Assurance Argument

University of Wisconsin Colleges - WI

5/15/2017

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

Argument

The University of Wisconsin (UW) System Board of Regents (BOR), the entity responsible for governing the UW System, approved the most recently revised mission statement of the UW Colleges on June 9, 2011, following UW Colleges Senate action in the prior year. The UW Colleges is committed to shared governance, and the mission statement was developed collaboratively between the UW Colleges Central Administration and the UW Colleges Senate. The Senate, which in 2010 was composed of faculty, academic staff, instructional academic staff members, and students, recommended approval of the mission statement to the UW Colleges chancellor on April 23, 2010. Dates of formal approval of the UW Colleges mission statement and statements of goals and vision are published on the UW Colleges website. The goals statement was approved by the Board of Regents on May 7, 2004, as indicated in BOR meeting minutes, following January 15, 2003, approval by the UW Colleges Senate.

The most recent, 2011, revision of the mission statement came about as a result of the addition of the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree completion program. UW Colleges wanted its mission to reflect its new 21st century degree program. The UW Colleges and the BOR-approved select mission reads as follows:

> The University of Wisconsin Colleges is a multi-campus institution committed to high quality educational programs, preparing students for success at the baccalaureate level of education, providing the first two years of a liberal arts general education that is accessible and affordable, providing a single baccalaureate degree that meets local and individual needs, and advancing the Wisconsin Idea by bringing the resources of the University to the people of the state and the communities that provide and support its campuses.

The UW Colleges mission is informed by the tradition of the Wisconsin Idea, originally declared in 1905 when University of Wisconsin President Charles Van Hise, stated he would "never be content until the beneficent influence of the university reaches every family in the state." The UW Colleges is a single institution comprised of 13 campuses and the UW Colleges Online program. In the tradition of the Wisconsin Idea and in concert with its mission, the UW Colleges spans Wisconsin to ensure

access to liberal arts education for all the people of the state.

In accordance with its mission and values, the 13 UW Colleges campuses and UW Colleges Online offer an Associate of Arts and Science degree and the foundational coursework for a wide variety of majors and careers. UW Colleges offers the essential freshman and sophomore curriculum to prepare students for the workforce and for successful transfer to a bachelor's degree program (as discussed in more detail in criteria 3 and 4).

The UW Colleges degree programs vary by campus. Six of the campuses (UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, UW-Barron County, UW-Marshfield/Wood County, UW-Richland, UW-Rock County, and UW-Waukesha) offer a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) degree, which is a knowledge-based, applied bachelor's degree completion program that is designed to help busy place-bound adults advance their careers. Students can also earn a bachelor's degree on UW Colleges campuses through formal collaborations between UW Colleges and UW System four-year universities.

The UW-Platteville Collaborative Engineering degree is possible due to a partnership between UW-Platteville and the UW Colleges. This collaborative degree program provides place-bound students and working adults with the opportunity to pursue an ABET-accredited bachelor's degree in electrical or mechanical engineering. Four UW Colleges campuses have built engineering-dedicated facilities to support the UW-Platteville Collaborative Engineering Program: UW-Fox Valley, UW-Rock County, UW-Sheboygan, and UW-Washington County. UW Colleges students complete associate degree requirements and pre-engineering courses at one of the 13 UW Colleges campuses or through UW Colleges Online. While working toward an Associate of Arts and Science degree, students begin taking the UW-Platteville engineering courses by distance technology or in a face-to-face classroom, depending on the student's location and course.

The Madison Connections program is offered at the UW Colleges. This is a dual admission program, enrolling students at UW-Madison and any one of the 13 campuses of the UW Colleges. The program allows offers select applicants who are Wisconsin residents the opportunity to start at a UW Colleges campus and finish a bachelor's degree at UW-Madison. Students are dually admitted to UW-Madison and the UW Colleges campus. A UW Colleges, UW-Madison Connections student receives a UW-Madison ID granting many of the same privileges as resident UW-Madison students.

In concert with the UW Colleges mission, there are robust student services within the institution to serve students. Each campus has a Solution Center that serves as a one-stop student services center providing student information and intake through: information specialists, advisors, student activities coordination, and events coordination. Folded into these positions are accessibilities services contacts. Although campuses vary in size, each campus has these services in its one-stop Solution Centers. The Campus Student Solution Centers are supported by an institutional Solution Center that serves as a call center assisting students throughout the institution with advising and financial aid questions, and other intake issues. Professional development and training for Solution Center staff members at both the institutional and campus levels is coordinated through the UW Colleges Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and facilitated by the five regional associate deans for student affairs.

Accessibility services are provided through a consolidated service function that is overseen by the UW Colleges Director of Student Accessibilities. Supporting the director is the institutional Alternative Format Text and Adaptive Technology Coordinator. Additionally, campus accessibilities contacts are folded into advising positions at each campus's Solution Center.

All admission applications are processed through consolidated services in the UW Colleges Admissions Office, which is supervised by the Registrar and Director of Admissions. Other

Admissions Office staff members performing consolidated admissions functions are located on UW Colleges campuses.

The Office of Marketing and Enrollment is responsible for student recruitment as they apply and are admitted to the UW Colleges. Once admitted, the office works with the campuses to facilitate enrollment of students. An extensive communications plan is generated through a customer service relationship system to reach students from prospective to enrollment.

The UW Colleges Student Financial Aid Director oversees the consolidated institutional financial aid office. Financial aid questions are facilitated through the information specialists at each of the campuses, and are directed to the institutional Solution Center and consolidated Student Financial Aid Office.

Services to veterans are coordinated and provided by two Veterans Services Coordinators. These are institutional positions that serve all veterans enrolled in the UW Colleges. The coordinators are located on two different UW Colleges campuses. The mission of the UW Colleges Veterans Services Office is to serve all military-affiliated students on the 13 UW Colleges campuses and UW Colleges Online. Military-affiliated students include prior service veterans, current members of the National Guard or Reserves, active duty personnel, and dependents and/or spouses of veterans.

Students can access information technology support services through the UW Colleges Central Information Technology Services (CITS) function located in Madison, Wisconsin. The CITS Service Desk provides technology services to UW Colleges students, staff, faculty members, and administrators. The Service Desk responds to questions about e-mail issues, Desire2Learn (the UW Colleges learning management system) issues, and problems with shared software programs such as Microsoft Word or SharePoint. CITS uses a hybrid model of a central data center and IT staff, coupled with a distributed network of administrators on each of the UW Colleges campuses, to provide IT Services that support the needs of the 13 campuses, UW Colleges Online, and UW Colleges Central Administration.

Each of the UW Colleges' six BAAS degree completion program campuses have been allocated a 0.25 BAAS Advisor and 0.25 BAAS Professional Experience Coordinator position. These positions report to the regional associate dean for student affairs and enrollment management within their respective regions and are organized to meet regularly with the UW Colleges Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for the foreseeable future.

The University of Wisconsin Colleges takes proactive responsibility for the ability of its students, faculty, staff, and administrators to function and thrive in an open and inclusive work, online, and living environment. Through the UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, the institution provides multicultural awareness programming to heighten self and other awareness of difference focused on promoting respect for all persons. Additionally, the UW Colleges now has a Gender Equity Coordinator position. UW-Waukesha has a dedicated safe space for LGBTQIA students, the LGBTQIA Resource Center; UW-Marinette has an LGBT Center, campus-based but open to the community, and the only LGBT organization for three counties; and several campuses offer Allies programs for their LGBT populations. A fuller discussion of UW Colleges participation in UW System's Inclusive Excellence and LEAP initiatives may be found in 1.C., below.

The UW Colleges student enrollment profile is closely aligned with its mission, as it is the institution of access within the UW System. The UW Colleges is structured to provide the necessary support for the significant number of first-generation college students (57.3% of degree-seeking AAS students) and parents that the institution serves. The UW Colleges' diverse student body reflects the population

of the state (e.g., UW Colleges enrolls 17% minority students and 24% non-traditional age students among its degree-seeking AAS students). In recent years, the institution has made a concerted effort to recruit students from countries outside the United States. International students are typically placed on the UW Colleges campuses that provide student housing. The majority of UW Colleges students are enrolled full-time, with the largest number of part-time students enrolled in the UW Colleges Online program. The linked "Demographics by Campus" provides more demographic details.

In 2011–2012, former UW Colleges-UW-Extension Chancellor Ray Cross led the development of the "UW Colleges Strategic Plan 2012–2017." The plan establishes areas of emphases for the institution and includes a detailed operational plan that outlines goals, specific action steps for each goal, the party responsible for each of the action steps, and the assessment of the action steps of the Strategic Plan. The strategic plan was derived from the UW Colleges mission and includes five goals that reflect the core values of the institution's mission statement:

- Clarify and communicate the UW Colleges' position within the Wisconsin higher education market by identifying the institution's value position and by communicating our economic value to the state, UW Colleges students, their families and the communities the institution serves.
- Enhance the student experience by extending high-quality University of Wisconsin education to learners throughout the state and assuring student success and degree completion.
- Strengthen the UW Colleges' stewardship by effectively using the university's faculty and staff time and expertise, the institution's educational and financial assets, and campus and online environments and infrastructure.
- Enrich UW Colleges' communities and the state through outreach, engagement, entrepreneurship, innovation and inclusion.
- Increase the UW Colleges' programs, the number of degrees granted, and our service to communities through range of programs, creative delivery, and effective assessment.

The ways in which the UW Colleges planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the UW Colleges mission is addressed in detail in Criterion 5.C.

Sources

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

Argument

As stated in subcomponent 1.A. above, a revised version of the UW Colleges mission was approved by the UW System Board of Regents in 2011. The mission is articulated publicly on the UW Colleges website and appears on the websites for each of the 13 campuses and UW Colleges Online. For instance, the UW Colleges mission statement appears on the UW-Barron County web page.

In addition to the general statement of institutional mission found at the UW Colleges' primary website, each campus's website, and UW Colleges Online's website, the UW Colleges provides public access to a concise statement of institutional goals and an explanation of institutional vision. The goals and vision statement is housed on the same web page as the mission statement. The statement of goals and the vision statement include a list of principles that all members of the UW Colleges community "have a responsibility to promote and a right to expect."

All three components of the UW Colleges mission statement can be easily searched for via web browser, both externally through a search engine such as Google and internally within the UW Colleges' website or individual campus websites, as well.

The nature and scope of the UW Colleges mission emphasizes the institution's transfer preparation focus with an Associate of Arts and Science degree, affordability, a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) degree completion program tailored to a student's individual needs, and the UW Colleges' commitment to the Wisconsin Idea, bringing the resources of the University to the people of the state. The constituents served by UW Colleges are students, local communities, public schools at all levels, private schools, businesses and industry, and the general public. Likewise, UW Colleges is committed to serving the needs of ethnically diverse students, first-generation students, students with disabilities, and non-traditional students. The diversity of its student population is examined thoroughly each year within the UW Colleges Final New Freshman Retention Summary (e.g., UW Colleges Fall 2014 Retention Summary, UW Colleges Fall 2015 Retention Summary).

Sources

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

Because the 13 campuses of the UW Colleges and UW Colleges Online are located outside of Wisconsin's metropolitan areas and within rural and suburban locations, they serve as the relatively low cost, affordable entry points for much of the state's underserved populations. These particular populations are composed of rural high school graduates, first-generation college students, foreign nationals, non-traditional students returning to college after time spent in the private sector, single mothers, veterans and other military-affiliated persons, and persons of color, as well as other demographics that qualify as being multicultural (see above in 1.A and "Demographics by Campus" for more details). All of these populations have access to a UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science degree and a liberal arts experience, the latter of which the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has deemed a "necessity for all students" and "essential for success in a global economy and for informed citizenship."

To better serve students in this mission, UW Colleges is currently engaged in a faculty-led associate degree and curricular reimagining project. The project is informed, in part, by the AAC&U's signature Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) work and the efforts underway by UW System institutions within LEAP Wisconsin. The UW Colleges' reimagined associate degrees will be built upon the UW System's Shared Learning Goals, which are strongly influenced by AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes.

The following quotation from the LEAP Wisconsin webpage details the primary focus of this initiative as it pertains to UW Colleges' role in a multicultural society: "LEAP and Inclusive Excellence are critical components of the UW System's goals for educational attainment. Their shared purpose helps to realize the UW System's abiding commitment that more—and more diverse—students have access to, persist through, and complete high-quality undergraduate degrees."

UW System's shared learning goals were developed by faculty and are aligned with AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes. They represent the university's commitment to prepare students to be competent citizens in the 21st-century knowledge-based, global economy. Inclusive Excellence, under this initiative, is composed of four pillars of diversity, equity, inclusion and excellence. The thinking that supports the diversity pillar emphasizes that "individual differences (e.g. personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations) can be engaged in the service of learning."

The shared learning goals that are currently being implemented by the UW System under the LEAP Wisconsin initiative are intended to provide a framework for conveying the meaning and value of a college education in the 21st Century. Instead of compartmentalizing student outcomes into traditional academic specializations such as Biological Sciences, Psychology or History, student outcomes will

be captured by more refined skill set categories such as knowledge of human cultures and the natural world, critical and creative thinking skills, effective communication skills, intercultural knowledge and competence, and individual, social and environmental responsibility.

The UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI) helps to provide a wide variety of activities, resources and services to promote multiculturalism across the institution consistent with the UW System Inclusive Excellence framework. OEDI works closely with the UW Colleges Senate Inclusive Excellence Committee to promote engagement that advances human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

UW Colleges Online is in the process of becoming its own stand-alone campus, which will be the 14th within UW Colleges. This is happening, in part, because online enrollments continue to grow (from 1,784 in Fall 2013, to 2,484 in Fall 2016). The online presence of UW Colleges serves constituencies who require flexible scheduling and who may not be able to attend a traditional brick and mortar campus on a full time basis. These students often work one or more jobs and have families to support. Enrollment data indicate many online students are over the age of 25 (52 percent in Fall 2013, and 38 percent in Fall 2016). Consistently, year after year, over 50 percent of online students are also first generation. A dedicated online UW Colleges campus will make it easier for these traditionally underserved students to pursue a university degree.

UW Colleges strives to make its academic environment a welcoming one for returning veterans of the armed services, as well as their dependents and other military-affiliated persons, providing an effective array of veteran services. Currently, six of the 13 UW Colleges campuses have active veterans clubs serving student veterans, their family members, and other military-affiliated persons. As the largest UW Colleges campus, UW-Waukesha has the most active club and holds a membership with the Student Veterans of America (SVA) organization. UW-Waukesha also has a well-utilized Veterans Resource Center, where students can gather for support and camaraderie, or just to have a veteran-friendly space to take a break or study. UW-Barron County is the latest campus to implement a similar space for its students. Several other campuses have also established designated spaces for their student veteran populations.

UW Colleges has traditionally offered an American Indian Studies certificate. In 2016, American Indian Studies was approved as a stand-alone program with its own chair and program bylaws. This move will better serve Native communities in the state of Wisconsin and offer continuity and consistency in building relationships with the approximately 54,000 enrolled tribal members (one percent of the state's total population). Additionally, UW Colleges students will have increased access to courses about Native American cultures, history, and contemporary issues.

A number of UW Colleges campuses host annual lecture series that serve as a form of outreach popularizing salient academic topics for UW Colleges students, local community members, and high school students. For example, the UW-Washington County campus holds an annual lecture series every fall focused on a particular country such as Brazil, Mexico, Germany, and Iran, with specific topics covering OPEC, the 2016 Iran nuclear deal, underground cinema, immigration, health care, and the Syrian refugee crisis. Average attendance at this campus's lectures is close to 200, and the majority of attendees are drawn from the community.

Finally, much of the professional development and research that is conducted by UW Colleges faculty members also impacts Wisconsin's communities directly and is tailored toward improving the educational outcomes of students. The linked list is a small sample of some of the relevant professional publications and activities conducted by faculty members from 2013 through 2016.

Sources

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- UWS_LEAP
- UWS_SharedLearningGoals

1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

Argument

The UW Colleges mission statement clearly demonstrates a commitment to the public good by noting as a primary goal "providing the first two years of a liberal arts general education that is accessible and affordable, providing a single baccalaureate degree that meets local and individual needs, and advancing the Wisconsin Idea by bringing the resources of the University to the people of the state and the communities that provide and support its campuses." Additionally, it is clear that the goals and vision statements that are part of the UW Colleges mission speak to a commitment to the "public good." For instance:

- Goal 3 states, "To prepare students for lifelong learning, leadership, service, and responsible citizenship."
- Goal 5 states: "To serve the people of Wisconsin by promoting continuing education and outreach in Wisconsin communities."

Serving the communities in which the UW Colleges campuses are located is embedded in the curriculum. One way this is demonstrated is through the practice of service-learning. In UW Colleges, service-learning is defined as a "teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities." (National Service Learning Clearinghouse)

Faculty within 13 departments have incorporated service-learning into 23 different AAS courses, such as Environmental Science, Education in a Pluralistic Society, and Introduction to Sociology. Materials about UW Colleges service-learning opportunities include details and reflections on these courses and stakeholder information. With the addition of the BAAS degree completion program in 2011, both service-learning and internships have become integral to the UW Colleges, as they are necessary requirements for the degree. Through these requirements, students learn practical applications of their studies and become actively contributing citizens and community members.

The Center for Device Design and Development housed at UW-Fox Valley is an example of how UW Colleges campuses serve their campus communities. The Center seeks to connect Wisconsin inventors and companies with the resources they need to solve novel problems, design new product prototypes, and develop new intellectual property. Since the Center began operation in 2013, it has evaluated over 50 different concepts from 30 unique sources and has involved over three dozen Wisconsin engineering students in real-world problem solving and design. Several projects are en route to becoming patented intellectual property and the students contributing to these patents may well have

their names on them in accordance with patent law. This program is offered as a service free to the Wisconsin public.

The mission of the UW Colleges Continuing Education Department is to fulfill the Wisconsin Idea through direct engagement with the local communities of each of the 13 UW Colleges campuses throughout the state. Each campus has a Continuing Education program that promotes intellectual stimulation, personal/professional growth, and cultural enrichment through a variety of non-credit seminars, workshops and short courses (see, e.g., Continuing Education publications for the north, northeast, and southeast regions). To meet the needs of lifelong learners, UW Colleges campuses collaborate with business, industry, K-12 school districts, technical schools, and non-profit agencies, increasing access to higher education (see UWC Critical Analysis, FY15). Educational travel opportunities, such as a New York City Theatre Tour (with UW Colleges Theatre program professors as group leaders), Boundary Waters Canoe Expeditions (led by UW Colleges professors) and a credit-bearing opportunity to explore and snorkel in the Florida Keys (BIO 298 Special Topics in Biology: Florida Keys), are facilitated through UW Colleges Continuing Education offices.

The campuses of the UW Colleges also offer a variety of community outreach resources, including the Barlow Planetarium and Weis Earth Science Museum at UW-Fox Valley; the Center for Wisconsin Archaeology at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County; the UW Center for Civic Engagement at UW-Marathon County; the Field Station at UW-Waukesha; and the Lakeshore Water Institute at UW-Manitowoc.

Founded in 2007, the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policyand Service (WIPPS) is a unit of UW Colleges and UW-Extension. The mission of WIPPS is to address local, state, and national issues by linking public scholarship, civic outreach, and student service to enhance community life throughout Wisconsin. The work of WIPPS is based on two core ideas: (1) the institute supports citizen-centered democracy, and (2) WIPPS embraces the Wisconsin Idea. These core ideas and the programs they inspire are meeting the needs of real people in their communities, such as Rene Daniels, Executive Director, North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, who recently stated, "We have turned to WIPPS to provide professional research services and found them to be an excellent partner. Because of their connections to experts in the UW, they can be counted on to deliver high quality work in a timely manner" (see WIPPS Overview, 2017-01-20).

Those receiving instruction in the UW Colleges are not limited to college-age students; several programs are offered to Wisconsin high school students. Some of these programs are supported by the local school districts and are free to students, while others are offered at reduced costs to students and their families; several are priced at full tuition. UW Colleges has several modes of delivery for its college credit in high school programming:

- Concurrent Enrollment (UW Colleges academic department-approved high school instructor in the high school) = 50 percent of UW Colleges tuition ($99/credit hour)
- Dual Enrollment (UW Colleges instructor in the high school) = 100% UW Colleges tuition ($197.98/credit)
- Youth Options (UW Colleges instructor on UW Colleges campus) = 100 percent UW Colleges tuition and fees ($197.98/credit + segregated fees)
- Youth Options ITV (UW Colleges instructor on UW Colleges campus Delivering to High School via ITV) = 100 percent UW Colleges tuition ($197.98/credit)
- High School Special (high school student self-registers for UW Colleges class outside Concurrent Enrollment and Youth Options programs) = 100 percent tuition and fees apply ($197.98/credit + segregated fees)

The UW Colleges offers the greatest number of modes of delivery of these types of courses in the UW System and is second only to UW-Oshkosh in the number of students served. In Fall 2016, the UW Colleges served 1,161 unique students in high school programs (399 through Course Options programs in the form of either Concurrent or Dual Enrollment). Given such a large variety of offerings, UW Colleges has worked to unify the processes across these modes of delivery and campuses. A Course Options Mentoring Policy and memorandum of understanding templates were created to align with both the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) (see Course Options Mentoring Policy; MOU Dual Enrollment COP Template; MOU concurrent enrollment template).

As a public university within the UW System, the UW Colleges does not have investors, nor a parent organization, nor external interests that require support. The educational priorities that define the UW Colleges are clearly stated within the UW Colleges mission, goals and vision statement and indicate a commitment to educational responsibility and excellence. Indeed, the mission, goals, and vision statement reveal the institution's public education and service components as intrinsically tied to its educational responsibilities. For instance, the following two goals demonstrate the institution's commitment to teaching and scholarly excellence as firmly tied to its constituencies:

- Goal 2: "To emphasize teaching excellence including the development, use, and assessment of effective teaching methods."
- Goal 4: "To foster scholarly activity that supports the mission of the University of Wisconsin Colleges."

On a practical level, the Regional Associate Deans for Administration and Finance (RADAF) oversee and report on the Planning and Budget Processes for UW Colleges Campuses and Regions, and keep careful track of the percentages of the budget or expenditures that go to the educational mission, including instruction and academic programs. This responsibility ensures a stable and consistent emphasis on maintaining delivery of high quality of course and other educational offerings across the institution.

The UW Colleges engages with its external constituencies and communities of interest in an accurate and honest way. The UW Colleges website offers external constituencies a clear vision of the institution as a whole, the UW Colleges Online Program, and each of the 13 individual campuses. Additionally, each region has numerous marketing and recruitment materials (brochures, factsheets, postcards, and the like) that provide information about its services. More importantly, the institution provides the public with data on its yearly budget, student enrollment and student performance, faculty demographics, library holdings, and many other institutional features in the form of the UW Colleges Fact Book.

The institution is assisted in this presentation by being part of the UW System, which provides the resources of the UWSA Office of Policy and Academic Research (OPAR). For example, OPAR produces informational memoranda that include globalized demographic information on students' academic backgrounds, their performance and graduation/retention rates, and their transfer rates, among other information about the institution. More recently, the OPAR website has provided resources and visibility for the UW System Annual Accountability Report.

Each UW System institution including UW Colleges presents to the public and to the Wisconsin state legislature an array of data that demonstrates each institution's work toward advancing the UW System Growth Agenda.

In sum, both on the institution's own initiative and because the institution functions as one part of a

larger public higher education system, the UW Colleges engages in ongoing, clear, and transparent self-assessment and self-study that is widely shared with its external and internal constituencies.

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2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

Argument

In its vision statement, the University of Wisconsin (UW) Colleges promises that "all members of the UW Colleges community have a responsibility to promote and a right to expect respect for persons, personal integrity, individual development, considerate assessment, and responsive institutions." Thus, respect for persons and personal integrity is embedded in the day-to-day operations of the UW Colleges and is expected of all members of its community.

The Wisconsin State Statute 36.65 requires that the Board of Regents provide an annual report to the state governor and legislature on the operations of the UW System. An Accountability Dashboard has recently been developed to provide this information, and information specifically for UW Colleges can be selected by readers. For instance, under Cost & Efficiency, readers will observe that UW Colleges has routinely had an average net cost of attendance that falls below the published cost of attendance.

Finances within the UW System are guided by the UW System Board of Regents financial policies and general administrative policies. These policies include fiscal management of auxiliary operations. Financial reports are routinely provided by UW System institutions to the Board of Regents. The UW Colleges' financial status is routinely audited by the University of Wisconsin System's Office of Internal Audit and the State of Wisconsin Wisconsin's Legislative Audit Bureau.

Integrity in academics is guided by the UW System Academic Information Series, which includes statements regarding program planning and review and associate degree standards. Additionally, the UW Colleges Senate Policies and the Faculty and Instructional Academic Staff Handbook address curricular topics specific to the UW Colleges. Included in UW Colleges Senate policy are specifics regarding required syllabus sections that clearly detail instructor expectations for students. Lastly, the bylaws of UW Colleges academic departments and programs give further guidance for maintaining integrity in academics.

Personnel procedures are addressed in UW Colleges Senate Policies and appropriate UW Colleges handbooks. Topics addressed include Criteria and General Procedures for faculty hiring, retention, and review; merit decisions for faculty and staff members; and grievance procedures.

The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System sets policies, goals, budgets, and regulatory framework for the UW System, including the UW Colleges, as set forth in section 36.09 of

the Wisconsin Statute Chapter 36. In this role, the 18-member Board follows its Statement of Expectations of Board Members that includes an expectation to "adhere to high standards of ethical conduct" and ensure "sound financial management" and "prudent stewardship of University assets." Additionally, the Board "establish[es] and maintain[s] a strong system of accountability to the public for performance results." All of this is done to "most effectively serve the higher educational needs of Wisconsin citizens."

New members of the Board of Regents participate in a one-day orientation and all members attend an annual refresher session. All Board members adhere to the Wisconsin Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Employees.

As a part of the University of Wisconsin System, all employees of the UW Colleges are held accountable to the Code of Ethics in Wisconsin Administrative Code UWS 8. This policy states that each employee "at the time of appointment makes a personal commitment to professional honesty and integrity." Furthermore, all UW System employees are expected to be fair to and respectful of others, protect and preserve UW System resources, act ethically and with integrity, contribute to a healthy and safe workplace, and promote a culture of compliance as detailed in UW System UPS Operational Policy WE 3.

UW System administration has a mission to "[model] and [lead] organizational learning and transformation through inclusive excellence, equity, and diversity." The administration must also "[ensure] the effective and efficient use of resources, building trust with students, taxpayers, donors, and other funders."

The UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI) is also helping to build capacity related to the Inclusive Excellence work in the UW Colleges. Specifically, OEDI is drawing from the Inclusive Excellence framework established by the UW System in curating critical resources to support the institution's Inclusive Excellence efforts. Some of these materials will be integrated into an Inclusive Pedagogy link on the UW Colleges Virtual Teaching & Learning Center (VTLC) website. The VTLC is a widely used resource overseen by an institutional VTLC Director.

The UW Colleges Constitution sets forth how UW Colleges is structured and governed. UW Colleges faculty members are guided by the aforementioned policies and the UW Colleges Faculty and Instructional Academic Staff Handbook and UW Colleges Senate Policy #305 Code of Conduct. These documents establish "respect for human dignity [as] essential to the university environment." Staff members and administrators are guided by the policies of the UW System, UW Colleges Senate Policy #305 Code of Conduct, and the Administrative Academic Staff Handbook.

UW Colleges Administrative Policies give employees an additional framework for fair and ethical behavior. One policy is the Student Wage Plan that addresses the required qualification of student employees of UW Colleges, the maximum number of work hours allowed, and a salary structure for task and experience levels. The Foundation Relationships Policy ensures that there is accountability in the relationship between each UW Colleges campus and its respective foundation. However, because UW Colleges has recently determined that this policy does not reflect current best practices of an institution-foundation relationship, the policy is undergoing a substantial revision. The UW System Office of General Counsel has provided the UW Colleges with a template for an appropriate memorandum of understanding for the institution's adaptation and use. The UW Colleges is now standardizing this memorandum of understanding for use with each of the institution's 13 campus foundations.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

Argument

The UW Colleges website offers internal and external constituencies a clear vision of the institution as a whole, UW Colleges Online, and each campus specifically. The UW Colleges directory allows the public to search for faculty and staff by name, campus, and/or department. The resulting search results then provide relevant information about a particular faculty or staff member's position and, as relevant, degrees held and courses taught, as well as voluntary additional information such as a curriculum vitae and publications.

The UW Colleges catalog also provides important information about admissions requirements, policies, programs, courses, and degree requirements. Information about specific programs and courses can also be found by visiting the web pages of the relevant academic departments. The UW Colleges website also provides information about concurrent or dual enrollment for high school students.

The UW Colleges At-A-Glance web page provides information about current student tuition and fees, and offers a comparison of cost per student in the UW Colleges, the Wisconsin Technical College System (liberal arts and sciences programs), and the other UW System campuses for undergraduate students. This page also contains information regarding retention and graduation rates of students who attend or have attended the UW Colleges, which supports the statement that UW Colleges students who transfer within the UW System persist and graduate at higher rates than students who transfer from technical colleges or private colleges.

Additional information on co-curricular activities, financial aid, special academic programs, and special features of local UW Colleges campuses is available in each campus Solution Center (formerly called the Student Affairs Office) and through UW Colleges Online for online students. For example, in a section titled "Paying for College," the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County Solution Center website informs students about scholarships, financial aid, student employment, and tuition and fees. It also includes a Net Price Calculator that allows students to calculate an estimated amount that students like them have paid – after grant aid and scholarships but before student loans – to attend this institution in a given year. For more comprehensive content over and above local financial aid opportunities (such as campus foundation scholarships, student employment options on the campus, etc.), each individual campus directs students to the consolidated Student Financial Aid Office (SFAO), from which the majority of information about financial aid is disseminated and student financial aid award packages are distributed to qualifying students with SFAO staff following up with students directly. Another example is UW-Barron County's Solution Center Career Development website, which provides students with resources to help them as they explore and prepare for careers. This includes workshops and a BUS 194 Career and Life Planning class, as well as information on career choices, career testing, goal setting, resume writing, and interview tips.

The UW Colleges Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation status is listed on the UW Colleges Accreditation web page. This is linked to the HLC's website where details of the UW Colleges' accreditation status can be viewed. In addition to the HLC's Mark of Affiliation on the site

web page, information about the UW Colleges is provided, including the institution's mission, goals, and vision statements; history; Strategic Plan; Constitution; organizational charts; campuses; and administration, faculty and staff directory; as well as information about its students and why prospective students should consider attending UW Colleges.

The UW Colleges Office of Marketing and Enrollment strategizes, develops, implements, and manages institution-wide recruitment, marketing, and advertising campaigns for all UW Colleges campuses. In fact, in the relatively new regional administrative model, all UW Colleges enrollment-focused research marketing, advertising, recruiting communication, graphic design, and web design is managed through this office. The regional media, public and community relations are coordinated by the four Regional Directors of Communication.

Through integrated marketing efforts as evidenced in the UW Colleges Marketing Plan, the Office of Marketing and Enrollment builds connections with prospective campus-based students, promotes student success and retention, and shares what makes UW Colleges and its campuses a great college choice. The office specializes in developing creative content and social media campaigns to connect campuses with current students, alumni, and the public. A new social media strategy is managed through the office using shared content provided by multiple sources, including the Regional Director of Communications, the UW Colleges-UW-Extension Communications and External Office, campus-based Solution Center staff, and other contributors. An example of this coordination is the UW Colleges and UW-Extension Tap Into It Campaign developed by the UW Colleges/UW-Extension Communications and External Office and supported through multiple channels. This campaign seeks to tell the stories of how students, alumni, and the public have used its resources and been impacted by its services. UW Colleges Regional Directors of Communications and the UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Communications and Marketing serve as the liaison among news media, UW Colleges, and its campuses. The office also highlights students who are served by the UW Colleges mission as an institution of access to liberal arts general education in higher education.

The UW Colleges website also features the Chancellor's website containing information on a variety of topics, including UW System Board of Regents meetings, communications, events, news, reports, an idea form, and speech and video request forms. The Chancellor's office regularly publishes information relating to the UW Colleges on its website, along with information relating to UW Colleges events. The website also provides links to information on various topics, including Communications and External Relations; Government Relations; the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; Board of Visitors; Publications; Program Innovations; the Academy for Leadership and Innovation; Service-Learning; For Wisconsin; and Strategic Planning.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Argument

The statement of purpose and mission in Chapter 36.01 of the Wisconsin State Statutes clearly articulates the public mission of the UW System and of the UW Colleges as one of its components. As a public non-profit institution, UW Colleges does not have a for-profit parent entity. The UW System (and, by association, the UW Colleges) is governed by the eighteen-member Board of Regents. Sixteen regents (including two student regents) are appointed by the state governor subject to confirmation by the state Senate. The Board includes two voting ex-officio members: the state superintendent of public instruction and the president or a designee of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board.

As Wisconsin State Statute Section 36.09 (1) describes, the Board of Regents is responsible for the University of Wisconsin Colleges and the other institutions that comprise the UW System: "The primary responsibility for governance of the system shall be vested in the board which shall enact establishing policies and rules for governing the system, planning to meet future state needs for collegiate education, setting admission standards and policies and priorities established by the board."

In one example of fostering excellence, the UW Colleges is seeking to improve its Student Survey of Instruction to obtain more meaningful results and to eliminate potential bias. This will more fully maintain the high quality of instruction in UW Colleges, aligning with the Board of Regents' priority of promoting "quality undergraduate programs." A list of suggested changes to the Student Survey of Instruction is under consideration by the UW Colleges Senate Academic Policy Committee.

UW Colleges takes gender equity seriously. Since 2012, the institution has conducted a careful examination of issues of gender equity within the faculty ranks. Following an external consultant analysis of UW Colleges faculty salaries in November 2012, which demonstrated a sizable gap in salary compensation levels between male and female faculty members at the associate and full professor ranks, varied groups within the UW Colleges have initiated conversations at department, administrative, and academic leadership levels about institutional gender equity issues. Wage adjustments implemented in 2013 were the first steps toward addressing gender-based inequities in the institution. Recognizing that gender equity is important in recruiting and retaining top quality instructors, and in keeping with the Board of Regents' priority of maintaining quality academic programs, the UW Colleges continues its commitment to identifying and addressing

additional institutional, structural, culture, and climate factors that may be contributing to gender inequities. In March 2015, again as an outcome of the 2012 consultant report regarding gender inequities related to compensation of faculty members at the associate and full professor ranks, the UW Colleges established a new position, a UW Colleges Gender Equity Coordinator. This coordinator's responsibility it is to work with multiple constituencies in a comprehensive way across campuses, academic departments and programs, and policy-making bodies. In addition to this work, the Gender Equity Coordinator has created a gender equity web page that includes background on gender equity, a faculty survey and its outcomes, summaries of academic research, the coordinator's presentations and travel schedule to UW Colleges campuses, and an annotated bibliography on gender equity.

Another example of fostering excellence involves reimagining the associate degree. As noted in the linked overview, "These efforts are being coordinated by several standing committees of the UW Colleges Senate (Senate Academic Policy Committee, Senate Curriculum Committee, Senate Assessment Committee, Senate Steering Committee) and ad hoc UW Colleges-wide committees (General Education Maps and Markers Community of Practice and the Reimagining Leadership Team), with support from the Virtual Teaching and Learning Center (VTLC) and UW Colleges Central Administration. This work aligns with the Board of Regents' priority of planning "for the future needs of the state for university education." Throughout the 2016-2017 academic year, the Senate Academic Policy Committee (SAPC) is reviewing and revising academic policy to reflect changes to the associate degree as developed by the Reimagining Team. Members of the committee are basing their revision on feedback from relevant stakeholders, most notably academic departments and programs, about Associate of Arts and Science (AAS) degree policy changes. Following the Reimagining Leadership Team's findings and recommendations, the SAPC has invited faculty and academic staff members to review proposed changes to the AAS degree and to participate in a survey to provide additional feedback. Survey results will help SAPC and the Reimagining Leadership Team identify issues to address through policy work and information.

The governing board of the UW System, the Board of Regents, appoints the president of the UW System and the chancellor of the UW Colleges, both of whom serve at its pleasure. The Board grants tenure appointments to faculty members. The Board meets monthly and maintains a formal record of its decision-making deliberations.

Section 36.07(5) of the Wisconsin State Statutes describes the necessity for "Access to the Board": "The board shall provide in its operating policies for access to the board by the public, faculty, students and chancellors." Accordingly, the Board's meeting agendas and minutes are made available to the public on the Board of Regents website. Meetings within the UW Colleges are likewise open to the public in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes 19.81-19.98.

As has been noted, the Board of Regents is the governing body for the entire University of Wisconsin System. As such, it acts on initiatives that are presented to it for action from each institution in the UW System, including the UW Colleges. Examples of recent actions taken by Board of Regents on behalf of the UW Colleges include the authorization to appoint the chancellor for UW Colleges and UW-Extension (October 2014), the approval of the UW Colleges bookstore contractual agreement (February 2014), and the approval of a non-resident tuition increase (December 2016).

Wisconsin State Statute 36.09(1)f indicates that the Board of Regents delegates "to each chancellor the necessary authority for the administration and operation of the institution within the policies and guidelines established by the board." Accordingly, Section 1.00 of the UW Colleges Constitution states, "The chancellor shall be the executive head of the UW Colleges and shall be vested with the responsibility of administering board policies under the coordinating direction of the

president of the University of Wisconsin System and be accountable and report to the president and the board on the operation and administration of the UW Colleges." Thus, the Chancellor is responsible for the day-to-day management of the institution.

Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 36.09(4) states that the faculty shall have the primary responsibility for academic and educational activities and faculty personnel matters. The faculty of each institution in the UW System have the right to determine their own faculty organizational structure and to select representatives to participate in institutional governance. The rights of the faculty in the oversight of academic matters provided in the statutes are exercised through the actions of the UW Colleges Senate and its standing committees.

Section 4.03 of the UW Colleges Constitution states, "Departments shall be responsible for maintenance of standards in the discipline, as regards to curriculum and teaching personnel." Accordingly, the academic departments have primary responsibility in academic matters and evaluate instructional academic staff and faculty members.

Finally, it may be noted that Wisconsin State Statute 36.23 prohibits the Board of Regents from having any conflicts of interest. It states: "No regent or officer or other person appointed or employed in any position in the system may at any time act as agent for any person or organization where such act would create a conflict of interest with the terms of the person's service in the system. The board shall define conflicts of interest and promulgate rules related thereto."

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

UW Colleges affirms its commitment to freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning through the inspiration it takes in The Wisconsin Idea: a 1904 philosophy used by the University of Wisconsin System in partnership with the State of Wisconsin government and administration that, when applied, assists all people of the state by solving problems, and improving health, quality of life, the environment, and agriculture. In support of this philosophy, the Board of Regents issued a statement in 2015 affirming its commitment to freedom of expression and a commitment to academic freedom: "Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe the great state University of Wisconsin should ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found."

Along with the vision of UW Colleges which focuses on respect for persons, personal integrity, individual development, considerate assessment, and a responsive institution, and the UW Colleges Strategic Plan (Institutional Values pp. 5 and 6), the UW Colleges Operational Plan (Goal 2.4, pg. 8 "inclusive excellence") and the UW Colleges Student Rights – Code of Conduct create the basis for integrity, and for ethical and responsible conduct by faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

In addition, UW Colleges fosters robust processes for resolving conflict, bias, and professional ethics violations, and ensuring academic honesty in both tenure and promotion policies as well as student conduct. These processes are included in the UW Colleges Constitution and Bylaws (Chapter 6, Faculty Grievances and Chapter 9, Academic Staff Grievances and Complaints), research policies, faculty handbook (Staff Polices pp. 17-18, Professional Conduct pg. 27), and student handbook (Code of Conduct pp. 4-5). During the 2016-2017 academic year, the UW Colleges is actively working within institutional shared governance practices at the Senate level to develop even clearer processes and procedures.

To assist with communicating the essential importance of equity, diversity, freedom of expression, and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning, UW Colleges provides core training for students, faculty, and staff members in areas related to diversity and inclusivity. Recent examples include Peace Circles for students, launched at UW-Rock County in 2016, which will be implemented at all campuses during the spring semester of 2017, and the Multicultural Awareness Program (MAP) for faculty, staff members, and administrators. Trained peer facilitators lead two-day MAP workshops for employees. The intended outcomes of MAP are to increase the ability of participants to apply multicultural concepts and practices throughout the campuses (including classrooms), and to increase institutional diversity by providing training in how to recruit and retain a diverse work force. The UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion follows the Inclusive Excellence framework developed by a joint UW Colleges and UW-Extension task force, taking as its basis the four essential pillars of Inclusive Excellence: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Excellence.

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

UW Colleges governing bodies have developed policies that define processes and protocols for scholarly research, including Senate and Administrative policies. Within the classroom, UW Colleges has in place an Administrative Policy addressing the appropriate use and dissemination of copyrighted materials to ensure compliance with state and federal copyright laws. Faculty and staff members are guided in their scholarly research by policies that address procedures for incidents, or reported incidents, of scientific misconduct and non-compliance with human subject research.

The UW Colleges Institutional Review Board (IRB) is responsible for ensuring that any research conducted by representatives of the UW Colleges community involving human subjects is conducted in accordance with UW Colleges guidelines and federal policy regarding research with human subjects. The IRB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Human Research Protections Database (and has been since September 2014).

The UW Colleges IRB is responsible for reviewing proposals (via protocol forms) for research involving human participants, as well as status report forms to ensure ongoing compliance with federal regulations. As part of the IRB review process, any principal investigator or faculty/staff member sponsor of student research must complete one of two online training modules on research with human participants: The National Institute of Health training, or the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training – "Social and Behavioral Research" module. UW Colleges created an IRB Coordinator position in 2011, to ensure any research conducted by UW Colleges faculty and staff members, and students remain in compliance with federal or state regulations and to coordinate the activities of the IRB. The IRB Coordinator and IRB members are available to provide resources, guidance, and support in the process to parties engaged in human research.

UW Colleges provides accessible resources for students that guide them in the ethical use of information sources. These resources emphasize the importance of proper citation to avoid plagiarism. The UW Colleges English Department hosts a webpage of resources, including citation resources and information on plagiarism, copyright, and fair-use resources that students can access on the UW Colleges English Department website. UWC Libraries host a website for students with frequently asked questions pertaining to the ethical use of information. To assist students with the citation process, UW Colleges provides Online Citation Style Guides for the following formats: Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), and Chicago Manual of Style (CMS). The libraries also subscribe to NoodleTools, a shared software program assisting students to build proper citations. UW-Fox Valley Library also provides a website with additional information on using sources. Librarians meet individually with students to discuss finding

appropriate sources and other research techniques. These consultations reinforce the above listed concepts and often include the ethical considerations of integrating and citing sources. Librarians also include a discussion of the ethical use of information resources within their classroom instruction sessions; discussion topics may include plagiarism, appropriate paraphrasing, critical source evaluation, copyright restrictions and fair-use allowances, as well as how to incorporate external information into a research assignment (see 3.D for more details).

In addition to Online Citation Style Guides, all UW Colleges students have access to the UW Colleges Online Writing Lab (OWL), through which students can receive feedback on their work, including the proper use of citations in assignments. Drafts of student papers are reviewed by peer tutors under the guidance of the OWL director.

Personal and academic integrity are cornerstones of the UW Colleges, as outlined in the UW Colleges Vision Statement ("Personal Integrity"). Policies related to academic misconduct are articulated in Senate Policy #206 – UWS 14 Academic Misconduct Institutional Procedures. Guides are available for instructors that address institutional procedures when an accusation of academic misconduct has been made, and describe potential repercussions if an individual is found to have engaged in academic misconduct. Students are provided with a guide outlining Academic Misconduct policies and the consequences of academic misconduct.

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

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

The UW Colleges offers two accredited degree programs: the Associate of Arts and Science (AAS) degree and the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) degree completion program. Several processes are in place that assure that these programs and the curriculum that support them are current and at the appropriate levels.

First, new courses undergo a rigorous process of review and evaluation by two separate curriculum committees after campus and/or academic department and programs initiate new course proposals. These are the Senate Curriculum Committee for the AAS degree (see pp. 3-4) and the Senate BAAS Curriculum Committee (see pp. 4-5) (UWC Senate Bylaws).

Second, all courses and instructors are evaluated by students via the Student Survey of Instruction (SSI) instrument, as per the UW Colleges Policy on SSI (see pp. 1-2), at a minimum of every three semesters and twice a year for faculty members who are on the tenure track. For instructional academic staff (IAS) members, the SSI evaluation is administered in the first two semesters of instruction and every third semester thereafter, as per the UW Colleges Policy on SSI for IAS (see page 1). Every student, regardless of a course's mode of delivery, uses the same SSI instrument for course evaluations. Consequently, students have many opportunities for commenting on the quality and the currency of the course and the instruction of the course. Completed SSI forms are collected at the regional level and processed in Madison by the Central Instructional Technology Services (CITS) unit using the Class Climate software package. Reports are generated and shared with all faculty and instructional academic staff members, and with the academic department and program chairs. SSI results are used by academic department and program evaluation committees, and by campus evaluation committees during faculty merit, retention, tenure, and promotion decisions and instructional academic staff member merit and promotion decisions.

Third, every semester class syllabi are collected at the regional level and are archived on a UW Colleges SharePoint site. This ensures that any interested person may request course syllabi and

review the learning outcomes, subject matter, and testing methods covered in all UW Colleges courses.

Fourth, the UW Colleges has set up rigorous articulation agreements with other UW System institutions to ensure that courses transfer smoothly and completely. One facilitator of this process is a UW System-wide course Transfer Wizard by which professors, administrators, and students can determine how a course will transfer between University of Wisconsin System institutions and Wisconsin Technical College System institutions; see UWC Transfer Wizard. Another major component of transfer is the Guaranteed Transfer Program whereby a student can begin his or her education as a freshman at a UW Colleges campus and receive guaranteed admission to another UW System institution as a junior by earning the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science degree and participating in the UW Colleges Guaranteed Transfer Program. Additionally, the UW Colleges has a comprehensive and rigorous process for transferring courses between and among UW System institutions and with the Wisconsin Technical College System institutions. It is important to note that academic department and programs, in consultation with the UW Colleges Transfer Coordinator, are responsible for overseeing how courses transfer between and among UW System institutions and the Wisconsin Technical College System institutions.

Fifth, the UW Colleges has a process for transferring courses from the institution into non-UW System higher education programs. Sixth, courses taught at the 13 UW Colleges campuses and UW Colleges Online, and in high school Concurrent and Dual Enrollment programs, are consistent in quality and content. Consistency is maintained primarily through academic department and program-developed course guides, which are constructed for every course in the UW Colleges. Course guides are described in detail below. In summary, the UW Colleges has numerous procedures for ensuring the quality of its courses are appropriate for the institution and for ensuring that courses transferred in and transferred out of the institution meet UW Colleges standards.

As noted above, the UW Colleges offers two degrees: the Associate of Arts and Science degree (AAS) and the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) degree completion program. The learning goals and outcomes for the AAS degree are as follows:

A. Analytical Skills

Students must be able to:

1. Interpret and synthesize information and ideas

2. Analyze and evaluate arguments

3. Construct an argument in support of a conclusion

4. Select and apply scientific and other appropriate methodologies

5. Integrate knowledge and experience to arrive at creative solutions

6. Locate and assess information from printed sources, electronic sources, and observation

7. Construct and support hypotheses

B. Quantitative Skills

Students must be able to:

1. Solve quantitative and mathematical problems

2. Interpret graphs, tables, and diagrams

3. Use statistics appropriately and accurately

C. Communication Skills

Students must be able to:

1. Read, observe, and listen with comprehension and critical perception

2. Communicate clearly, precisely, and in a well-organized manner

3. Demonstrate a large and varied vocabulary

4. Recognize and use a variety of communication forms and styles

5. Use computer technologies for communication

D. Aesthetic Skills

Students must be able to:

1. Create or perform a work of art

2. Critically reflect upon a work of art

E. Intercultural Skills

Students must be able to:

1. Apply an understanding of different cultures to an analysis or interpretation of course content

2. Exhibit competence while interacting with people, ideas, or artifacts from a variety of cultures

These AAS learning goals apply across all 13 UW Colleges campuses and UW Colleges Online (AAS Degree; AAS Degree Online). The AAS degree is designed to fulfill the UW Colleges mission that requires core requirements in writing and mathematics and a distribution of credits in breadth of knowledge categories. The breadth categories in the AAS degree are as follows: Fine Arts and Humanities, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Application and Performance, Ethnic Studies, and Interdisciplinary Studies. The AAS degree requirements include a minimum of 60 credits and a minimum 2.0 grade point average; additionally, at least 24 credits must be completed within the UW Colleges and a student must be enrolled at a UW Colleges campus the semester that he or she graduates. Degree requirements are discussed in further detail below.

The AAS degree may also be completed through the UW Colleges Flexible Option program. The learning goals of the UW Colleges Flexible Option program are the same as those of the traditional AAS degree program. To achieve credits towards completion of the UW Colleges Flexible Option AAS degree, students study, learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies identified within a discipline, program, or competency sets. The competency sets consist of essential knowledge and skills associated with a field of study as identified by UW Colleges faculty members and formally

approved by the appropriate academic department or program, the UW Colleges Senate, and the UW Colleges chancellor. Students make progress by learning these competencies and passing assessments or by completing projects that demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

The Bachelor of Arts and Sciences degree, or BAAS degree completion program, is offered at six campuses (UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, UW-Barron County, UW-Marshfield/Wood County, UW-Richland, UW-Rock County, and UW-Waukesha). The learning goals for the BAAS degree completion program are as follows:

A. Integrative Learning

Students must be able to:

1. Integrate past work/life experience with the college experience,
2. Identify, analyze, and develop strategies to meet local community and business needs,
3. Understand the role of service in the development of healthy communities,
4. Adapt to a continuously changing work world, and
5. Demonstrate persistent learning through the capacity to apply research skills, critical analysis, group discussion techniques, and disciplined writing in community and work settings.

B. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Natural World

Students must be able to:

1. Demonstrate a broad knowledge of global issues, processes, trends, and systems,
2. Communicate effectively across contemporary cultural boundaries, and
3. Work effectively in a variety of cross-cultural environments.

C. Practical and Cognitive Skills

Students must be able to:

1. Demonstrate analysis, synthesis, evaluation, decision-making, and critical and creative thinking skills,
2. Identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in one's own and others' work,
3. Write coherent, organized, well-developed, and substantive texts that follow the conventions of standard written English, and
4. Apply effective leadership, teamwork, relationship management, and conflict resolution skills in the workplace.

These learning outcomes were approved on June 10, 2011, when the BAAS degree completion program was approved by the UW System Board of Regents. The degree is designed for busy, place-bound adults who wish to continue their education and achieve their career goals. The BAAS degree is for students who hold a liberal arts or technical/vocational associate degree and who want to take the next step in furthering their education by attaining a bachelor's degree. With their associate degree in hand, students enter the program with junior status. Students then complete additional coursework with a minimum of 60 credits to earn the BAAS degree. The coursework includes global studies, professional experience, cognitive skills, electives, and a capstone senior seminar.

Students in the BAAS degree completion program may elect an academic focus for their degree and select one of six concentrations. A BAAS degree-seeking student is required to complete 15 credits to obtain a concentration. The six areas of concentration are as follows:

- Business
- Communication
- Health and Wellness
- Organizational Leadership
- Project Management
- Sustainability

UW Colleges also offers seven credit certificate programs, which students can use to give greater focus to their program of study within the AAS degree program. Students may also choose to pursue specific emphases to provide greater coherence to their general education, liberal arts AAS degree program pursuits. The UW Colleges offer 11 emphases on all 13 campuses, with a total of 15 emphases available on some campuses.

Finally, it is important to note that course descriptions and goals are published in each campus's and UW Colleges Online course schedules (e.g., UW-Marshfield Course Schedule Spring 2017) used by students to register for classes. Additionally, UW Colleges Senate policy requires that all course syllabi include a statement on course and learning goals to inform students of the key learning outcomes of each course.

As noted above, the courses taught at the 13 UW Colleges campuses and UW Colleges Online, and in high school dual enrollment programs are consistent in their quality and content. The primary basis for this consistency are course guides, which are submitted as each new course is initiated by an academic department or program and is then considered for approval by the Senate Curriculum Committee. A course guide defines an extensive series of features to be adhered to when the course is offered on campuses, through online distance education modes, and in high schools. These features include a list of course proficiencies, learning objectives and outcomes, the course's major topics and requirements, recommended texts and readings, and information about transferability with other UW System institutions. For example, the course guide for ENG 102 Critical Writing, Reading, and Research lists six major topics that must be covered, six course requirements, and over 20 learning outcomes and competencies. Academically grounded instructor choice of required texts accounts for one area of difference in how the course is taught among campuses, while the mode of delivery by UW Colleges Online accounts for another difference (e.g, the content of lectures delivered orally in classrooms is presented in written format in most online classes). Academic departments and programs are responsible for maintaining the currency of course guides and for ensuring that faculty and instructional academic staff members are following the course guide for a specific course. This oversight is accomplished during peer classroom visitations, and during retention, tenure, and promotion deliberations. Inclusion of course syllabi is required as part of the materials submitted by a faculty member during these personnel reviews, and by instructional academic staff during reviews for promotion.

The rigorous system by which course quality is evaluated in the UW Colleges begins with careful analysis of a course when it is first proposed, including its syllabus, structure, content, and learning outcomes. This analysis is conducted by at least two and, on occasion, three distinct curriculum committees. If a course is initiated at the academic department or program level, the respective department or program curriculum committee reviews and evaluates the course. If a course is initiated at the campus level, then it is reviewed and evaluated by the campus curriculum committee, followed by the appropriate academic department or program curriculum committee (UW Colleges Curriculum Guidelines Policy, see Section IV., pp. 2-3). All new course proposals are next reviewed by the UW Colleges Senate Curriculum Committee. The Senate Curriculum Committee then recommends course approvals to the provost, who as chief academic officer has final approval authority. In summary, as

the UW Colleges Curriculum Guidelines policy notes, the general "sequence of course proposal review is (1) department, (2) campus (not always needed), (3) Senate Curriculum Committee, (4) Provost."

At each level, the course is evaluated according to a number of criteria including the clarity of the course aims and goals; a consideration of how the course fulfills a need for degree requirements (e.g., whether it fulfills the Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Humanities, or Social Sciences requirement); the quality and number of graded assignments; the assigned course material (e.g., textbook, articles, videos); the grading system; and other course policies. The course will by then typically have been evaluated by a minimum of nine different faculty members: at the department level the course is reviewed by at least three faculty members with expertise in the subject, and at the campus and Senate levels it is reviewed by curriculum committees that include faculty members from three distinct academic areas (Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences). Finally, the course goes to the provost who examines the course proposals one last time and determines, ultimately, if the course should be incorporated into the UW Colleges course curriculum.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

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

Argument

The AAS degree has a set of core general education requirements that are appropriate for a two-year degree that is intended to support transfer to institutions that offer a bachelor's degree. The AAS degree requires students to complete a minimum of 60 credits and have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 earned at the UW Colleges and 2.0 overall GPA in credits applied to the AAS degree. Students must successfully complete core requirements in writing and mathematics and a distribution of credits in breadth of knowledge categories that include Fine Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, and courses dedicated to Application and Performance, Ethnic Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies. The AAS degree is also available to students through the UW Colleges Flexible Option and the UW Colleges Online programs. It is important to note that the AAS degree core general education and breadth requirements identified above are expected to be fulfilled by students enrolled in the UW Colleges AAS Flexible Option program and UW Colleges Online program.

The BAAS degree completion program, which is offered at six UW Colleges campuses, is designed for students who have earned an associate degree and who want to take the next step in furthering their education by attaining a bachelor's degree. To be admitted into the UW Colleges BAAS degree completion program, students must have completed a liberal arts associate degree or an applied associate degree.

As discussed above, the UW Colleges AAS degree has core requirements in writing and mathematics and a distribution of credits in breadth of knowledge categories. The range of course offerings at the UW Colleges (see 3.B below for more detail) and the AAS degree breadth requirements provide a solid liberal arts general education that ensure students will develop the broad knowledge, intellectual concepts, skills, and attitudes essential for every college-educated person. The UW Colleges measures student learning outcomes for these areas through a rigorous assessment program at the department

and program, and institutional level. This information is addressed in detail in Criterion Four.

Both of the UW Colleges degrees, the AAS degree and the BAAS degree completion program, engage students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information.While many courses in the UW Colleges require these skills, they are particularly emphasized in the laboratory courses in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines and in the research papers and projects that are part of the social sciences and humanities disciplines. For example, in ENG 102 Critical Writing, Reading, and Research, one of the core courses for the AAS degree, all students must write a research paper. The breadth requirements of both degrees ensure that students will have become skilled at multiple modes of inquiry (e.g., the AAS degree requires students to take credits in at least two Natural Sciences areas and two Social Sciences areas). Creative work is also emphasized in the AAS degree. This is particularly evident in the requirement that degree-seeking students take at least one Fine Arts course, and in the Application and Performance requirement, which is often fulfilled by courses devoted to performance in music, art, or theater.

The BAAS degree completion program is particularly oriented toward giving students practical experience and skill in a work environment and in research projects. This is especially evident in its requirements for professional experience (e.g., an internship and service-learning projects) and the UW Colleges BAAS Senior Capstone Seminar, which requires all BAAS degree-seeking students to carry out a substantial research or creative-based project that is based in the student's local community.

Reports based upon data collected in the UW Colleges course assessment process provide evidence that the institution gives students a well-rounded and practical education. As evidenced in the most recent available assessment report, the majority of UW Colleges students meet or exceed expectations for a wide variety of important academic and life skills in the Humanities, the Social Sciences, and the Natural Sciences, in freshman- and sophomore-level courses. Assessments included varied performance indicators such as selecting and applying scientific methodologies; interpreting graphs, tables, and diagrams; communicating clearly in a well-organized manner; critically reflecting on works of art; understanding different cultures; and many more.

In addition to the skills developed in UW Colleges course work, students have numerous opportunities to develop work and research skills outside the classroom. For example, the UW-Waukesha Internship program is designed to integrate "knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting." The BAAS degree completion program includes an internship in its degree requirements. Students also have opportunities to engage in research with professors (e.g., in the Student Research Symposium) and present their research in public forums (e.g., Research in the Rotunda), as will be discussed in more detail below.

Requirements for the AAS degree include at least nine credits in the social sciences and at least three credits in courses dedicated to ethnic diversity. The BAAS degree completion program has a Global Studies requirement that gives students a solid background in issues involving globalization and cultural interconnectedness.

Course offerings in the social sciences, particularly in Anthropology and Sociology, have students regularly engage with diverse cultural and societal beliefs and practices found in countries around the world and with diverse ethnicities in the United States (e.g., Ethnic Studies classes offered at UW-Fox Valley and UW Colleges Online, in Spring 2017). Humanities courses cover both western and non-western cultures and ideas in philosophy and religion (Philosophy Department), art (Art Department), music (Music Department), history (History Department), and literature (English Department). UW

Colleges students may select from courses in world languages including French, German, Italian, and Spanish (World Languages Department). Importantly, UW Colleges students have the opportunity to interact with people from cultures other than their own through the UW Colleges International Students Education program. This program has brought students from over nine countries (e.g., Nepal, Vietnam, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, and China) to study on several UW Colleges campuses (UW Colleges International Student Testimonials).

The faculty of the UW Colleges take seriously their intertwined role as both instructors and scholars, and recognize that creative and scholarly work enhances their role as instructors (see UW Colleges Senate policies 501, 503, and 506 for information regarding the role of professional development in faculty hiring, and in retention, tenure, and post-tenure reviews). Through their engagement, faculty members demonstrate to students the excitement of creating knowledge and collaborating in creative works. Every year, UW Colleges faculty members in every department and program write scholarly papers for professional conferences, publish articles in professional and popular journals, publish books, or produce original creative work in the fine arts (UW Colleges Intuitional Accomplishments Listing 2013-2015).

Students have numerous opportunities, as well, to contribute to scholarship and participate in creative work. At all UW College campuses students participate in public theater productions and take part in public musical performances (e.g., Theater Productions at UW-Waukesha, UW-Barron County Music, UW-Richland Fine Arts). All campuses have art galleries that feature student and professional artists, and all campuses provide theater, music, and other cultural events offered to students, faculty and staff members, and community members. At several campuses students write, edit, and produce a college newspaper, though due to budget reductions in recent years, the number of newspapers has declined and print production schedules can be irregular (e.g.,*The Forum* at UW-Marathon County, UW-Fox Valley's *Fox Journal*). Eight campuses publish a literary magazine edited by students containing both faculty members' and students' creative works including stories, photographs, and drawings: UW-Waukesha, UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, UW-Fox Valley, UW-Rock County, UW-Manitowoc, UW-Marathon County, and UW-Washington County (e.g., *Pyrite*, *Fox Cry Review*).

Students at the UW Colleges have institution-wide opportunities to participate in undergraduate research. On the UW-Waukesha campus, for example, students actively collaborate on research projects with faculty members on topics such as climate change. Students on all campuses may participate in Research in the Rotunda, an annual showcase of undergraduate research in the UW System held at the state capitol building. UW Colleges students also participate in the Undergraduate Research Symposium at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, as well as the UW System Space Consortium and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR). Additionally, UW Colleges students have the opportunity to publish their research in the UW Colleges Student Research Journal. This online journal, which is edited by UW Colleges faculty members, serves the following purposes: "1). to give our students the experience of writing scholarly articles for development and dissemination of their learning and 2). To foster the close academic ties between our students and our faculty [members], a hallmark of the UW Colleges."

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Argument

The UW Colleges has a thorough process for hiring and evaluating instructors that ensures appropriate qualifications. Over 80 percent of UW Colleges faculty members hold terminal degrees in their respective disciplines. Instructional academic staff instructors are expected, at a minimum, to hold a master's degree in the discipline in which they are teaching, and, in fact, a number of hold terminal degrees. The process for hiring a tenure track faculty member includes a chancellor-approved national or regional search during which applicants are evaluated according to demonstrated excellence in teaching, scholarly and/or creative works and presentations, and a commitment to service to the community (Guidelines For Conducting The Faculty Position Request Process). Tenure track faculty members are expected to hold a terminal degree in the discipline in which they are hired. In rare cases, with the consent of the academic department or program and the provost, a tenure track candidate can be considered for a faculty appointment holding a master's degree or a master's degree in addition to graduate credits in the discipline. Both the academic department or program and the local campus participate in vetting applications and interviewing applicants. In the final stages of a search, a set of candidates give campus-based presentations to their prospective peers in which they must demonstrate their teaching abilities and their scholarly or creative abilities. The process for hiring an instructional academic staff member involves the academic department or program, the regional associate dean for academic affairs, and, in some cases, a campus-based committee evaluating applicants for their credentials and their demonstrated teaching abilities. Instructional academic staff members are required to have earned at least a master's degree in the discipline in which they will be teaching (UW Colleges Policy-Hiring, Promotion, Review of IAS).

The UW Colleges has made a commitment to delivering its curriculum to high schools across Wisconsin. High school teachers wishing to teach UW Colleges courses for college and high school credit (Dual or Concurrent Enrollment) are thoroughly reviewed and approved by UW Colleges academic departments to teach courses in their respective disciplines. High school teachers submit, at

minimum, a resume to the appropriate UW Colleges academic department or program for review. Academic departments or programs may also require official transcripts from high school teachers wishing to teach college courses in the high school. UW Colleges Senate policy requires that high school teachers hold at least a master's degree in the discipline in which the course is offered or a master's degree plus 18 credits in the discipline in which the course is offered. Additionally, the high school teacher must meet the same minimum qualifications required for a UW Colleges instructional academic staff member hired by the academic department or program responsible for the course.

The UW Colleges has a well-established set of procedures and policies to evaluate instructors. As noted above, UW Colleges requires regular class visits by colleagues for faculty members both before and after tenure, and for all instructional academic staff members. During these visits, instructors are evaluated for their ability to present material and handle student questions, as well as for how responsive students appear to be to the instructor's teaching during the visit. The course assignments and syllabus are also considered in the class visitation report. Additionally, students regularly evaluate course instruction through the SSI (Student Survey of Instruction). All instructors are evaluated through the SSI at a minimum of every three semesters, with faculty members on the tenure-track being evaluated twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. For instructional academic staff members, the SSI is administered for the first two semesters of instruction and every third semester thereafter, per UW Colleges Policy on SSI for IAS.

Probationary faculty members are reviewed every year first by their department and then by their home campus to determine their progress toward tenure. The review is based on a number of criteria: (1) a dossier, which probationary faculty submit both to their academic department and their campus, describing teaching practices, philosophy, and accomplishments; professional development; and university and community service; (2) results of the Student Survey of Instruction; and (3) reports from classroom visits by their colleagues. Review of tenure track faculty generally occurs each year for six years (the exception being when a faculty member elects to apply for early tenure). At the end of the sixth year, probationary faculty members' tenure materials are reviewed in turn by the academic department, the campus, the UW Colleges provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs, and the chancellor to determine an appropriate recommendation regarding tenure and promotion. The UW System Board of Regents receives the chancellor's recommendation and grants tenure at the institutional level, as well as promotion. Tenured faculty members are then reviewed every five years by their academic department and campus.

Each year, every instructor is required to submit an Activity Report to his or her academic department and, if applicable, program. Faculty members detail their teaching accomplishments, professional development accomplishments, and service to the academic department, campus, and local community, as well as any service to the UW Colleges and UW System. Instructional academic staff members are required to detail only their teaching accomplishments. Additionally, instructional academic staff members may include information pertaining to their professional development and service to their department, campus, and local community, as well as the UW Colleges and the UW System, if any. For merit determinations, these Activity Reports are evaluated in alternate years by academic department and by campuses. These evaluations form the basis for ranking instructors according to the following merit classifications: for faculty members, "Exceptionally meritorious," "Highly meritorious," "Meritorious," "Satisfactory," and "Unsatisfactory"; for instructional academic staff members, "Outstanding," "Above average," "Acceptable," "Needs significant improvement," and "Generally inadequate" (see UW Colleges Hiring, Promotion and Review Policy, UW Colleges Faculty Merit Policy, and UW Colleges Academic Staff Hiring, Promotion, and Review Policy).

The evaluation process begins with the rigorous practice for hiring instructors discussed above and it continues with the thorough set of procedures for evaluating instructors throughout their teaching

careers in the UW Colleges.

The UW Colleges provides its faculty and instructional academic staff members numerous opportunities to participate actively in professional development to ensure effective teaching.The UW System Office of Professional Development and Instruction (OPID) offers important programs and resources, including the annual UW System Faculty College held every summer, during which participants attend stimulating presentations and engage in lively discussion on subject matters concerning teaching and learning. The UW Colleges presents an annual UW Colleges Colloquium during which faculty members, instructional academic staff members, non-teaching academic staff members, and administrators gather to discuss teaching, learning, and other initiatives. For example, the theme for the 2016 Colloquium was "Regionalizing and Reimagining the Colleges."

Another easily accessed forum for professional development is the UW Colleges Virtual Teaching and Learning Center (VTLC). This web-based center provides programs and resources that engage faculty and instructional academic staff members in reflections and discussions about teaching and learning to encourage purposeful, informed pedagogy. Summer Research Grants provide UW Colleges faculty members with a stipend or expense payments to support summer research and professional development activities. The award of $4,000 can provide faculty members opportunities to collaborate on research and professional development activities with colleagues from within the UW Colleges, with colleagues at other UW System institutions, or with colleagues at institutions outside Wisconsin. Faculty members can also conduct discipline-specific research on teaching and learning, or conduct research activities appropriate to their discipline. The UW Colleges Central Information Technology Services (CITS) offers Desire2Learn training and blended course development instructor training to UW Colleges instructors. Additionally, UW Colleges Online provides a six week-long training for teaching online classes and sponsors a number of innovative teaching and learning programs (TOL 101 Course Syllabus).

The UW Colleges also supports its instructors in remaining current in their respective disciplines by providing funding sources for both research on teaching and learning, and discipline-specific research. Instructors may apply for professional development funds from their academic department (e.g., Chemistry Department Bylaws), their campus, and their local campus foundation (e.g., Washington County Campus Foundation) to attend professional conferences, collaborate with colleagues on research, and conduct technical analyses (e.g., using geophysical techniques in archaeology). Assistance with applying for competitive external grants is provided through the UW Colleges Office of Academic Affairs.

UW Colleges instructors take pride in being accessible to students. With the small class sizes students have ample opportunities to interact with professors regularly in the classroom, laboratories and all extra-curricular events (e.g., theater productions, concerts, and sports) (Student Success at the UW Colleges). All instructors post their office hours in their course syllabi, and typically on their office doors and course web pages, as well. (UW Colleges Courses and Instructional Policies). In addition, UW Colleges instructors meet regularly with students outside scheduled office hours to address student academic needs and concerns. Many faculty members also participate as advisors to student clubs across the 13 campuses (UW Colleges Student Life) as service to the campus considered during personnel reviews (UW Colleges Faculty Merit Policy, UW Colleges Academic Staff Hiring, Promotion, and Review Policy). Students taking online courses may contact and query instructors through discussion sections in the course (e.g., the Ask the Professor feature), by email, and by telephone.

The UW Colleges has hiring practices that ensure non-teaching academic staff members are appropriately qualified. Advisors must have a minimum of bachelor's degree and a year of experience

in a student affairs setting. Advisor duties include "providing professional academic and career advising to new and continuing students with additional direct responsibilities in the areas of financial aid, student accessibility, and recruitment and retention" (See Job Posting for Student Services Advisor). Positions can be advertised nationally (HigherEdJobs), regionally, and locally (UW Colleges Employment Opportunities). Candidates apply to the UW Colleges Human Resources Office and applicant screening is performed by local student affairs staff, who are located within the Solution Center (formerly known as the Student Services office) on each campus, in consultation with the Regional Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (RADSA). Finalists interview on campus or via distance technology. The final candidate is selected by a campus committee and the RADSA, who then recommend appointment by the campus administrator. The UW Colleges Human Resources Office initiates a criminal background check of the preferred candidate prior to appointment into the position.

Academic Librarians must have an American Library Association accredited Masters in Library and/or Information Science degree in order to be hired for a library position in the UW Colleges. Academic Librarians, under the direction of the Executive Director of Libraries, work to achieve the vision of the library as a vibrant learning commons space. Academic Librarians are responsible for delivering an array of library services to support the campus community and the public. These services include maintaining the collection to support the curriculum offered, overseeing the circulation of materials, providing instruction and assistance to students and faculty/instructors, and maintaining a strong professional knowledge of library best practices.

Numerous training and professional development opportunities are available to student support services staff. Solution Center staff members have a minimum of twice yearly face-to-face meetings on a UW Colleges-wide basis to review new procedures and processes. Solution Center staff members are encouraged and supported by the institution to further their professional development through workshops and conferences. These include workshops such as the Wisconsin Academic Advising Association meetings, Career Development Facilitator training at UW-Madison, and the Multicultural Awareness Program through the UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Academic Librarians are expected to pursue professional development opportunities. The Executive Director of Libraries has a professional development fund from which she can support Academic Librarian professional development. Academic Librarians can apply to the UW Colleges Libraries' Executive Committee and Professional Development and Service Committee for funds to support travel to and participation in national, regional, or state conferences or other kinds of training/education activities such as workshops and seminars. Campus professional development funds can be used to supplement Academic Librarian professional development needs. Additionally, the Library Council's Professional Development and Service Committee organizes an annual Professional Development Day (e.g., 2015, 2016, 2017) that is open to all library staff members and facilitates brown bag lunch webinars throughout the academic year. Recent webinar topics have included customer service training, supervision, and mentoring student workers.

Orientation and training opportunities are also available for the Center for Academic Success and Engagement (CASE) Associates. A comprehensive orientation is offered to new CASE Associates by Central Information Technology Services (CITS). The orientation covers information about CASE Associate roles and responsibilities, the tracking and processing of computer hardware repairs, and software and hardware requests, providing computer printer support, and information about the wireless network on the campuses. Additionally, ongoing training is available through training videos that cover a variety of topics: providing software support, submitting incident web forms, and understanding the computer repair process.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Argument

The UW Colleges provides extensive learning support and instruction to address academic needs and for directing entering students to appropriate courses and programs. Many of the campuses have First Year Experience Programs that help students transition to college by offering classroom opportunities that maximize academic success, build positive relationships among faculty and staff members, and students, and provide campus-wide resources tailored to first-year students. One of the main features of the program are the LEC 100 First Year Seminar courses, which are one-credit courses that focus on the skills students need for academic and career success. These much-needed skills include note taking, time and financial management, critical reading, and dealing with number sense and math anxiety. UW Colleges also offers non-credit courses in Mathematics and English for students in need of remedial support. In addition, entering students are directed to appropriate courses through placement tests for English, world languages, and Mathematics. Finally, three of the campuses (UW-Marathon County, UW-Rock County, and UW-Waukesha) are served by a Student Support Services TRIO Program, a federally funded grant program that provides extensive academic support to disadvantaged students who are eligible and are actively pursuing the services available that help students manage the transition from high school to college level academic study.

Both entering and continuing students have access to institution-wide programs and processes that provide academic advising. As noted above, every campus of the UW Colleges has a Solution Center that provides a wide range of services and programs to support and advance access, opportunity, and student success in furthering the educational mission of the college. The Solution Center is staffed by trained professional advisors who assist students with creating a course schedule that will meet each student's goals and ensure the timely completion of degree requirements (e.g., UW-Sheboygan Solution Center). Students also receive advice on coursework from UW Colleges non-teaching academic staff members who hold weekly office hours to assist students with their courses, transfer planning, and assistance and guidance on potential majors and careers.

Every campus also has a Center for Academic Success and Engagement (CASE). The CASE provides co-located academic support services including library services, instructional technology help, accommodations proctoring, access to tutoring, and other directional assistance. On most campuses,

CASE is housed in the campus library. A CASE Associate working at the circulation desk in the front of the library responds to student questions about academics and connects them with or schedules appointments with support services. The CASE associate can also help students troubleshoot IT issues, get access to printing services, and check out books, course materials or media. The CASE Associate also helps faculty members by assisting with course reserves, the scheduling and facilitation of accommodations proctoring, and helping to arrange appointments for in-class library and information literacy sessions. Additionally, several campuses have academic success centers (e.g., UW-Waukesha Academic Success Center, UW-Fox Valley Writing Pad). The UW Colleges Online program also has an extensive tutoring program (UW Colleges Online Tutoring). All UW Colleges students have access to the Online Writing Lab (OWL) through which they can submit draft essays online and receive feedback from a student writing tutor overseen by a professional director (UW Colleges Online Writing Lab).

UW Colleges provides the necessary infrastructure to support teaching and learning. Every campus has science labs, a theater, lecture halls, distance education classrooms, and technology-equipped classrooms. Likewise, every campus has a library that serves faculty and staff members, students, and local community members (UW Colleges Libraries). In addition to having access to local holdings of books, journals, musical recordings, and DVDs, all library patrons have access to databases and holdings throughout the UW System and an interlibrary loan system providing access to libraries across the United States and in other countries (e.g., UW Waukesha-ILLiad). Staff librarians also answer reference questions (e.g., in the 2015-2016 academic year, they answered 8,978 questions UW Colleges Libraries Annual Report 2015-16) from all their patrons. Finally, the libraries provide spaces for collaboration, learning, and research for all patrons.

Every campus has computer laboratories (e.g., Computer Lab at UW-Sheboygan), laboratories for the Natural Sciences disciplines (i.e., Geology, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, and Physics), an auditorium for musical and theater productions (e.g., UW-Fox Valley Communication Arts Center), practice rooms for vocal and instrumental music, two-dimensional art studios (e.g., painting and drawing), and art galleries (e.g., UW-Fox Valley Art Gallery). Some of the campuses have art studios for three-dimensional works (e.g., sculpture and ceramics), Engineering laboratories (e.g., UW-Washington County Collaborative Degree Programs, UW-Sheboygan Collaborative Degree in Engineering, UW-Fox Valley Collaborative Degree Programs, labs dedicated to developmental and credit-bearing Mathematics courses (e.g., UW-Fox Valley Math Labs), and greenhouses (e.g., UW-Marinette). In addition, UW-Fox Valley and UW-Marathon County have planetariums (e.g., UW-Fox Valley Planetarium) and UW-Fox Valley houses the Weiss Earth Science Museum. All the campuses have at least three classrooms devoted to distance education and meeting presentations. All campuses have technologically enhanced "smart classrooms." Finally, all campuses have a gymnasium, a weight room, and a soccer field or access to a community soccer field.

Librarians provide instruction on the development of skills to efficiently find, evaluate, and use information for research in coursework through information literacy instruction; in 2015-2016, librarians reached 9,532 students by way of 532 information literacy classes taught (UW Colleges Libraries Annual Report 2015-16). Nearly all information literacy sessions are taught as part of an existing class in the curriculum; for example ENG 098, ENG 101, and ENG 102. An instructor determines that a research project is appropriate for his or her curriculum and then arranges for a librarian to come to the class to help the students achieve their goals for that particular research project. At the UW-Marinette campus, a credit bearing, standalone information literacy course is taught with the goal of introducing students to academic research within the framework of a liberal arts education. As discussed above, students have ample opportunities to write research projects and papers in most disciplines (e.g., geography, anthropology, and history). One of the requirements for ENG 102 Critical Writing, Reading, and Research, a core courses for the AAS degree, is that students

must write a research paper UW Colleges First Year Writing Sequence. As also discussed more fully above, students have opportunities for research with faculty members (e.g., Student Research Symposium). Students are provided instruction in all natural science laboratories. Finally, students are provided instruction in research techniques in courses in all disciplines and have the opportunity for one-on-one instruction in independent studies. (e.g., GEO 299 UW Colleges Geography-Geology Courses).

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3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

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

Argument

Each of the UW Colleges' 13 campuses offers an array of popular co-curricular activities. All campuses provide intramural sport activities (e.g., basketball and volleyball are offered at all campuses). Each campus intercollegiate athletic department is a member of the Wisconsin Collegiate Conference (WCC), which specifies student athlete eligibility requirements (credit load and grade point average) that are overseen by the campus athletic director, the campus faculty athletic representative, and the campus administrator. Completed eligibility rosters are sent to the WCC commissioner. WCC coaches recognize outstanding student athletes by voting for All Conference Teams; student athletes are also recognized academically by being named to Academic All-Conference teams. Other co-curricular activities on all campuses include theater productions (e.g., Theater on the Bay), choral and instrumental ensembles (e.g., Lakeshore Wind Ensemble), student clubs such as Phi Theta Kappa (e.g., UW-Manitowoc PTK), Electronic Gaming (e.g., UW-Marinette Student Organizations), a Disc Golf Club (e.g., UW-Baraboo/Sauk County Student Organizations), and student government associations (e.g., UW-Barron County).

UW Colleges takes pride in the fact that it can demonstrate its favorable impact on its students and on the communities that it serves. Students who attend the UW Colleges and then transfer into other UW System programs perform better overall than transfers from any other institution UW System Transfer Information. The first year GPA for fall 2014 new transfer students was 3.0. The overall second year retention rate for fall 2013 new transfer students was 73%. The overall six-year graduation rate for fall 2008 new transfer students was 62%. The UW Colleges is committed to having students apply their learning and skills through service-learning projects, and the institution is a member of Wisconsin Campus Compact which "advances the public purpose of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility."

The UW Colleges also has positive interactions with and impacts on its local communities. The musical programs (e.g., Moraine Chorus), lecture series (e.g., UW Waukesha Lecture Series), and festivals (e.g., Festival of Arts, Southeastern Wisconsin Festival of Books) include the community in the academic and artistic lives of the campus. UW-Fox Valley has faculty members who serve on the Northeast Wisconsin Educational Resource Alliance (NEW ERA), which is "an alliance that fosters regional collaboration among the public colleges and universities in the New North to better serve the educational needs of the 1.2 million people who live and work in northeast Wisconsin." In addition, the 13 UW Colleges campuses have partnerships and agreements with a wide variety of local institutions, including arts councils (e.g., Richland Area Arts Council, UW-Richland Center Partnerships 2015), environmental organizations (e.g., Milwaukee River Cleanup, UW-Washington

County Partnerships 2015), local K-12 schools (e.g., K-12 School District of Winter, UW Barron County Partnerships 2015), county health departments (e.g., Sauk County Public Health Department, UW-Baraboo/Sauk County Partnerships 2015), and much more.

All UW Colleges campuses have active continuing education programs that promote intellectual stimulation, personal/professional growth, and cultural enrichment (e.g., UW-Marathon County Continuing Education). The UW Colleges also has a positive impact on the businesses and economic outlook for its communities (e.g., UW-Washington County Analysis of Contribution). Additionally, the UW Colleges is committed to informing local communities about important local natural resources (Lakeshore Water Institute).

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4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

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

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

The UW Colleges offers two accredited degrees: the Associate of Arts and Science degree and the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree completion program. The courses for and academic oversight of these two degrees fall to the eighteen academic departments and programs of the UW Colleges. The UW Colleges practices regular program reviews of academic departments and programs. These academic departmental and program reviews occur on a staggered timeline, with each academic department or program undertaking the program review process every three years. This timeline allows for a thorough analysis of the review by the Provost and for meaningful conversation among department members, the Department Chair, and the Provost about the academic department's or program's progress and goals. Departments and programs are divided into three groups for the rotation of reviews, based on academic division: Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The Provost and the Provost's direct reports in the Office of Academic Affairs work closely with each academic department and program chair in the academic year preceding the review and the academic year of the review to complete the report. The Provost's

office provides a clear charge memorandum, data sets detailing academic department and program curricular offerings by campus, detailed reports on faculty and instructional academic staff members' demographics, and academic department and program budget information.

These reviews are designed to cover what academic departments and programs have accomplished since their last review as well as what departments and programs are currently doing, and to help to identify and implement new goals through thoughtful reflection on their review. Departmental and program reviews include three main parts: a department or program profile, an academic department or program curricular and staffing review, and department or program goals. The department profile contains objective reporting of the array of courses, diversity and demographics of the instructional staff, and financial and technological resources of the department. This section of the review lays the groundwork for the next two sections of the review, which are reflective and goal oriented. In the academic program review section, the department or program is asked to contextualize its practices within the mission of the UW Colleges, the institution's goals and priorities, the student populations' needs, and statewide contexts. The department or program is asked to explain how different instructional modes or interdisciplinary efforts affect curricular offerings, and how its courses are being offered to emphasize new curricular initiatives, such as the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) degree completion program or the competency-based, self-paced UW Colleges Flexible Option Associate of Arts and Science (AAS) degree. The third part of the review encourages a department or program to "identify program goals that have become apparent through this analysis." Examples of numerous departmental and program reviews from each academic division (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics) indicate the academic program review process.

The UW Colleges accepts transfer credit based in part on UW System policy for Undergraduate Transfer. The UW Colleges reviews courses for transfer by reviewing the quality of the academic program (more specifically, its degree of accreditation), the comparability of the academic program, and the applicability of the academic program. The UW Colleges also applies the UW System Principles of Accommodation. These principles are sub-divided to account for differences among student populations. This resource provides guidance for how to manage transfer for all students, including students transferring from within the UW System, students with a UW System institution associate degree, and students from the Wisconsin Technical College System. A summary of the UW System transfer policy is publicly available to students and their families. A credit appeal process and a discussion of student responsibilities during the transfer process are also part of the summary.

The UW System has created a Transfer Wizard website, which is available to students, faculty and staff members, and the public that indicates how courses will transfer between and among institutions in the UW System. Additionally, this website indicates how courses will transfer to the Wisconsin Technical College System and lists articulation agreements between institutions.

The UW Colleges Transfer Credits web page explains the institution's policy on transferring credit from UW System institutions and Wisconsin Technical College System institutions, and transferring credits from colleges and universities outside of Wisconsin. The page explains that general education requirements are transferable from one UW System institution to another, that the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science degree will fulfill the general education requirements for a UW System bachelor's degree, and that course credit from the state technical colleges can be transferred to UW System institutions in several ways.

Students are able to review specifics about how their credits will transfer outside the UW Colleges to other UW System institutions. This page offers advice about what courses to take in preparation for transfer. Students within the UW Colleges have the opportunity to guarantee their successful transfer

to a four-year comprehensive or research university within the UW System. To do so, students must declare to which campus they intend to transfer prior to the sophomore year (30 credits), and fulfill curricular and grade-point average requirements, information about all of which is publicly available. Students fill out a transfer declaration form to initiate this process. When the transferability of college credit is unclear, the UW Colleges Registrar's Office contacts the UW Colleges academic department or program, which then evaluates the credit and determines whether or not it matches a UW Colleges course, whether it should be accepted for transfer as an elective, or whether it should not be granted credit.

The UW Colleges has an institution-wide method for evaluating and awarding credit for prior learning. The institution requires students seeking such credit to create a portfolio to demonstrate their prior learning. Academic departments are responsible for determining which courses are eligible for prior learning credit and evaluation. Departments must adhere to a common set of guidelines. Students must enroll in a one-credit online course to guide them in applying for prior learning credit before starting the portfolio-based process. Students can also earn prior experiential learning credits toward a BAAS degree through a portfolio process. BAAS students have the option of taking a one-credit course to prepare them for creating their portfolio. UW Colleges Senate policy outlines the timeline and procedure for submission and evaluation of the student's work, including a procedure for student appeal of the decision. Information about timelines and courses eligible for prior learning credit are publicly available in the UW Colleges Catalog.

Students may also earn advanced standing credit for UW Colleges freshman- and sophomore-level courses by earning a sufficiently high score on an Advanced Placement (AP) test, college level examination program, or through International Baccalaureate examinations. Information regarding necessary scores are made available on the UW Colleges website. Courses in which students can earn credit are listed individually by academic department. Timelines for applying for this credit and information about how it is denoted on the transcript are made clear as well. More specific information about how AP exams and scores translate into college credit is listed on the UW System UW>Helpwebsite.

UW Colleges Senate Policy guides how courses are initiated and approved. Academic departments and programs are entrusted with the responsibility for determining prerequisites for courses. Each academic department or program creates a curriculum committee to oversee the curricular development process at the department or program level. For instance, the Psychology department has created a Curriculum and Instructional Technology Committee, which acts in accordance with Senate Policy, as indicated within the department's bylaws. Decisions by the academic department or program must be approved by the Senate Curriculum Committee and then by the provost.

Course prerequisites are enforced through restrictions within PRISM, the software program that students use to enroll in classes. Students cannot enroll in courses without the indicated course prerequisite or instructor approval/override. Prerequisites are indicated in course schedules so that students and academic advisors can plan accordingly.

Academic departments and programs review the rigor of courses taught by faculty and instructional academic staff (IAS) members. This occurs through the annual review of faculty and IAS members' activity reports, and through dossiers created by tenure-track faculty members as they proceed through the tenure track process, including both those seeking promotion and experiencing post-tenure review. Multiple Senate policies regulate when faculty and IAS members are reviewed and evaluated by peers. Student surveys of instruction also ask students to evaluate the rigor and the quality of instruction in the courses in which they are enrolled.

Academic departments and programs are expected to define the student learning expectations and outcomes for each of their courses. When courses are created, departments and programs must generate a new course proposal that requires them to state which institutional proficiencies are met through the course. BAAS degree courses proposals also require curricular designation and curricular goal designations. The regular assessment of institutional course proficiencies is discussed in criterion 4.B.

Associate of Arts and Science degree courses are divided into breadth categories, which is another way expectations for student learning are maintained. Each category has a broad definition of learning expectations and outcomes, and students are required to take courses among each category to graduate. Expectations for student learning are communicated to students through course syllabi. Course proficiencies that students are expected to develop in the course, as well as expected work, are listed in the syllabus in accordance with Senate policy.

The process for maintaining high-quality Dual and Concurrent Enrollment credit courses is listed in UW Colleges Senate Policy. The policy sets standards for a high school student's eligibility in the dual credit course and as UW Colleges special students. The policy requires that students demonstrate college readiness through class rank, class standing (high school junior or senior, normally), or through appropriate departmentally defined measures, such as grades in specific courses, high school grade point average, and standardized test scores. High school teachers teaching UW Colleges courses to high school students in the high school must have a master's degree in the discipline or a master's degree plus 18 credits in the discipline. In short, high school teachers wishing to teach UW Colleges courses must meet the same credentialing requirements that on-campus instructional academic staff instructors must meet for purposes of accreditation. Senate policy also outlines the mentoring that the instructor will receive, which includes approval of the course syllabi and on-site classroom visits by faculty members in the discipline from a nearby UW Colleges campus. The supervisory faculty member will report to the academic department chair and appropriate regional associate dean for academic affairs, who will also assess the high school teacher's performance. Each department creates its own bylaws concerning Dual and Concurrent Enrollment (as these examples from the English Department and the Psychology Department indicate) that must be aligned with UW Colleges standards.

Policies for determining faculty qualifications are found in Senate policy. These policies determine the timing of and format for faculty evaluations and observations, as well as requirements for hiring, retention, tenure, and promotion.

Policies for evaluation and retention of instructional academic staff and retired faculty members are also explained in Senate policy. This policy covers the standards and methods for assigning merit for instructional academic staff, and it explains when non-tenure track faculty will be observed, how their merit rating may impact their employment, and the appeals process for reconsideration of merit ratings. There are Senate policies for the hiring, promotion, merit, and review of administrative academic staff as well. In addition, there is a Senate policy that governs promotion of instructional academic staff members; this policy outlines what qualifications are expected for each rank of instructional academic staff: Associate Lecturer, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Distinguished Lecturer.

The UW Colleges has been granted specific accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission for its UW Colleges Online Associate of Arts and Science degree program, its Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree completion program, its UW Colleges Flexible Option Associate of Arts and Science degree program, and its distance education program. UW Colleges has no other specialized accreditations.

The UW Colleges tracks student transfer information and publishes this through its Fact Book, which shows transfer data by major (Business, Health Sciences, and Education are among the most common majors) and institution (UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee are among the most common transfer destinations). In addition to presenting institution-specific transfer data, the Fact Book presents completion summaries of UW Colleges students earning the Associate of Arts and Science degree, and of those UW College graduates going on to earn bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degrees within the UW System. The UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research (OPAR) tracks students who transfer between UW System institutions as well as students who transfer from outside the UW System. UW System and the UW Colleges Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness tracks students' grade-point averages, their retention rates, and their degree attainment rates after leaving the UW Colleges. For instance, a recent informational memorandum notes, "Fall 2013 new transfer students from UW Colleges had a second year retention rate of 80 percent, while those from Wisconsin private institutions and the Wisconsin Technical Colleges had a second year retention rate of 70 percent."

The UW Colleges tracks employment success for students. In a survey of students graduating in Spring 2016, 80.6 percent of respondents indicated they will be employed in the coming year, 24.1 percent in a new position related to their major / program. Though this number may seem low, it needs to be interpreted in the context of the UW Colleges' mission as a transfer institution. Transfer students, therefore, would not necessarily be expecting to find subject-related employment until after they graduate with their baccalaureate degree. In this same survey, 87.4 percent of respondents indicated they plan to continue their education; when asked where they were going to continue, 73.9 percent said at a UW System institution and 90.3 percent at a four-year institution. This student self-reported information is slightly higher than UW Colleges tracking data that shows that 79% of UW Colleges AAS graduates transfer within four years to another postsecondary institution and 71% transfer to a UW System institution.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Argument

The Senate Assessment Committee, the Institutional, Department, and Campus Assessment coordinators, the Senate BAAS (Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences) Assessment Committee, and the Office of Academic Affairs all have shared responsibility for the UW Colleges Assessment Program. In conjunction with the Institutional Assessment Coordinator (IAC), the Senate Assessment Committee and the Senate BAAS Committee consult and advise assessment according to their particular charges for these three levels: the Associate of Arts and Science degree, the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree completion program, and the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science Flexible Option degree. The IAC coordinates institutional, departmental, and campus level assessment, as well BAAS level assessment, and UW Colleges Flexible Option Assessment. The position is held by a faculty member as a half-time appointment; the IAC reports directly to the Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

At the Associate of Arts and Science degree level, the institution regards the following areas of proficiency to be of primary importance in the education of its students: Analytical Skills, Quantitative Skills, Communication Skills, Aesthetic Skills, and Intercultural Skills. The institution's Proficiencies and Rubrics web page explains how UW Colleges measures the major skills students should acquire while completing an Associate of Arts and Science degree. In order to be prepared for success and completion of baccalaureate degrees, students must develop proficiency in each of the five areas. The proficiencies are defined in Senate policy. Each proficiency has performance indicators that explain how student aptitude in that skill is achieved. Rubrics, which are written and revised in consultation with Department Assessment Coordinators and the Senate Assessment Committee, determine how the performance indicators are measured. These rubrics are defined for each of the five proficiency areas: Analytic Skills, Quantitative Skills, Communication Skills, Aesthetic Skills, and Intercultural Skills.

At the institutional level of assessment, the UW Colleges measures these five institutional proficiencies on an annual rotation cycle. Instructors measure student proficiency using common standards (rubrics) applied across academic disciplines. Each academic department or program decides on a particular skill and sub-skill to assess in a given academic year, such as A1, "Interpret and Synthesize Information and Ideas." The academic departments or programs determine a method for measuring student learning of the chosen skill, and this method is then reviewed by the Institutional Assessment Coordinator (IAC) and the Senate Assessment Committee (SAC). After IAC

and SAC feedback and approval is given, the academic department and program members assess their students. The UW Colleges Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness aggregates, analyzes, and distributes the resulting data though institutional assessment reports, and then academic departments and programs discuss the reports' implications for teaching and learning, and curriculum. Academic departments and programs use the findings to improve teaching and learning. The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness also creates reports for each Academic Division (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics), and a full report of the entire institution.

These proficiencies for institutional assessment are adopted and revised when context or evidence indicates there is a need to measure student learning differently. For instance, in January 2013, the UW Colleges Senate added the Intercultural Skills proficiency in order to meet institution-wide goals identified by the Senate Inclusive Excellence Committee and those identified by the UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. In November 2015, as a result of a 2014-2015 Institutional Assessment project in cooperation with the UW Colleges Library Council and departmental assessment of Project SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills), the Analytical Skills proficiency was revised to more accurately convey the skills and knowledge students need when locating sources.

At the departmental and programmatic levels, assessment differs from the institutional level, even though both assessment levels are directed by academic departments and programs. Whereas Institutional Assessment addresses university-wide rubrics and learning objectives, Departmental Assessment addresses academic department and program course-specific learning objectives. Each department and program has at least one Department Assessment Coordinator and/or an Assessment Committee directing the assessment project for any given year in consultation with the Senate Assessment Committee and the Institutional Assessment Coordinator. Departments discuss assessment results as the basis for possible changes in teaching or curriculum. A selection of departmental assessment reports from the Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Social Sciences, and Humanities divisions illustrates the range of reports. For example, CSEPA (the department of Computer Science, Engineering, Physics, and Astronomy) created a quiz to administer on the course D2L website to assess the students' ability to evaluate arguments; Anthropology / Sociology used an article and a multiple-choice quiz to assess the students' critical reading comprehension; Philosophy / Religious Studies used an assignment chosen by each instructor to assess the whether the students demonstrated a wide and varied vocabulary.

Campus-level assessment takes place through the work of campus assessment coordinators, who examine and assess campus-based co-curricular experiences that impact students. These assessments measure student experience and success inside and outside the classroom. For instance, campuses might measure course scheduling, campus advising, campus outreach, learning resources, developmental programs, or course presentation models. These assessment results are then reported back to campus faculty and staff members to spur dialogue about and action to be taken on needed campus-related changes and improvements. Each of the 13 campuses creates campus assessment reports. For instance, in 2015-2016, the Campus Assessment Coordinators, in consultation with the Senate Assessment Committee and the Institutional Assessment Coordinator, assessed the impact of the UW Colleges new regional administrative model through a survey and communicated the results of the survey to the Chancellor's Quality Improvement Advisory Council, including the Chancellor. Other topics have included grit (persistence) and academic success, campus and faculty advising, resource allocation and student population changes, placement and student success, and retention and recruitment through LEC 100 First-Year Seminar classes, to name a few.

Academic assessment of the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science Flexible Option is part of

the regular assessment of the UW Colleges AAS degree, treated simply as another mode of the same courses, as are UW Colleges Online courses. The enrollment model for Flexible Option students is different than that of campus-based or online students, which changes the timing of assessment gathering, as seen below. The lines of reporting out on programmatic-level assessment also differ somewhat, as is also outlined below.

To summarize the enrollment model for Flexible Option students, it may be noted that students can enroll in competency sets for a three-month subscription period on the first of each month throughout the year. Students can move as quickly or as slowly through the competency sets as needed and receive individualized support from an academic success coach. Instructors, usually working in teams from each academic department or program, develop assessments that are explicitly mapped to the learning outcomes for each competency sets. The assessments encompass a wide variety of methods: exams, papers, projects, speeches, portfolios, design projects, performance reviews, and peer review, mirroring the methods used in the UW Colleges face-to-face and online Associate of Arts and Science degree programs. After the Flexible Option student submits an assessment, the instructor evaluates the work and provides feedback. Most commonly, the student has two opportunities to attempt any assessment in a subscription period.

Programmatic assessment for the Flexible Option is planned and carried out by the UW Colleges Flexible Option Coordinator and the Institutional Assessment Coordinator (IAC). The Flexible Option Coordinator then shares that report with the UW Colleges-UW-Extension Flexible Option Working Group, which is comprised of staff involved with the program. In 2016-2017, a UW Colleges Senate Flexible Option Assessment Committee is being proposed to the UW Colleges Senate to organize this ongoing work; this new committee would report to the IAC and its work would be shared via the Flexible Option Coordinator to the appropriate constituencies for review and action.

The UW Colleges recently began further assessment of the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) degree completion program, now in its fourth year of being offered. The BAAS assessment data (both programmatic, and academic or course-level) has been designed and will be analyzed and reported upon by the Senate BAAS Assessment Committee. This report will be shared with the BAAS Capstone Coordinator, instructors and the Provost, who serves as the BAAS institutional point person. Proficiencies for the BAAS degree are identified in Senate Policy. The Senate BAAS Assessment Committee prepared three assessment rubrics for BAAS program and course-level assessment: "Critical Thinking," "Global Learning," and "Written Communication." Instructors have been asked to select one rubric that best fits their course. Rather than having a single common assignment on which to base assessment of student learning, these rubrics are intended to be used across the entire course. Data is being collected; however the institution recognizes that the small numbers of courses and small student enrollments may preclude taking significant action at the programmatic level based upon these assessment results. In the 2016-2017 academic year, the Senate BAAS Assessment Committee is moving to assess the effectiveness of the graduation e-portfolio that is assembled by each student before graduation from the BAAS degree completion program. In this model of academic assessment of the BAAS degree, instructors are choosing a signature assignment for students to include in their e-portfolio. Portfolios from students who complete the degree will be assessed by the Senate BAAS Assessment Committee, according to the stated proficiencies. In March 2014, the Senate BAAS Assessment Committee also evaluated the early stages of the BAAS program and, as a result, the institution made substantial suggestions for improvement.

The UW Colleges carefully assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular programs. The UW Colleges Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness is responsible for collecting and aggregating institutional assessment data and findings for the Associate of Arts and Science degree program. The office then distributes the results to the

Department Assessment Coordinators in each academic department and program for discussion and subsequent action. Academic departments and programs determine their own assessment approaches and their respective assessment coordinators meet with the Senate Assessment Committee, which advises them, as is indicated by Committee meeting minutes. As noted above, campuses also assess student co-curricular learning either directly or indirectly, or assess other campus-based priorities and programs, and the Campus Assessment Coordinators report their approaches to assessment, findings, and actions taken in prior years based on previous assessment results to the Senate Assessment Committee.

Annual Institutional Assessment reports (e.g., 2013-14 IAP report, 2014-15 IAP report) document what the institution as a whole, academic departments and programs, and campuses have assessed, and include information on how many students are meeting or exceeding expectations in learning outcomes, including those students who have earned 45 or more credits. As the 2015-2016 annual Senate Assessment Committee report indicates, the Department and Program Assessment Coordinators, Campus Assessment Coordinators, and the Senate Assessment Committee meet frequently throughout the academic year, demonstrating steady attention to student learning and campus-based programs. The 2015-2016 report also demonstrates ways in which the Senate Assessment Committee focuses on assessing new modes of student learning, such as the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science Flexible Option degree.

UW Colleges Flexible Option program instructors are in the early stages of assessing curricular improvement with assistance from the Institutional Assessment Coordinator, the UW Colleges Flexible Option Academic Program Coordinator, and program instructional designers. The Flexible Option program instructors use explicitly mapped learning outcomes to develop assessments. One third of the Flexible Option curriculum is redesigned each year in order to provide a better learning experience for students with the most current materials and Learning Management System tools, and by integrating best practices and competency set redesign into the curriculum.

Occasionally, other special forms of assessment occur. In 2014, for example, the UW Colleges participated in the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS), an assessment project based on the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, written by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). The report measured the information literacy skills of UW Colleges students and spurred conversations within campuses and academic departments and programs. Several campuses initiated conversations between instructors and librarians following the results of that study. The UW Colleges does not have institution-wide learning outcomes defined for co-curricular programs, though, as noted above, co-curricular programs can be assessed by individual campuses.

As these Campus Assessment and Departmental/Institutional Assessment forms indicate, focus is placed on "closing the loop" with follow-up questions about what discussions departments conducted about assessment results and how those departments' curriculum was revised based on the assessment results and discussion. Representative examples of Analytical, Quantitative, Communication, Aesthetic, and Intercultural skills assessment indicate the breadth and depth of attention to each of these proficiencies, the focus on closing the loop, and on using the assessment to improve teaching and learning or improving the measurement of knowledge area. For example, the Department of Biological Sciences used assessment to identify problems that students were having in mastering important terminology, which then suggested pedagogical improvements such as spending more time covering and testing Biological Sciences vocabulary. In another example, the World Languages Department assessed the relationship between placement exam results and performance in the classes into which students had been placed based on their performance on the exam, with the hope of improving student performance by way of more accurate placement. In a third example, the

Chemistry Department assessed students' abilities to construct arguments for scientific conclusions, and came to the useful (and perhaps surprising) conclusion that Chemistry instructors themselves needed to improve their ability to teach argumentation in a scientific context.

Instructors teaching two or more classes during a semester are expected to participate in institutional assessment if they are teaching a course that their academic department or program is assessing for that semester. While the UW Colleges has substantial participation by faculty and instructional academic staff members, in practice the recorded participation numbers can appear to be lower than expected. For instance, in the fall and spring terms in 2015-2016, 65 percent of faculty and instructional academic staff members participated in the fall and 54 percent in the spring. This number is probably lower than actual participation numbers for at least two reasons. First, not all eligible instructors teaching can be reasonably expected to submit assessment scores: to do so in the fall, they must be teaching a high-enrolled course selected by the department or program. Second, an instructor could have participated in assessment activities in some other way, such as assessing a different course outside of the department assessment plan. Consequently, documentation of their participation cannot be easily accomplished.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

The UW Colleges has long been committed to monitoring student retention, persistence, and completion rates and using that data to make programmatic and structural modifications in an effort to foster more student success. The UW Colleges analyzes student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs in a number of ways.

The institution conducts 10th day curricular detail reports during the fall and spring semesters, when the period for adding and dropping courses has ended. The reports are shared with academic department and program chairs, and regional campus leaders. In addition to these reports, drop rates are calculated for students who withdrew from a class with a "W" on their transcript, and D or F reports are calculated to show poor student performance. On an institution-wide scale, Ds and Fs in classes were between 15 percent and 16 percent between 2012 and 2016.

The UW Colleges produces a New Freshman Retention Summary report each year. These retention reports from the 2014, 2015, and 2016 track the retention of students from their first Fall semester through the next Spring semester and then the following Fall semester. The reports show that new freshmen are retained at a rate of 56 percent in the UW Colleges (Fall to Fall) with an additional eight percent being retained in the UW System. The UW System also measures student success by carefully analyzing student demographic data from these retention reports and cross-referencing the data with retention, persistence, and completion rates that it produces for the UW System as a whole. The UW System produces many different reports including reviewing student enrollment by region, underrepresented groups by residency, income, and participation rates (the percentage of Wisconsin high school graduates enrolling in UW System institutions) from high school students.

Based on its retention data, the UW Colleges created a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan in 2012-2013. One method the UW Colleges introduced as part of the SEM plan to improve student retention is a recruitment and retention Customer Relations Management (CRM) tool. The retention CRM was originally purchased through funds awarded by a UW System grant project. The CRM has

three parts: Hobsons Connect, Hobsons Retain, and AgileGrad. Campus-based Solution Center staff on all 13 campuses and UW Colleges Online staff were trained to use the CRM. Hobsons Connect is used to recruit students through an extensive communications plan. For instance, information on placement testing, advising and registration, campus previews, and student participation in recruitment events are housed in Connect. Hobsons Retain allows advisors to track academic alerts that indicate when a student is underperforming in a class and at risk for dropping or failing the course. Advisors can then directly contact students to guide them in improving their academic performance. Hobsons Retain also allows Solution Center employees to run reports to determine different types of data, such as whether or not students have read e-mails from the institution or in what student organizations students might be interested. AgileGrad allows students to set up meetings with advisors. It also allows instructors to make notes concerning a student's academic performance, which are then read by their advisors. Over the next academic year, the three CRM tools mentioned above will be systematically assessed and evaluated by the UW Colleges Office of Marketing and Enrollment.

One of the UW Colleges' efforts to define goals for student persistence has been to reduce the average drop rate of courses by students. Over the last four years the institution's course drop rate has fluctuated, mostly between five and six percent. In 2012, the drop rate was 6.2 percent, and since then it has dropped to 5.9 percent in 2013, 5.4 percent in 2014, and then saw a slight increase to 5.6 percent in 2015.

While this number is regrettably high, it must be understood within the context of the UW Colleges' mission as an institution of access. Access means that as an institution, the UW Colleges ensures access to degree programs, information, knowledge, and learning opportunities of the University of Wisconsin System for all residents in the state. In its pursuit of being a successful institution of access, members of the institution focus on traditionally underrepresented or marginalized groups. UW Colleges admits students who might not be accepted elsewhere in the UW System with large numbers of students coming from the bottom half and bottom quartile of their graduating class. Well over half of UW Colleges' students are first-generation. For instance, in the Fall semester of 2015, 58 percent of UW Colleges students were first generation students, which was the second highest in the UW System, and 53 percent were from the bottom two quartiles of their high school class, which exceeds all other UW System institutions. Furthermore, since the UW Colleges is a transfer institution, courses must still maintain rigor similar to those of the UW System's four-year and research-intensive institutions. This is especially important given the UW Colleges' context as part of the UW System. This context means that the UW Colleges drop rate goals are perennially challenging. Nevertheless, the institution firmly believes its mission can be accomplished and continues to strive to make progress with reducing the course drop rate.

In recent years, the UW Colleges has aggressively pursued improving both retention and course drop rate percentages. These actions include:

- Careful advising, especially of under-prepared students, including early alert systems and interventions.
- Continuous improvement of freshman orientation sessions for both traditional and returning adult students, including some web-based components, focusing on adjusting to college-level courses and developing strong study skills and time management skills.
- Offering the First-Year Seminar course for new freshmen that provide additional academic support and instruction to students to increase their chances for success in college.
- Increasing high impact practices such as strong instructor-to-student and student-to-student connections through increased opportunities in enrolling students in service-learning projects, community-based research and service projects, internships, and faculty-student undergraduate

research endeavors.

- Taking an institution-wide approach to campus-based academic success centers and learning centers. In January 2016, the UW Colleges created the Center for Academic Success and Student Engagement (CASE) on each campus. CASE staff members provide guidance and direction to students seeking library, information technology, proctoring, and tutoring services.

In addition to the UW Colleges' intense focus on access, the UW System's Office of Policy Analysis and Research studies access, which "includes total enrollments, where students come from, participation of Wisconsin high school graduates, new transfer students, and access for underrepresented and lower-income students." By closely tracking this data, the UW Colleges can track student success for each part of its student populations, including traditionally marginalized and underserved groups.

Overall, those students who transfer from the UW Colleges to another UW System institution have a high rate of retention at their new institutions. For students entering their transfer institution in Fall 2012, retention rates were "highest for new transfer students from within the UW System, with a rate of 83.3 percent for new transfers from UW Colleges" (see Information Memorandum 2013-2014, pg. 10). Students who transfer from UW Colleges are better retained and graduate at higher rates than those who transfer from any other type of sending institution. The second year retention rates for students transferring in 2013 and 2014 was 80 percent and 82 percent, respectively. Transfers from UW Colleges have a six-year graduation rate of 71 percent, ten points higher than the overall average of 61 percent.

The UW Colleges has used its information on student retention, persistence, and completion to improve student performance. These include a number of recent initiatives. One such initiative has been through improving freshman orientation programs. These orientation sessions help students prepare for differences between high school and college levels of rigor. Students are also asked to reflect on their study and time management skills. Freshman orientation is also concerned with campus involvement and connection to student organizations, in the hopes that it improves retention and persistence of students. This guidance is framed differently for traditional-aged students and for returning adult students.

When first-year, new freshman students begin to enroll in classes, they are encouraged to take LEC 100, the First-Year Seminar class. These classes help students connect with their peers, with instructors, and with student mentors, and to reflect on the purpose of a liberal arts education. Though the number of First-Year Seminar programs has declined due to budget reductions, in the In 2015, 47 sections of the First-Year Seminar were offered. Data collected to date demonstrates that the First-Year Seminar class shows gains for better prepared students that are comparable to those for less prepared students.

Opportunities for close student-teacher interaction have been offered through service-learning classes, internships, and collaborative undergraduate research projects between faculty members and students. For instance, at UW-Waukesha, students are encouraged to work independently with faculty members to conduct original research. Press releases from UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, UW-Manitowoc, and UW-Fox Valley show the range of student undergraduate work across campuses. Student research is presented annually at a multi-disciplinary symposium. Additionally, the UW Colleges has begun an institution-wide approach of creating learning centers (for example, at UW-Marathon County and UW-Barron County) and campus-based academic success centers to assist students with Mathematics, English, and other subject areas, as well as access to the institution-wide Online Writing Lab known as OWL.

To make better use of limited resources and to continue attention on student retention, in academic year 2015-2016, the UW Colleges redirected budgetary and staffing resources to a creating a new resource on each campus, the Center for Academic Success and Student Engagement (CASE). Each campus has a CASE, and CASE staff assist students with technology, library, proctoring, or tutoring needs. During the 2017-2018 academic year, each campus's CASE will be assessed with an eye toward quality improvement (see pp. 2-3 of the Chancellor's Quality Improvement Council Executive Summary).

Individual academic departments and programs have revised curriculum and pedagogy based on assessment data and research. For instance, the Mathematics and English departments have developed or revised their placement processes to more appropriately assign students in accordance with their skill and knowledge levels. In the English Department, this placement process involves multiple-measures placement that takes into account test scores, high school grades, questionnaires, and timed-essays. Instructors in English who place students are trained in how to conduct this process. The Mathematics Department has also moved into a multiple measures placement process, in order to accelerate some students into a higher course based on their scores. After students take their Mathematics placement test, they are asked to work through an online remediation tutorial that helps them refresh their latent skills. Results have been encouraging: "Analysis of the Fall 2015 data shows that overall 77.5 percent of the students that were moved up in their placement were successful in the math class they were placed in by the Multiple Measures Placement (MMP)." The placement revision study from which this information is taken was funded by a grant from the Gates Foundation. The English Department placement measure is based on input both from faculty within the institution and on national standards. The World Languages Department has set a goal of increasing student participation in placement tests, which will make their placements (otherwise based upon high school grades or other measures) more accurate, and by so doing help the students both enjoy these courses and succeed in them. Both the Mathematics and English departments have also revised their developmental curriculum based on assessment data. Students taking Mathematics courses can now take an accelerated Pre-Algebra/Algebra course that helps developmental students earn college credit. The English Department uses a variety of reading, writing, and tutorial courses to assist students based on placement results. Another important assessment activity that results in ongoing changes to the curriculum and pedagogy are activities associated with the national Scholarship of Teaching and Learning movement. Several departments and programs are especially active in this area.

The UW Colleges Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Effectiveness produces regular reporting of key student outcomes including retention, degree completion and transfer. The process for all of these measures is consistent and includes the following steps:

- Processes for retention and associate degree completion: The UW Colleges student management system supplies all student, course enrollment, and associate degree completion information to be used for reporting retention and degree completion.
- Processes for tracking transfer and baccalaureate degree completion within the UW System: A regular data exchange with the UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research that includes an exchange of student Social Security numbers through a secure site supports tracking of transfers within the UW System and of baccalaureate degree completion with major by students who began with the UW Colleges.
- Processes for tracking transfer and degree completion outside the UW System: A regular data exchange with the National Student Clearinghouse supports tracking of transfers and degree completion at any institution by students who began with the UW Colleges.

The UW Colleges reports the information described above to UW System's Office of Policy Analysis and Research, which, in turn, reports UW Colleges' data to IPEDS. The UW System provides IPEDS

reports on Cost Per Credit, Curricular Analysis, Faculty Contact Hours, and Section Size Analysis. Informational Memoranda reports about student enrollment, student retention and time to degree, financial aid, transfers, and degrees conferred are also created annually. An interactive web page titled "Student Statistics" provides answers to general questions about the UW System institutions' student populations and degrees conferred. Regular curricular reporting for the UW Colleges BAAS degree-granting campuses shows courses offered and students enrolled, with the Senate BAAS Assessment Committee focusing on programmatic assessment; more information on BAAS assessment can be found above. Data on UW Flexible Option student retention, persistence, and completion is compiled monthly by the UW-Extension institutional researcher. In the Flexible Option program, students are permitted to be in progress for up to six months of enrollment in any competency set (similar to the timeline of a face-to-face course). Retention and persistence measures take this flexibility into account as completion statistics are compiled. The data is resolved at the course level and at the program level, and is shared with the UW Colleges leadership. Student enrollment is also tracked longitudinally with UW System-level tools.

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5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Argument

Despite major budgetary and demographic challenges over the past four biennia, the UW Colleges continues to deliver and grow its methods for delivering high quality, accessible, liberal arts education. These challenges include reductions in state funding (a $2.3 million annual reduction in 2013-15 and an additional $4.958 million annual reduction in 2015-2017), legislatively-imposed tuition freezes, and a decline in the number of high school graduates. The UW Colleges faces increased competition for Wisconsin students, as some UW System comprehensive institutions lowered admission standards and accepted students who might otherwise have enrolled in the UW Colleges. The UW Colleges confronted these fiscal realities through a major reorganization that cut $5.6 million annually from the institutional budget while strengthening its position for the future. Shared governance groups, charged with planning this reorganization (RTF Charge; pg. 3 of BPTF Final Report 4-10-2015; BISC Charge) protected the educational mission of the institution and no campus was closed.

Although reorganization eliminated 62 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions through downsizing, regionalization, and consolidation, no significant changes were made in how the UW Colleges delivers its academic programs. These delivery mechanisms include face-to-face instruction on campuses and in high school classrooms, compressed-video distance education, online course offerings, and UW Colleges participation in the UW Flexible Option competency-based program. In addition to Associate of Arts and Science offerings, the UW Colleges and six partner institutions offer coursework leading to the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree. Resource and infrastructure aspects of these delivery mechanisms are discussed in detail below.

UW Colleges campus buildings are owned and maintained by local counties and, in some instances, in partnership with local municipalities, rather than the state. Annual reports summarize the local financial investments in campus facilities. Between 2012 and 2016, local investment in the 13 UW Colleges campuses, as measured by total insured value, increased from $399,058,110 to $441,541,526, while total debt dropped from $51,602,960 to $18,686,565, despite added debt associated with new capital projects. All campuses maintain a six-year capital and facilities plan that summarizes the current condition of its physical plant and operations, identifies deficiencies and needed upgrades, and lays out a strategic plan for improvements. Sample plans can be found here and here. Campus leaders cultivate and maintain positive relationships with local governments to ensure continued local support.

Campuses are staffed by faculty and instructional academic staff members, and various administrative and other non-teaching personnel. When making hiring decisions, academic department and program needs, and campus needs are evaluated within the context of the institutional budget. Faculty capacity data are used to optimize the distribution of faculty expertise and to identify instructional needs. Campus decisions to hire instructional academic staff for additional course sections must balance student needs for course availability in a given timeframe with impacts on the campus budget. Certain campus-based non-instructional positions were eliminated in 2015 and 2016, with the duties assigned to regional or consolidated positions or reconfigured into new campus positions, as detailed in 5.C., below. To evaluate the impacts of such changes, the chancellor formed a Quality Improvement Advisory Council (CQIAC), which began its work in 2016 with assessment of functional units with direct impacts on students. The CQIAC identified an immediate need to correct an inadequate number of academic advisors. To bring the institution in line with national standards, the chancellor authorized funding for 4.5 additional FTE for advisors.

UW Colleges courses may be taught at a high school by a UW Colleges instructor (Dual Enrollment) or by a qualified high school teacher (Concurrent Enrollment). In the Concurrent Enrollment model, high school teachers are paid by their school district but are assigned a compensated UW Colleges faculty mentor. UW Colleges course offerings in high schools represent a significant enrollment for the UW Colleges: in Fall 2016, high school students enrolled in 4,388 credits of UW Colleges courses, representing 293 student FTE and over $650,000 in tuition revenues.

Through distance education (DE), the UW Colleges has become increasingly resourceful and efficient in delivering academic programs while preserving educational quality, even in times of significant enrollment declines. Each UW Colleges campus has at least three or more DE classrooms. Compressed video and web conferencing courses enable all 13 campuses to offer a complete curriculum (e.g., UW-Marathon County Spring 2017 schedule). Distance education classrooms are also used for UW Colleges Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences courses and for collaborative degree programs, which allow students to complete degrees from UW System institutional partners on a UW Colleges campus. These rooms are also used for meetings by UW Colleges groups and, for a rental fee, by external groups.

The UW Colleges Online program is another important mode of curriculum delivery. Since its inception in 1998, it has grown to enroll about 2,000 students in 80 course-sections per term. Academic departments work well with the program to hire a stable corps of qualified instructors. UW Colleges Online remains a major revenue stream for the institution as a whole. Up to 90% of UW Colleges Online's year-end tuition balance (approximately $2.7 million in 2015-2016) is distributed to departments, campuses, and UW Colleges Central Administration on a formula basis.

The BAAS degree completion program, launched in 2013, allows associate's degree holders to complete a UW Colleges bachelor's degree through a combination of on-campus, online, and distance

education courses. The program has unique staffing and other needs, which the UW Colleges has decided to subsidize through the early years of the program.

Management of information technology (IT) has been consolidated and standardized by Central Information Technology Services (CITS) according to their strategic plan and downsizing associated with budget reductions. Given the loss of some campus IT positions, CITS works to increase the technology skill set of faculty and staff. An evolving Knowledge Base has been developed to deal with common IT questions. Difficult problems are to be directed to campus-based Center for Academic Success and Engagement (CASE) staff trained for this function. More complex problems can be referred to the CITS Helpdesk by phone, e-mail or web form. To reduce costs and improve service hours, some inquiries sent to the CITS Helpdesk are outsourced to UW-Madison's Helpdesk.

As a state institution, UW Colleges disburses no revenues to superordinate entities. As an already lean institution made leaner by a series of reductions in state support and decreasing tuition revenues noted above, UW Colleges has minimal opportunities for "elective resource allocations." Budget and resource allocation decisions throughout the institution are highly scrutinized to ensure that they support the core educational mission of the UW Colleges.

Institutional guidelines make clear that development of institutional and UW Colleges Central Administration budgets must reflect the UW Colleges core academic mission, capabilities, culture, and strategic plan, and that "'Growth by substitution will be used continually to ensure incremental resources are devoted to the highest priority strategic initiatives." These strategic initiatives are identified in annual lists of institutional priorities which are guided, over the longer term, by strategic and operational plans.

A few examples of "elective resource allocations" illustrate the degree to which all such allocations are in line with the core educational mission of the UW Colleges.

New faculty hires represent a significant and long-term investment for the institution since they are employees of the institution and not of a home campus. Departmental staffing needs on campuses are identified in regular department reviews and in analyses of low-enrolled course sections, percentages of courses taught by faculty and instructional academic staff members, and total instructional workload. Using this array data, campus administrators and department chairs discuss the need for a new faculty member. Ultimately, the chancellor authorizes faculty searches after balancing staffing need with budgetary realities. As a result of careful capacity analyses, new faculty searches have not kept pace with loss in faculty due to retirement or resignation over the past five years, yielding significant salary savings for the institution.

In 2014, despite ongoing budgetary concerns, the UW Colleges allocated $600,000 of base budget for faculty salary adjustments that were allocated according to criteria developed by faculty-led committee. Faculty compensation had long been an institutional priority due to impacts of institutionally less competitive compensation on faculty recruitment, retention, and morale. A 2012 analysis found that UW Colleges faculty earned significantly less than faculty at peer two-year institutions, UW System comprehensive institutions, and Wisconsin Technical College System institutions. Similarly, in 2016, $797,000 from base budget savings and an allocation from UW System was used to make one-time retention payments to full-time staff with a salary below $40,000 and to eliminate a "tripwire" that reduced the pay rate for instructional academic staff with workloads below 70 percent.

The UW Colleges mission statement emphasizes high-quality educational programming and degrees for students and the communities that host its campuses. The mission is realized through nine goals

that direct the activities of the institution. Five of these (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7) focus on preparing students for future academic success and life beyond the classroom, and the scholarly pursuit of excellence by instructional staff. Other sections of this assurance argument provide evidence that these goals are being met successfully, as follows: Goal 1 (see Criteria 3.A and 4.A); Goals 2 and 3 (see Criterion 4.B), Goal 4 (see Criteria 2.D and 2.E), and Goal 7 (see Criteria 1.C and 3.B). The four remaining goals, discussed in Criteria 1.D and 2.B, address the partnership between the UW Colleges and the local communities that own and maintain campus facilities.

The academic program of the UW Colleges is delivered primarily by highly qualified faculty and instructional academic staff (IAS) members. The UW Colleges Constitution gives academic departments primary responsibility for "maintenance of standards in the discipline, as regards to curriculum and teaching personnel." UW Colleges Senate policy requires new faculty to hold the terminal degree in their discipline and, in 2015, 85 percent of 276 UW Colleges faculty members did so (see pg. 32). New faculty members are invited to a day-long orientation at the UW Colleges Central Administration offices in Madison, and are assigned a departmental mentor and often a campus mentor. Instructional academic staff (IAS) members offer a significant portion of the UW Colleges academic program; they comprised 220 FTE in 2014 (see pg. 32). Minimum criteria for appointment as IAS meet or exceed Higher Learning Commission standards. Probationary faculty and IAS are subject to scheduled classroom observations by peer faculty and annual reviews by their academic department and home campus. Faculty and IAS members also participate in annual merit reviews based on performance in teaching, service, and professional development. In addition, tenured faculty participate in post-tenure reviews on a five-year cycle. Faculty and staff members can apply for professional development funding through their campus, department, and/or the Office of Academic Affairs. For example, an annual grant opportunity is available for faculty or staff to acquire additional knowledge or skills that meet identifiable institutional needs.

There are clear guidelines that direct development of the institutional and UW Colleges Central Administration budgets. These guidelines emphasize that budget development must reflect the UW Colleges core academic mission, capabilities, culture, and strategic plan and that resources must be devoted to the highest priority strategic initiatives. Guided by the UW Colleges Strategic Plan 2012-2017 and detailed Operational Plan, the UW Colleges works to "identify our strategic priorities, strengthen financial management, and find innovative methods of fulfilling our mission to cope with reduced state support."

Declining enrollments and record-setting cuts in state support for the UW System and UW Colleges over four biennia derailed implementation of the Operational Plan. Instead, the institution's focus shifted toward repositioning itself for this new economic reality, as discussed elsewhere in this argument. Annual Institutional Priorities continue to guide preparation of annual budgets as discussed in section 5.C.

Ultimately, the chancellor is responsible for ensuring that the institution's budget is balanced and aligned with the mission and priorities of the institution. Annual operating budgets for the institution and UW Colleges Central Administration are prepared and monitored by the UW Colleges Office of Budget and Planning, in accordance with policy, and with direction from the Vice Chancellor and Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance. Annual reports from the UW Colleges controller summarize the financial status of the institution.

The Office of Budget and Planning also collaborates with campuses, offices, and programs throughout the UW Colleges to support budget and planning activities at those levels. Each campus receives targets for enrollment and tuition revenue based on historical trends. In addition to tuition, campus revenues include a share of state support (General Purpose Revenues, or GPR) allocated in

the institutional budget, revenue-sharing from the UW Colleges Online program, and revenues from auxiliaries and other campus-based sources. Enrollment shortfalls directly reduce the campus budget and require the campus to cut spending or generate additional revenue. Spending reductions are accomplished through decreased instructional appointments and increased revenues usually come from increased educational outreach opportunities. To support campus budget planning, the Office of Budget and Planning releases revenue estimates and projections for each campus and region after the 10th day of each semester.

Each Regional Associate Dean for Administration and Finance (RADAF) is responsible for planning and monitoring budgets for campuses and regions. The RADAF works with the campus administrator and the appropriate campus committee to build the campus budget. Designated campus-based managers monitor accounts (e.g., auxiliaries, departmental supply and expense budgets, library) using web-based budgeting and business intelligence tools.

The Office of Budget and Planning supports campuses and regions to ensure compliance with state and UW System policies through assistance with budget planning and tracking, program implementation, financial assessment, training and ad hoc support, and consultation. On a biweekly basis, the four RADAFs meet via Skype with the Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance for training, troubleshooting, and sharing of ideas. The RADAFs, in turn, share their financial expertise as their region's campus communities and leadership teams engage in strategic financial planning. As strategic initiatives emerge within a region, RADAFs communicate campus and regional funding priorities to the Office of Budget and Planning as part of the annual budget development process. The Chancellor's Quality Improvement Advisory Council, formed in Spring 2016, is assessing the effectiveness of regionalized administrative and budgeting procedures over the coming years and will suggest any needed improvements.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System is the governing board of the UW System, as established by Chapter 36.11 of Wisconsin State Statutes. The President of the UW System reports directly to the Board of Regents. The current UW System President, Ray Cross, previously served as Chancellor of the UW Colleges/UW-Extension. The Board has eight regularly scheduled meetings per year and its Education Committee and Business and Finance Committee convene at most meetings. The Board's Bylaws include mechanisms for an individual or group to bring issues before the Board of Regents for consideration.

Shared governance is pervasive and staunchly defended throughout the UW System, including the UW Colleges. Chapter 36.09 of Wisconsin State Statutes grants specific governance authorities and rights to the Board of Regents, the UW System president, chancellors, faculty and staff members, and students. These are clarified and operationalized in the Constitution of the UW Colleges, individual campus constitutions (e.g., UW-Marathon County Constitution), and the Bylaws and policies of the UW Colleges Senate. The Senate is the primary policy-making body if the institution. Its policies provide guidance on numerous aspects of curriculum, personnel, student, governance, and other areas.

One example of shared governance is the extension of shared governance rights to University Staff (formerly Classified Staff) who, prior to 2011, had collective bargaining rights and, therefore, were excluded from shared governance. After the UW System Board of Regents authorized shared governance rights for these employees in 2013, a UW Colleges advisory council was organized and advised the Senate, campuses, and administration on proposed roles for University Staff in institutional shared governance. Subsequently, the UW Colleges Senate amended the Constitution of the UW Colleges and Senate Bylaws to incorporate University Staff into institutional shared governance, and all 13 campuses revised their constitutions to do the same for campus governance (e.g., UW-Marathon County Constitution).

A second example, discussed further below, is the ongoing transition of the UW Colleges Online program into a 14th campus of the UW Colleges.

In addition to governance procedures described in policy, the UW Colleges Central Administration routinely consults with internal constituencies prior to making major decisions, as illustrated by the

following examples:

- In 2013, the Chancellor formed a [Repositioning Task Force](#) to make recommendations on how to accommodate major cuts in state funding without compromising the institution's mission.
- In 2014, the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance appointed the [Faculty Compensation Committee](#) to recommend criteria for allocating $600,000 of base budget for ongoing faculty salary adjustments.
- In early 2015, the Chancellor formed a [Budget Planning Task Force](#) to recommend ways to accommodate a $6.5 million cut in state support.
- Later in 2015, the Chancellor charged a Budget Implementation Steering Committee with developing a plan to yield $2.6 million in savings. This committee coordinated approximately 140 UW Colleges employees working in 27 small working groups. Pages 29-35 of the minutes of the [September 11, 2015](#) Board of Regents meeting summarizes the role of shared governance during restructuring.

Faculty members play an important role in shared governance. [Chapter 36.04](#) of Wisconsin State Statutes states, "The faculty of each institution, subject to the responsibilities and powers of the board, the president, and the chancellor of such institution, shall have the primary responsibility for advising the chancellor regarding academic and educational activities and faculty personnel matters." The curriculum review and change processes begins with academic departments and programs. Curriculum committees within academic departments and programs review and approve curricular changes before they are forwarded to the [Senate Curriculum Committee](#) (SCC). Following SCC review, proposed curricular change recommendations are forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs where they are reviewed and, ultimately, acted upon by the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. When an academic policy question arises that is not addressed in existing policies, the Senate Steering Committee engages the [Senate Academic Policy Committee](#) (SAPC), whose eight members include faculty and academic staff representing all three academic divisions, when possible, and one student member. [Senate procedures](#) ensure ample opportunity for collaboration and contribution from students, staff and faculty members, Senate, campus members, and the administration.

The SAPC Annual Report 2015-16 ([see pp. 176-179](#)) identifies the significant roles of faculty and staff members, and students in shaping academic policies. Three examples from that report include:

- Consideration of revised drop deadlines to address the many students eligible for a W-grade (Withdrawn) instead of their F7-F10 grades (Policy #202).
- Ongoing work on the dissolution, combination, splitting, and/or relocation of academic departments (Policy #408).
- Major revision of Policy #110 on College Credit Courses Offered in High Schools.

For larger academic policy projects, the administration and/or Senate often assemble ad hoc committees or working groups. Two examples illustrate this: transitioning the UW Colleges Online program to a 14th UW Colleges campus and reimagining the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science degree.

As the UW Colleges Online program has grown, so has the need to represent UW Colleges Online students, instructors, and administrators in governance opportunities like those enjoyed by campus members. In response, the Chancellor charged a [Virtual Campus Investigation Committee](#) composed of faculty, staff, administration, and student members to investigate the transition of UW Colleges

Online into a 14th UW Colleges campus. Based on the committee's recommendations, the Chancellor granted campus status to this program in December 2015 . Since then, multiple committees with diverse memberships have been building the structures needed to support this change. Senate procedures will ensure institution-wide discussion before the final implementation of the UW Colleges Online campus.

