist Degree (Ed.S.).

RECOMMENDATION: No change

APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS:

The institution has been approved for the Notification Program, allowing the institution to open new additional locations within the United States.

RECOMMENDATION: No change

*Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS*

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

RECOMMENDATION: No change

ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES:

RECOMMENDATION:

Interim Report due 12/16/16 on Federal Compliance: Institutional Records of Student Complaints

Interim report due 12/14/18 on Strategic Planning

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 2005 - 2006

YEAR FOR NEXT REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 2015 - 2016

RECOMMENDATION: 2025-26



ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET

INSTITUTION and STATE: 2029 University of Wisconsin-La Crosse WI

TYPE OF REVIEW: Open Pathway: Comprehensive Evaluation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW: Comprehensive evaluation includes a federal compliance panel.

XX No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

	<u>Program Distribution</u>
Programs leading to Undergraduate	
Associates	1
Bachelors	69
Programs leading to Graduate	
Doctors	1
Masters	17
Specialist	1
Certificate programs	
Certificate	8

Recommended Change:

Off-Campus Activities:

In State - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations:

- Aldo Leopold Nature Center - Black Earth, WI
- La Crosse Summit Elementary School - La Crosse, WI
- La Crosse Longfellow Middle School - La Crosse, WI
- Tomah High School - Tomah, WI

Recommended Change:

Out Of State - Present Activity

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Out of USA - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Distance Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

Certificate 51.0907 Medical Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiation Therapist Certificate in Medical Dosimetry Internet

Master 13.1102 College Student Counseling and Personnel Services Master of Science in Education in Student Affairs Administration in Higher Educa Internet

Master 51.0907 Medical Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiation Therapist Master of Science in Medical Dosimetry Internet

Master 13.1299 Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Levels and Methods, Other Master of Education - Professional Development Internet

Bachelor 51.0001 Health and Wellness, General Bachelor of Science in Health and Wellness Management Internet

Master 31.0505 Kinesiology and Exercise Science Sport Administration Internet

Master 31.0505 Kinesiology and Exercise Science Master of Science in Sport Administration Internet

Recommended Change:

Correspondence Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

None.

Recommended Change:

Contractual Relationships:

Present Offerings:

None.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET

Recommended Change:

Consortial Relationships:

Present Offerings:

Bachelor 51.0001 Health and Wellness, General Bachelor - 51.0001 Health and Wellness, General
(Bachelor of Science in Health and Wellness Management)

Master Collaborative Online Master of Science in Data Science (MSDS)

Recommended Change:
