# Assurance Argument

# Grand Valley State University - MI

**4/11/2019**

# 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

**GVSU's mission statement is suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.**

Grand Valley State University (GVSU) is a Masters Large institution serving nearly 25,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The student body is diverse, both demographically and in terms of non-traditional students (including veterans, older students, and other adults in transition). The university promotes ongoing success for all students as its core mission.

In Spring 2015, following an inclusive Strategic Positioning Process, the Board of Trustees revisited, reevaluated, and ultimately reaffirmed and approved the university's longstanding mission statement, attesting to its strength and continued relevance:

> *"Grand Valley State University educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies. The university contributes to the enrichment of society through excellent teaching, active scholarship, and public service."*

GVSU's Strategic Positioning Process is a distributed, iterative, and engaged effort. As its purpose is to empower and involve institutional stakeholders at all levels, the process is horizontal and integrated, drawing on the university's shared governance model. Thus it involves President's Cabinet, Provost's Cabinet (which includes the College Deans and the Office of the Provost staff), university-wide faculty governance committees, cross-divisional task forces, and all layers of college-level governance: College Deans, Associate Deans, Unit Heads, Program Coordinators, and Faculty Committees. Throughout the process, University Academic Senate (UAS) members take time to learn about the university's operating systems and members of the Provost's Office regularly attend the UAS meetings, ensuring that UAS's recommendations are feasible and able to be implemented.

In 2013, institutional stakeholders began working together to form a representative Strategic Positioning Committee. The Committee lead and participated in 12 in-depth Strategic Positioning

Conversations, administered multiple surveys to university constituents, including focus interviews with key community members. What emerged from this highly investigative and deliberative work was a tried and tested mission statement that continues to embody the true nature and culture of the institution.

Following these conversations, what stood out was the university's deep commitment to inclusion, a value that is embedded throughout the new 2016-2021 Strategic Plan and the university's process in both adopting and working toward completion of its goals. Under the oversight and with support from the Division of Inclusion and Equity, all Colleges and their Divisions completed and began inclusion implementation plans in 2011. All academic and non-academic units had fully integrated their College and Division inclusion implementation and strategic plans and processes by end of 2013. Currently, outcomes and objectives are embedded in division/college/unit strategic plans. The role, prominence, and importance that inclusion has assumed at GVSU cannot be overstated enough and is discussed in further detail in Core Component 1.C.

Following the governing board's adoption of the reaffirmed mission statement and corresponding 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, all Divisions, Colleges, and Units began updating their respective mission statements and strategic plans to bring them into alignment. These related plans, flowing from Divisions to Colleges to individual Units and Programs, articulate strategies, activities, and tasks that ensure GVSU meets its stated institutional outcomes. All plans, including objectives, baselines, metrics, strategic actions, and statements of progress are posted on a publicly accessible website, facilitating cross-unit collaborations and transparency to all university constituencies.

**GVSU's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.**

GVSU's mission embraces both student learning as well as the enrichment of society. Academic programming and practices support and enhance this mission. Instructional offerings encompass more than 300 areas of study, including 90 undergraduate and 41 graduate programs.

Academic Programs

With a mission rooted in a commitment to the liberal education tradition, GVSU has responded nimbly to emerging needs of society, creating new academic programs and updating existing programs to sustain educational and practical relevance. As discussed in Criterion 3, the rigorous approval process for new undergraduate and graduate programs ensures alignment with the institution's mission, vision, and values as well as available resources. Examples of new programs that reflect changes in the global context and emerging local needs include the Bachelor of Global Studies and Social Impact (BS/BA), Master of Arts in Social Innovation, and Master of Science in Data Science and Analytics.

GVSU also meets its mission through institutional programs aimed at educating students beyond the walls of the institution. For example, local and regional civic engagement opportunities are fostered through GVSU's Office for Community Engagement and the Community Service Learning Center (CSLC). Continuing education opportunities for professionals in fields like Education, Physical Therapy, and Social Work are managed through the Center for Adult and Continuing Studies. National and international experiential learning opportunities are facilitated through partner organizations such as the Johnson Center for Philanthropy's Community Research Institute and

the Padnos International Center.

Student Support Services

Student support services have kept pace with the evolving student profile. In particular, GVSU has invested significantly in providing services for nontraditional students and veterans. For example, Continuing Education was renamed the Center for Adult and Continuing Studies, reflecting a reorganization to provide returning adult students with "one stop" advising services and a community room for non-traditional students to meet and engage with one another. GVSU also has a new Veterans Upward Bound program and holds Gold Status from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency for its friendliness to military students; the Military Times ranked the university "one of its 140 "Best for Vets" institutions in 2016 for outstanding support to current and former service members." In addition, the Children's Enrichment Center provides affordable child care and early childhood education to children of GVSU students.

In addition to the university's efforts to provide services to nontraditional students and veterans, the Division of Inclusion & Equity advances a broad, intersectional social justice framework. The Division coordinates sustainable and strategic institutional efforts to engage all members of the community while also intentionally supporting and advocating for historically underrepresented communities. A few impressive examples include the Hispanic Heritage Celebration and Native American Spring Pow Wow organized by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and student organizations; the Queer and Trans 101: Training for Allies offered by the Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center; Laker Familia programs, Black Excellence orientation and mentorship programs; and the Assistive Technologies and Learning Specialist assistance offered by Disability Support Resources.

Enrollment Profile

The 2015-2016 Accountability Report noted GVSU enrolled the largest number of students of color, out-of-state, and international students in its history. Again in 2017-2018, Grand Valley broke the record for number of students of color enrolled. Nearly 40 percent of all GVSU students are the first in their families to attend college. All Divisions pay careful attention to the characteristics of incoming students, with a collective goal of allocating resources toward increasing the diversity of the student body and meeting the needs of returning adult learners, veterans, and our large population of first-time-in-any-college (FTIAC) and first-generation students. While resourcing student support systems (e.g. TRIO Student Support Services) is of great importance at GVSU, so too is fostering professional development programs (e.g. New Faculty Orientation) to keep the particular needs of various student population at the forefront for faculty and staff.

In 2015, GVSU created an Enrollment Development Division, led by Vice President for Enrollment Development, which signaled the central role of admissions, retention, and completion in the university's strategic vision. A large, cross-divisional Enrollment Development Planning and Assessment Committee carries out the strategic enrollment management work of the university, supported by the work of its various topical subcommittees. For a more detailed description of the university's current and past enrollment profiles, see the Office of Institutional Analysis.

**GVSU's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.**

Institutional budgeting and planning efforts take place in the context of a changing state funding landscape. The Michigan Constitution specifically provides for individual autonomy and separate funding for Michigan's public universities. Each institution must lobby independently and competitively for scarce fiscal resources; this has contributed to persistent inequities in funding across the state universities.

Despite the challenge of scarce resources, GVSU is proactive and resourceful in its budgeting and planning to ensure that students can continue to *shape their lives, their professions, and their societies*. For example, the University Development Division has established several scholarships available to nontraditional students in various specified populations, and the Padnos College of Engineering and Computing initiated the Wisner Endowment, providing financial support for transitioning students. The Kirkhof College of Nursing continues implementation of a federal Nursing Workforce Diversity Grant, which supports more than 50 educationally or economically disadvantaged R.N.-B.S.N. students.

More generally, from 2011-2015, the amount of financial aid awarded to students increased by 29.8 percent, helping to offset a 21.6 percent increase in undergraduate tuition and room and board costs. In 2015, GVSU offered $258 million in financial aid, which reduced the posted tuition by $4,000 for the average student. In that same year, U.S. News and World Report ranked Grand Valley as a "Best Value" and "Top Public Regional University in the Midwest." Additional recognition related to affordability can be found on the Awards & Recognition page.

In fiscal year 2011-2012, the state reduced GVSU's (along with 14 other public universities) annual appropriation by 15 percent ($9.3 million). State appropriations have since been allocated based on a performance funding formula. Since the introduction of this performance funding formula, Grand Valley has received the highest state funding percentage increase each year in comparison to the other 14 public universities. However, because state appropriations amount to only 18 percent of the university's budget, GVSU is still highly dependent on enrollment and tuition revenue, and donor contributions. The university's annual budgets have been developed to fit within the tuition, state-mandated tuition increase caps, and state appropriation revenues.

In conjunction with planning efforts throughout the institution, the Strategic Positioning Committee, President's Cabinet, and other stakeholders worked to fully coordinate institutional budgeting, accountability, and accreditation efforts with the new 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. In accordance with that plan, GVSU continues to have a transparent financial and budgetary reporting and implementation process that includes faculty governance. Thus, annual budget requests at all levels are required to align with the standing and ongoing institutional outcomes within the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. Every effort is made to ensure the university's budgeting process is focused on the needs of students and their academic success.

Additional evidence supporting the alignment of budget and planning efforts with the institution's mission are provided in Criterion 5.C.

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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

**GVSU clearly articulates its mission.**

Grand Valley's mission is clearly articulated in the 2016-2021 strategic planning documents available on the strategic planning website. It is also featured on the About GVSU page, to which a link appears on the footer of every single web page.

The GVSU community is proud of the mission statement and what it stands for in the region, state, and nation. The mission is a touchstone in conversation and planning at every level; when "mission" is used as a GVSU website search term, hundreds of hits reveal the many programs and units throughout the institution that have developed their own strategic alignment with GVSU's mission statement. The mission is articulated in public statements made by the university's administrative team (ex. 1, ex. 2 ) as well as in many department, unit, and program documents.

The mission and associated strategic planning efforts are recorded, tracked, assessed and reviewed in a common web-based system named GVPlan. This system, built in-house, is used by all divisions, colleges, and units and is accessible by all faculty and staff. Key components of the plans, including mission statements and overview of annual progress made toward achievement of planning objectives are viewable publicly on a searchable strategic plan website, as well as on college/unit websites (ex. CLAS, KCON, criminal justice, libraries).  Programs/units and their parent colleges or divisions regularly review progress (either annually or biennially) of planning efforts, and the University Assessment Committee reviews all curricular and co-curricular programs every two years, as part of a regular review schedule.

Prospective students and families encounter the mission statement early on in investigating GVSU when they receive the University Viewbook and the General Education Program handbook during campus visits. When enrolling students and their families return for new student orientation, they'll find the mission statement in the Catalog, which describes every program and course at the university, as well as in the president's welcome within the *Family Guide* booklet, which highlights student support services.

The mission is at the core of the standards outlined in the Student Code, a document created to create a community atmosphere in which the mission, vision and values can flourish. From the 2018

national champion Club Gymnastics team to the Leadership Academy program in which students are awarded a "star" each time that they complete leadership activities from each category of the mission, the mission is the common thread in the student co-curricular experience.

Employees initially see the mission statement on the GVSU job posting website (Why GVSU?), Human Resources website (About Grand Valley State University), and in the Commitment to Inclusion and Equity and Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy. The mission is featured on the University Policies website that includes the Faculty Handbook and Board of Trustees Policies, reflecting the university's commitment to all decision-making processes being in alignment with its mission.

Publications from University Communications highlight stories of the mission in action, including within Grand Valley Magazine which is mailed to alumni, parents, students, faculty and staff, and friends of the university, and in the *Forum,* a publication that is mailed to GVSU faculty, and staff. *GVNow,* a daily news website that welcomes story ideas from all members of the GVSU community also features stories of the university's mission in action. These publications and others articulate and highlight the many ways GVSU is educating students to "*shape lives, professions, and society.*"

The Laker Effect branding campaign , spearheaded by Institutional Marketing, plays off the familiar meteorological term "Lake Effect," to showcase the collective impact of the GVSU mission. Since the campaign launch in February 2016, campus community members have been invited to use the hashtag #GVLakerEffect to share the impact GVSU has had on them and that they, in turn, have on society through research, service, creativity, problem solving, volunteering, or advocacy. The Laker Effect has been featured on billboards, print, web and broadcast advertisements, and on apparel at the Laker Store. These messages highlight how the people who compose GVSU — students, alumni, and employees —"contribute to the *enrichment of society,"* as stated in the mission.

An abbreviated version of the mission statement appears on building banners, business cards, and throughout many GVSU public documents.

**GVSU's mission documents are current and explain the extent of our emphasis on the various aspects of the mission.**

This influence on instruction, scholarship, research, creative work and other various impacts of this mission is addressed in the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan and in related documents and progress reports on the university Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Accreditation website. These web pages outline the ways the mission statement has influenced all aspects of the strategic plan, including scholarship, research, service, economic development, and the various social and cultural concerns of the university. The range of this impact is addressed in the "Context for Planning" and values statements pages. The institution's annual Accountability Report and other documents provide a rich summary of the university's successes and challenges as seen in this April 2018 Progress Report.

**GVSU's mission documents identify the nature, scope, and constituents of its programs.**

The 2016-2021 University Strategic Plan begins with an in-depth description of the strategic planning context, identifying the teaching-oriented mission of the institution. Further context

describes GVSU as built upon a liberal education foundation that serves students and the community. Faculty members' primary commitment is described as teaching, scholarship, and service—with emphasis on community engagement and public service. University staff, faculty and students participate in the United Way campaign and Community Outreach Week. Thus, institutional outcomes and objectives support the student-focused, community-embedded nature of the institution.

The institution's mission statement and related strategic planning documents work together to guide new program proposals, unit and program annual assessments, and the wide range of university work on the strategic planning site itself. Divisions and colleges describe their mission in ways that closely align with the university's strategic plan. While unit-level mission and values statements are specific to those programs, they also align with the university mission and values. Annual updates to the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan are published, documenting progress toward specific institutional outcomes.

In sum, not only is the mission stated and presented clearly and publicly, the evidence presented above shows the many ways it guides the institution's plans, actions, and interactions with the Grand Valley community. The mission defines GVSU's culture.

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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

**The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society**

GVSU's long history of addressing its role in a multicultural and diverse society is evident in its organizational structure, identity centers, and programming to support an increase in diversity at the institution.

One of GVSU's seven core values is inclusiveness (approved by the BOT), a critical aspect of its mission in practice. Institutional Outcome B in the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan states, "Grand Valley is diverse and inclusive." The university-wide objectives identified to achieve this outcome include: training and education for students, faculty, and staff about cultural competencies; recruitment and retention efforts to expand and enhance the diversity of faculty and staff; and instructional and outreach efforts to expand and enhance the diversity, knowledge, skills and abilities of the student body. First-year retention rates of underrepresented students is 3% lower than that of their majority counterparts. Several objectives in the strategic plan tackle such inequities. The university's web-based dashboard makes its diversity efforts transparent.

**GVSU's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within the mission and for the constituencies served.**

Ongoing commitment to inclusion and diversity builds on prior decades of work. In 2008, President Thomas Haas created the Division of Inclusion and Equity (I&E), making GVSU one of the first universities of its size to create a leadership structure in which the chief diversity officer reports directly to the president and is part of the President's Cabinet, overseeing a divisional portfolio structure with human and financial resources. In response to input from the campus community, campus leadership, and community stakeholders, I&E has grown and developed into a comprehensive support system for students, faculty and staff, as well as a dynamic community resource. I&E is proactive in educating, supporting, and leading the campus community to become more inclusive and diverse, guided by its Framework for Inclusion & Equity, which was endorsed by the University Academic Senate, Student Senate, and President's Cabinet in 2015.

Significant progress toward creating a welcoming campus environment has been achieved. A university-wide Inclusion Implementation Plan (IIP) was completed in 2011, which evolved into embedded inclusion and equity outcomes and objectives in the GVSU 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. Adapted from a framework articulated by the American Association of Colleges and Universities, the IIP document included strategic initiatives from each college, division, and unit that detailed their contribution to making GVSU a more inclusive campus. Guided now by the *Framework for Inclusion and Equity*, campus efforts focus on three areas of action:

1. Equity and Structural Diversity

GVSU has approached this area through recruitment and retention efforts as well as policy and administrative initiatives. The institution has established partnerships and collaborations with other educational institutions such as Grand Rapids Public Schools, Grand Rapids Prep Academy, the Michigan Campus Compact and several two-year institutions to increase the diversity of students. The Admissions Office actively recruits students from across the entire state of Michigan, surrounding states, and international locations. University leaders believe that an excellent academic community includes people of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. Over the years, efforts at improving access and equity in educational opportunities can be seen in the increase in unduplicated minority students which is currently 16.9%.

GVSU has made continual efforts to increase its hiring of faculty and staff from underrepresented populations. Every search committee now includes an Inclusion Advocate (IA) who has been trained to recognize and address bias--conscious or unconscious--in the search process. IAs receive regular training on topics ranging from effective media outlets to recruit diverse pools of highly qualified candidates, racial and gender inclusion, and hiring techniques inclusive of age, sexual orientation, disability, and veteran status. Based on continued evaluation, improvements to the IA initiative include providing Affirmative Action data to the IAs and ensuring the IA is part of the recruitment planning.

In addition, affinity groups support and nurture diverse faculty and staff. These groups include: Asian Faculty and Staff Association, Black Faculty and Staff Association, International Faculty and Friends, Latin@ Faculty and Staff Association, LGBT Faculty and Staff Association, Native American Advisory Council, Positive Black Women, and Women's Commission. Affinity groups host events, engage in mentoring, and foster community among underrepresented and diverse faculty, staff, and student populations. The Equity and Inclusion Committee was established as a standing faculty governance committee in 2017 to promote and facilitate faculty involvement in support of a healthy and equitable campus climate.

In 2018, the Social Justice Education office launched a professional development inclusive leadership program, Cultivate: Building Capacity to Lead for Equity, in response to findings from the 2015 myGVSU Climate Survey, in which the majority of respondents indicated GVSU should provide more diversity education and training for faculty and individuals at the leadership level. The Office of Student Life worked with Student Senate to create a Cultural Funding Board to which registered culturally-based student organizations may request resources for campus programming and travel.

2. Inclusion and Campus Climate

GVSU has been a leader in campus climate assessment. Five campus climate studies have been completed since 1994, the results of which have driven campus change, icluding creation of the Women's Commission, Children's Enrichment Center, Collegiality Policy, and student ombudsperson.

In 2015, GVSU completed its fifth Climate Survey, with 42% of the campus population participating. That study showed campus community members believed GVSU is more committed to diversity in 2015 (70%) than in 2005 (62%). Employees reported observing less "unfair and unjust hiring practices" (18% in 2015 vs. 20% in 2011). LGBT members and women reported higher levels of inclusion and less negative experiences compared to 2011. Women and members of the community with disabilities reported comparable experiences or perceptions of climate as the overall population

in 2015.

Student orientation includes an introduction to being a member of a diverse campus community. This includes viewing a video that discusses behavioral expectations, support resources, and bias reporting. The goal is to ensure that every new Laker understands campus expectations for inclusiveness. New faculty and staff orientations also include training provided by I&E.