Another important one-time project is the Associate of Arts and Science Degree Reimagining Project to align the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science degree with the UW System July 2015-approved UW System policy on Associate Degree Standards. In June 2015, the Chancellor appointed a faculty-led Leadership Team for this project. The faculty team leader kept the UW Colleges community informed and involved in this work through regular e-mail updates and visits to department meetings and to all 13 campuses. Academic departments and programs are currently working to "map" their courses to these new associate degree standards.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

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

Argument

The UW Colleges mission is operationalized in the 2012-2017 UW Colleges Strategic Plan: "We will be Wisconsin's institution of access, innovation, and quality in teaching, learning, and community service."

The Strategic Plan states five strategic goals. The first is to "Clarify and communicate the UW Colleges' position within the Wisconsin higher education market by identifying our value position and by communicating our economic value to the State, our students, their families and our communities." This directive is accomplished through targeted advocacy work and by promoting stories of student success. Goal Four is related: "Enrich our communities and the State through outreach, engagement, entrepreneurship, innovation and inclusion." The UW Colleges' commitment to this goal is demonstrated in a wide variety of work. For example, the Center for Device Design and Development at the UW-Fox Valley campus works within the community to bring inventions to the marketplace. See Criteria 1.D. and 2.B. for additional examples.

The second strategic goal directs, "Enhance the student experience by extending high-quality UW education to learners throughout the state and assuring student success and degree completion." To reach this goal, the UW Colleges increased its efforts to expand course offerings via distance education to learners throughout Wisconsin. Distance education courses are intended to meet the time constraints of busy students, and are offered using a variety of modes of delivery including streaming video, compressed video, and point to point (see 2016-2017 NODE master schedule and Fall 2016 UWC BAAS CV Courses). Additionally, to attain this strategic goal the UW Colleges increased the emphasis on and strength of student support services such as advising, and academic support services including academic success centers and tutoring. For instance, in January 2016, the UW Colleges created the Center for Academic Success and Student Engagement (CASE) on each campus. CASE staff members provide guidance and direction to students seeking library, information technology, proctoring, and tutoring services. Several campuses have academic success centers (e.g., UW Waukesha Academic Success Center, UW Fox Writing Pad). The UW Colleges Online program has an extensive tutoring program. All UW Colleges students have access to the Online Writing Lab (OWL) where they can submit essays online and receive feedback from a student writing tutor.

Through the annual budget-building process, the Office of Budget and Planning addresses the third

strategic goal, "Strengthen our stewardship by effectively using the university's faculty and staff time and expertise, its educational and financial assets, and campus and online environments and infrastructure." The process uses enrollment projections, State General Purpose Revenue forecasts, UW System support, program revenues, and grants and gifts. The UW Colleges worked in Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) toward a balanced budget by implementing recommendations from the Budget Planning Task Force and the Budget Implementation Steering Committee. The balanced budget required administrative cuts of $5.6 million for FY16 (4.1 % of the $138 million annual budget compared to FY15), without compromising direct instructional services to students.

The fifth strategic goal directs the UW Colleges to "Increase our programs, the number of degrees granted, and our service to communities through range of programs, creative delivery, and effective assessment." During the past five years of this planning window, two new academic programs were added:

1. The Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree completion program, delivered through partnership with six UW System institutions.
2. The UW Colleges Flexible Option Associate of Arts and Science degree, an online competency-based education degree.

To meet Goal five, the UW Colleges Online program is being restructured to be equivalent to a campus in its governance and administration, in effect a 14th campus. The Dean of UW Colleges Online coordinates three working groups who are building structures for the online campus. This initiative is described in more detail in section 5.B. above.

The Strategic Plan is put into operation through annual Institutional Priorities. The Institutional Priorities are an effective tool for implementing the Strategic Plan while responding to current conditions. The pace of change is limited to the rate at which resources can be reassigned from other obligations through the "growth by substitution" process outlined in budget policy.

The 2016-2017 priorities intend "to serve students by providing them access to the highest quality educational experiences possible." The first priority calls the institution to "Continue to implement and evaluate the UW Colleges consolidation/regionalization plans with a focus on serving and supporting students, making necessary Senate and Administrative policy revisions, and amending the UW Colleges Constitution." This priority responds to the regionalized and consolidated management models put in place during the 2015-2016 fiscal year. In March 2016, Chancellor Sandeen created the Quality Improvement Advisory Council to evaluate the regionalized and consolidated administration. The Council developed a plan to assess the impact of the recent restructuring and is currently working through that process.

The second priority for 2016-2017 is to increase the resource base for the UW Colleges. This is important because tuition has been frozen for eight of the past ten years (see p. 15 of this Legislative Fiscal Bureau report), state allocations to higher education are decreasing, and the population of high school graduates is at a low point. To meet this priority, the UW Colleges added two new cost-recovery degree programs: the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree completion program, and the online UW Colleges Flexible Option AAS Degree Program. The UW Colleges Office of Marketing is creating new strategies for recruiting students, including expanding the number of targeted high schools, expanding marketing tools available to all campuses, and doing more with social media.

The next three priorities for 2016-2017 demonstrate a planning commitment to meet the UW Colleges mission. Priority Three allocates resources for "Completing the Associate of Arts and Science (AAS)

Degree/Curricular Reimagining Project." The Office of Academic Affairs launched a degree revision project in July 2015. The revision has specific goals: to increase accessibility of the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science degree, and to increase the number of students who attain the degree before transfer. Following implementation, the impact of the degree change will be assessed by the Senate Academic Policy Committee, the Senate Curriculum Committee, and the Senate Assessment Committee.

Priority Four requires that the UW Colleges work on "Reinvigorating the UW Colleges' diversity/inclusion/climate efforts with a focus on students." Resources are allocated to this initiative through the UW Colleges-UW-Extension Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI). The OEDI works collaboratively with the UW Colleges students, staff and faculty members to realize the goals of the Inclusive Excellence Framework. An example of their planning work is detailed in their 2016 "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan."

The UW Colleges appointed its first Gender Equity Coordinator in 2015, following an extended conversation between the tenured women faculty and the Office of the Chancellor. The discussions were prompted by a gender-based compensation gap that was discovered in 2012 and corrected in 2013, as also discussed Criterion 2.C., and in further detail below. The Gender Equity Coordinator surveys staff, maintains a website, conducts research, and consults with internal groups on topics such as Student Surveys of Instruction, mentoring, and hiring, merit, and promotion.

The final priority for the 2016-2017 period is "Maintaining the strong tradition of shared governance and tenure practices in the UW Colleges." This priority responds to two current concerns. Wisconsin Governor Walker's administration and the state legislature removed language supporting faculty tenure from state statute in 2015. In response, the UW System Board of Regents incorporated tenure language into its policies. Since then, UW System faculties have been working to meet the Board's new requirements. The UW Colleges funds the activities of the Senate Steering Committee Chair to participate in a UW System-wide faculty leadership team. The second concern is the restructured UW Colleges administrative environment. Faculty members are working to ensure that shared governance is honored through the transition.

Past Institutional Priorities show how priorities were used to improve salaries for instructional academic staff and faculty members, as well as to address the large wage gap between the salaries of UW Colleges faculty members and those of their peers.) This example is fully described in section 5.A., above.

Through robust student learning assessment, faculty and staff members evaluate and improve their work with students, as well as courses and programs. Learning assessment results do not overtly direct operations or the allocation of funds. Instead, assessment results advise a program of continuous improvement for the institution's activities in instruction, curriculum design, and student support services. For example, UW-Baraboo/Sauk County completed a multi-year initiative (see pg. 4) to improve its student orientation (SOAR) program through Spring 2016 (see pg. 3). The campus redesigned its SOAR sessions, which required reallocation of human, physical, and monetary resources. The Department of English in 2014-2015 explored students' abilities to evaluate the credibility of source material. This exploration led to revision of learning outcomes for Composition classes and to the revision and adoption of a new rubric for evaluation of students' research skills. These revisions were disseminated across the department in its twice-yearly meetings, through shared documents, and faculty peer-to-peer mentoring.

The institution-wide budget response over the past two years demonstrates that the institution engages a large and representative sample of employees in doing the planning work of the institution. For

example, the Budget Implementation Steering Committee, composed of ten individuals (representing all employment classes and students) and a faculty program manager, coordinated the activities of more than 100 members of the institution to arrive at budget implementation recommendations sent to the Chancellor.

For planning and budgeting, the UW Colleges governance processes are articulated in institutional policies and are designed to gather broad perspectives. The Senate is a body of 28 members that includes faculty, Instructional Academic Staff, University Staff, administrative staff members, and students. This shared governance body creates and oversees academic and institutional policies, including those for tenure and promotion. Twenty-two standing committees are charged with completing the work of the Senate through 130 voting members. Committees recommend financial resource allocations to the Chancellor, including the Senate Budget Committee, Senate Assessment Committee, Senate Information and Instructional Technology Committee, and Senate Steering Committee.

For campuses and regions, planning and budget activities are directed by the four Regional Associate Deans for Administration and Finance (RADAF). The RADAFs draft budgets in consultation with the UW Colleges Office of Budget and Planning, then bring those budgets to the campus budget committees to develop local budgets. In this way, there is broad input from these campus-level governance bodies. The RADAFs meet regularly to coordinate the budget process and represent campus needs to the Office of Budget and Planning.

External constituent perspectives come to the UW Colleges through the communities the UW Colleges serves. The institution's Regional Executive Officers (and before their positions were consolidated, the 13 Campus Deans and CEOs) and the Dean of UW Colleges Online develop and maintain strong and productive relationships with local government, and business and community leaders within their respective regions. Additional external perspectives come from the Chancellor's work with external constituencies such as state legislators, and county board and municipal leaders.

While recently suspended, the UW Colleges Board of Visitors has in the past provided additional external perspectives come from the Chancellor's work with the UW Colleges Board of Visitors. The Board of Visitors, comprised of one person per campus, represents the interests of the general public to the management of the UW Colleges. Each visitor advocates on behalf of the UW College to their local and state government officials.

The UW Colleges' sources of revenues are tuition, State of Wisconsin General Purpose Revenue allocations, and grants and gifts. The institution receives considerable support for facilities and maintenance, $12.2 million in the 2014-2015 period, from the counties and municipalities in which the 13 campuses are located.

In the years since the UW Colleges' Higher Learning Commission site visit in 2012, the University of Wisconsin Colleges experienced two additional decreases in biennial allocations from the State of Wisconsin, amounting to a $4.7 million reduction in between the Fiscal Year 2012-2013 (FY12-13) budget and the FY15-16 budget, or a 12% decrease from $31.9 million to $27.2 million. Over this same period, the tuition revenue budget remained flat at $43.7 million. To manage this reduction, institution-wide input was sought. In 2011-2012, the Repositioning Task Force addressed a $2.3 million annual reduction in State allocations for the 2011-2013 biennium. To manage the 2015-2017 cut of $6.2 million annually, historically the largest experienced by UW Colleges, the Chancellor formed the Budget Planning Task Force and charged the team with identifying strategies for meeting this decrease of State funds.To accomplish a cut of this magnitude, the Chancellor formed the Budget Implementation Steering Committee (BISC). These activities are detailed in section 5.B., above.

Over 100 members of the BISC collected and analyzed data, and presented recommendations for managing the reduction. The most dramatic recommendation was adopted: four regional leadership teams were created from the 13 campus-centered administrative teams. The campus-based administration was replaced by four Regional teams composed of the Executive Officer and Dean, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Dean for Student Services, Associate Dean for Administration and Finance, Director of Facilities, Director of Communications, and Director of Continuing Education. Other administrative positions were eliminated: the Coordinator for the BAAS degree completion program and the Coordinator for the Course Options high school program. These duties were assigned to other administrative team members in the UW Colleges Office of Academic Affairs. Sixty-two full-time equivalent positions were lost in 2015-2016, for a 22% reduction of the non-instructional workforce, which resulted in a savings of $5 million of annual budget (see April 2016 Budget Impact Infographic and UWC Base Budget and FTE Reductions FY16-FY17).

To evaluate the impacts of these changes and with an eye toward continuous improvement, the Chancellor formed the Chancellor's Quality Improvement Advisory Council (CQIAC), which began its work in 2016 with assessment of functional units with direct impacts on students. For more information, see section 5.D., below.

Additional savings were realized by restructuring technical support services and the Office of Human Resources. More economies accrued by adopting a national best-practice One-Stop Shop student services model. This model, called the Solution Center, was fully implemented in Fall 2016 across the 13 campuses and UW Colleges Online. The Solution Center transition was accomplished through an intensive information campaign to students and staff, training of staff in this new service model, and through implementation of a new student management portal.

The UW Colleges is managing a challenging confluence of realities: a shrinking high-school population, dwindling state allocations, and heavy reliance on tuition revenue at a time when tuition has been frozen for eight of the past ten years. Recruitment, retention, and a strong and diverse enrollment management plan are critical to the sustainability of the UW Colleges. The UW Colleges takes advantage of its campus locations throughout the state, as well as the UW Colleges Online program, and continues to develop these strategies for serving students:

- Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences Degree completion program, new in Fall 2013. (24 graduates)
- UW Colleges Flexible Option Associate of Arts and Science degree, new in January 2014. (six graduates)
- UW Colleges Online Associate of Arts and Science degree program. Measured from the 10th day, enrollments increased over ten years from 1,305 headcount in Fall 2006 to 3,844 headcount in Fall 2016.
- Concurrent and Dual Enrollment high-school students. These programs added 293 FTE and $650,000 in tuition in Fall 2016, for example.

The UW Colleges anticipates and plans for emerging factors in technology. For large-scale projects, the UW Colleges participates in resource-sharing and strategic planning for technology with institutional peers within UW System. The UW System recently completed the Learning Environment Needs Analysis Project to survey all of the institutions, including participation from the UW Colleges. Strategic planning for technology occurs at the UW System level, which informs and directs UW Colleges planning and implementation of technology improvements.

At the institutional level, the UW Colleges shares informational technology services with UW-

Extension in a shared Central Information Technology Services group (CITS). The CITS group, guided by the UW Colleges-UW-Extension (UWCX) Technology Strategic Plan capitalized on emerging technology and restructuring opportunities to simultaneously meet budget goals and move the institution's technological infrastructure and staff forward. Several technological infrastructure improvements were made in 2015-2016, including implementation of the Software Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) for remote desktop management (staff time), new or upgraded servers and warranties ($90,000), and upgrades to campus networks ($2 milliion) and distance education classrooms ($47,000). CITS and distance education personnel keep abreast of emerging trends by attending conferences, subscribing to e-mail listservs, reading trade articles, and collaborating as members and officers of UW System-wide technology councils.

The UW Colleges' response to globalization has been impacted by budget reductions. In December 2014, due to budget reductions, the Provost announced the termination of the Study Abroad program; however, the UW Colleges continues its commitment to recruiting international students. In the past five years, the number of international students in the UW Colleges increased nearly six-fold, from 33 students in 2011-2012, to 193 students for the 2016-2017 academic year, with revenues increasing from $0.8 million to $2.2 million over that same time. This program aims for controlled growth of about ten percent annually.

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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

Argument

The UW System maintains Accountability Reports and an Accountability Dashboard for all of its member institutions. One measure of Operational Excellence is, "UW Colleges provides flexible, responsive, and cost-efficient access to higher education through a fully accredited online program." Satisfying that goal, UW Colleges Online enrollment grew from 2,026 students in Fall 2012, to 3,844 in Fall 2016, a 90% increase .

The number of credits attempted by Associate of Arts and Science Degree recipients is another efficiency measure. Data from 2009-2013 (see pg. 9) show that the average credits attempted has remained stable at 70-71 credits, despite a steady increase in the number of students requiring developmental coursework that does not accrue to the 60-credit Associate of Arts and Science degree.

Students who are enrolled in low-enrolled programs and courses are actively accommodated by the UW Colleges. To make low-enrolled offerings feasible, 467 sections enrolling 4,407 students were offered via video conferencing, web-based video instruction, and blended and accelerated courses in 2012-2013 (see pg. 9).

The UW Colleges' facilities are constructed and maintained by their respective host municipalities and counties, and utility costs are paid by the UW Colleges. The UW Colleges campuses continue to invest, with the support of their communities and counties, in improved heating, electrical, and water systems. Over the past ten years, UW Colleges campuses have achieved a 16 percent savings in terms of BTU per gross square foot (0.581 BTU/GSF in 2005, 0.487 BTU/GSF in 2015 (see pp. 18-24).

The past year's experiences with changes in the UW Colleges structure demonstrate that the institution learns from its operations to improve its effectiveness, capabilities and sustainability. In academic year 2015-2016, the Campus Assessment Coordinators (CACs) conducted an assessment of the impact of regionalization and consolidation of administrative structures on students, faculty, and staff members. Survey data was collected by the Senate Assessment Committee to establish a baseline of responses to the new administrative organization. Evolution of the UW Colleges' response to regionalization will be evaluated into the future.

As noted above, in March 2016, Chancellor Sandeen created and charged the Chancellor's Quality Improvement Advisory Council to assess the effectiveness of the regional and consolidated administrative models, identify risks and gaps, and to recommend improvements. The Council developed a framework to assess the impact of the recent restructuring. Phase I of the work addresses immediately-impacted functional areas: Accessibility Services, Advising, Business Services, Financial Aid, Conduct and Compliance, Veterans Services, IT Services, Academic Services, and Employee Services.

Continuing a long UW Colleges tradition of collaborative work, the Regional Associate Deans for Academic Affairs (RADAAs) share information to build a sustainable academic program. One example is their study of faculty position capacity across the UW Colleges. The RADAAs are also collaborating to standardize the classroom schedule across the UW Colleges. Their proposal corrects scheduling challenges for distance-education deliveries across 13 campuses.

The UW Colleges Online program is reviewing its administrative and business structures. Early data show that post-reorganization staffing levels are insufficient to support growth in this highly competitive sector of higher education. Since the UW Colleges depends on steadily increasing revenues from UW College Online ($2.7 million in FY16), reinvestment of its resources in staff positions at UW Colleges Online can be expected.

An example of how the UW Colleges uses data to improve its operations in direct service to students came about in August 2016. Data revealed that the UW Colleges exceeded the national standard student-to-advisor ratio of 450:1. To correct the deficiency, 4.5 advising positions were restored to campuses in three of the four regions.

To support sustainability in the regions, the Regional Executive Officers and Deans (REO) communicate with campuses in their respective regions regularly. For example, Charles Clark, the REO of the Southwest region, sends a monthly report of his activities to all faculty and staff members at the three campuses for which he is responsible. Keith Montgomery, REO for the North region, shares monthly reports with the four campuses in his region outlining his work in external affairs across the northern tier of the state.

Informal approaches to collecting feedback to improve effectiveness also exist. The Senate created a Regionalization Scratch Pad for feedback from students and staff members. The Scratch Pad collected in-the-trenches reports that were used to guide a series of strategy sessions held on each campus.

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