The Division of Student Services continuously reinforces this commitment through its programs and services. For example, Campus Recreation developed an *Inclusion Statement* in 2016 as well as a video promoting student equity and inclusion in recreation in 2017; and the Career Center and Office of Student Life teamed with I&E to train local employers in fostering equitable and inclusive work environments for GVSU graduates and all employees.

In 2016, I&E appointed Inclusion and Equity Faculty Associates to assist in both circular and co-curricular initiatives to advance campus climate. Initiatives were in direct response to climate assessment findings, including the piloting of a White Consciousness Raising learning community, dean-level training across the university, efforts to improve classroom climate, and a Faculty of Color Cohort in the Pew Faculty and Teaching Learning Center.

3. Learning and Development

Ongoing education is essential in advancing the university's equity and inclusion efforts. This includes curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students, and professional development experiences for employees.

A cultures component in the General Education curriculum exposes all students to both global perspectives and U.S. diversity. Students must take one course in global perspectives, which provides perspectives regarding the ways of life in societies outside of the United States. Students also take one course in U.S. diversity, which focuses on understanding how diversity may affect their own identities as well as their relationships with people in their social and political communities.

Across the institution, new courses, programs, minors, and certificates tied to inclusion, equity, and diversity have been added to the curriculum. Curricular examples include newly established minors in LGBTQ studies and human rights, as well as a certificate in Latino/a Studies.

Academic and service units work to support and integrate culturally diverse perspectives in curricular and co-curricular programming. The Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center, Gayle R. Davis Center for Women and Gender Equity, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and Disability Support Resources host many programs tied to inclusion and equity. A scholarships resource program for LGBT students has been established and mediation services are offered to the campus community. All Housing and Residential Life assistants complete social justice training, and a significant number of students take Women's Issues Volunteer Corps training, Activate. Each living area seeks to educate residents via its Community Development Plan in the values of community building, academic success, becoming interculturally aware, and learning about becoming a citizen in a democracy.

Social Justice Centers have expanded since 2015 to include a Pathways to College unit, focused on K-12 outreach, and the Campus Interfaith Resources office, focused on supporting the religious, spiritual and secular development of students. The University Counseling Center offers identity-based

Group Counseling and facilitates a social justice discussion series about disparities in health care based on race, gender, socioeconomic standing, and other factors. The Community Service Learning Center in the Office of Student Life hosts multiple programs focused on diversity, equity and inclusion through the MLK Day of Service and Solidarity.

The Act on Racism (AoR) group performs throughout the campus and community. AoR is a student performance group founded in 2005 by Dr. Jennifer Stewart, Associate Professor of Sociology. During performances, students reenact true experiences of racism that have affected their lives.

The Office of the Vice Provost for Health (OVPH) received a Department of Defense grant to provide culturally appropriate care for veterans and their families. The OVPH also initiated the recruitment of wounded warriors with traumatic brain injuries through the Wounded Warrior Project, which included the development of educational programming to enhance the knowledge base of employees at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital.

A significant number of rural and underrepresented populations use the *pro bono* clinic offered each Friday classes are in session by the College of Health Professions. The clinic's services are free to underrepresented members of the community who either lack or have exhausted their insurance coverage.

Areas of strength regarding diversity in the curriculum/co-curriculum include the university's Intercultural Training Certificate program, housed in the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies. This certificate is designed to give students the skills to interact sensitively and effectively with people from diverse backgrounds. Through coursework across the university, bookended by an introductory course and a practicum, students learn in an atmosphere of respect about the differences that expand human capacity and enrich experiences.

The Social Justice Education office, created in 2016 within I&E, works to develop, and connect students, faculty and staff with programs and services that empower them to learn about the many ways their intersecting identities inform their understanding of their worldview and role in disrupting or maintaining power and privilege, including ways to confront systems of oppression and promote social justice by working toward equity. Programming includes a dialogue series, trained student ambassadors, and social justice service learning opportunities and education.

In November 2017, GVSU held its fifth annual Teach-In titled *Power, Privilege and Difficult Dialogues* which garnered over 1,600 participants. The idea of establishing the Teach-In was proposed by faculty and students motivated by the results of the 2011 Campus Climate Study and ongoing reports of bias incidents on campus. A day-long event, the Teach-In supports mutual education among students, faculty and staff and addresses topics related to inequality and systems of oppression, as well as social justice and liberation.

Since 2008, over 300 faculty and staff have attended the Institute for Healing Racism, a two-day session connecting people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds to discuss the history of race in North America and how race affects people personally and professionally. In 2015, this training was brought in-house and is now offered twice per semester to employees as part of a Social Justice 101 training series. In addition, I&E provides an LGBT inclusion workshop to employees called Queer and Trans 101. In 2011, the Division of Student Services implemented Gender Inclusive Housing; review of such requests is done via partnership with faculty, Intercollegiate Athletics, and I&E.

GVSU's commitment to diversity has resulted in a number of recognitions. For example, in 2015 GVSU was recognized as a Diversity Visionary by the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce. September 2014, *INSIGHT Into Diversity* named GVSU among its Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) recipients. In 2011, the university received the *Diversity Award* from Minority Access, Inc., and was a featured "Role Model Institution" in the organization's Best Practices Guide. In 2011, the Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council recognized GVSU with its "Corporate ONE Award" for providing procurement opportunities and support for minority owned businesses. The university was named one of the top LGBT-Friendly universities in the nation in 2016 and received a four out of five-star rating on the Campus Pride's LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index in 2017.

Numerous community engagement efforts are occurring that focus on diversity and equity. The College of Community and Public Service, Kirkhof College of Nursing, and College of Education (COE) established a productive relationship with Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS), the most racially and ethnically diverse K-12 school district in the region. Through this partnership, various relationships with GRPS were developed. Similarly, the College of Health Professions developed sustainable programs tied to diversity and inclusion: a yearly camp devoted to expose middle school children to health profession careers (sHaPe Camp, 68% of participants from minority populations), and a program to expose health profession careers to high school students from diverse backgrounds(GRPS High School TRiO program). In addition, the COE has worked effectively with many area schools and businesses, including preparing GRPS high school students for the transition to college.

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# 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

## Argument

**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**

GVSU's mission statement--*educating students to shape their lives, their professions and their societies*--embodies the institution's commitment to the public good. The approach is unique as while GVSU is a large, complex university, it maintains a consistent focus on offering students rich experiences embedded in the traditions of liberal education. Commitment to this tradition is evident in the institution's range of undergraduate and graduate academic programs which include interdisciplinary degrees, as well as a select few professional/clinical doctorates.

**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.**

As a state university with a focus on student-centered teaching and learning, GVSU is not driven by profit margins. It promotes transparency of a commitment to the public good by issuing an annual Accountability Report. This report, along with other evidence presented below, provides assurance that the university's educational responsibilities take primacy over all other interests. This practice of providing regular reports to the institution's public stakeholders is an ongoing commitment and a top priority in GVSU's strategic planning cycle. Additionally, the accountability reports demonstrate the many ways GVSU helps build Michigan's future.

**The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.**

GVSU's responsiveness to the public good can be gauged in qualitative ways at every level through our curricular development, faculty-led initiatives, and student engagement.

Curricular development that serves the public good is illustrated by the revision of the Allied Health

Sciences program in 2014. To align itself more purposefully with workplace health care needs, the program allows students to select an *emphasis* rather than a general program, which was implemented as a response to growing specialization in the allied healthcare fields and the workplace demand for these professionals. Additionally, GVSU now offers a master's program in health administration, a physician assistant program located in Traverse City, and has developed clinical doctoral degrees in several health programs in response to Grand Rapids' growing Medical Mile.

The university's commitment to service and the public good is found in large program development, and in faculty-level engagement with the community. The Faculty Handbook outlines faculty responsibilities and workload: *"Community service and service to the profession involves the engagement of a faculty member's professional expertise. Community service includes, but is not limited to, engaging in community outreach, acting as a board member in a community-based organization, participating in public service programs, and volunteering your services as a consultant on community projects when representing the university."* This expectation is reflected in faculty reviews and annual faculty activity reports where public service is cited as evidence of successful faculty performance.

Many academic units are engaged in community partnerships that enhance student educational experience as well as offer important benefits to the community. The Allied Health Sciences program is one good example. Another example is the way a particular department stays in touch with its related professional, workplace community. In Spring 2016, faculty from GVSU's Writing Department cultivated an advisory board to provide outside, public perspective in ways that will enhance student learning experiences. The initiative's intention is to make a quality difference in students' future professional contributions to the community in ways that are directly responsive to community input.

Students also strengthen the university's commitment to the public good**.** Internships keep students (and academic programs) connected with the public and workplace needs, and service learning projects provide meaningful ways for students and faculty to participate in community development. The Community Service Learning Center (CSLC) provides community service, civic engagement, and co-curricular learning opportunities for students to engage the local community. It is a campus clearinghouse and resource for students, as well as provides support to faculty and staff for community engagement and service-related initiatives. A Fall 2014 article in GV Magazine profiles a student who was among "11,753 Grand Valley students who collectively spent more than 1 million hours volunteering in their communities in 2013. Their service generated an estimated economic impact of nearly $24 million, according to Independent Sector." The Assistant Director of Civic Engagement said in this article, "Our role in CSLC is to help students understand that community service is not only part of the university's mission, but that it's important to their personal and professional development." He concluded, "Students are showing that they're Lakers for a Lifetime by giving back. Community service is a priority at Grand Valley. We don't just exist in the community, we're part of it."

Other civic partnership examples include the 1,800 students who are members of GVSU fraternities and sororities contributing over 54,000 hours and more than $225,000 for philanthropic purposes in 2018; GVSU's designation as one of only 83 institutions nationally designated as Voter Friendly Campus; and being named one of seven national Lead Consulting Institutions by NASPA for promoting civic learning and democratic engagement.

Of note, the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, launched in 2006, annually highlights the role colleges and universities play in solving community problems and

placing more students on a lifelong path of civic engagement by recognizing institutions that achieve meaningful, measurable outcomes in the communities they serve. GVSU was recognized for this award in 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014. In 2017, President Haas signed the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Statement, indicating GVSU's commitment to the public purpose of higher education through many efforts including the GVSU Civic Action Plan with action updates.

From the 2017-2018 Accountability Report, more than 80 percent of revenues come from students and their families, underscoring their importance as immediate stakeholders. Appropriations from the State of Michigan comprise about 18 percent of revenues, which highlights that the university is also accountable to the broader public and elected officials. In addition, GVSU is accountable to its generous donors, whose gifts have leveraged nearly $544.2 million in new and remodeled facilities, endowments, and scholarships. The new P. Douglas Kindschi Hall of Science is one significant example of donor impact, a development that is in turn making it possible for undergraduate and graduate students to learn within the context of the local community. GVSU is proud to make its dollars work in these ways and to do so with the support from public-minded donors. An impact story in the 2015 Annual Development Report describes one graduate student's response to the P. Douglas Kindschi Hall of Science and represents the impact such efforts have for these stakeholders.

A concerted effort has been made to disseminate these reports widely. By making these reports and narratives interactive, dynamic, and publicly accessible, the university's Institutional Marketing Department,University Communications, the Strategic Positioning Committee, the administration, and the university community can work together to ensure that planning and assessment data is both transparent and useful, and that stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees, are well-informed about the institution's progress each year.

External evidence of GVSU's commitment to the public good and economic impact is cited from a wide range of sources. The most recent 2003-2013 peer assessment conducted by the Business Leaders of Michigan, an organization comprising CEOs representing Michigan's largest companies, showed that GVSU increased its public service spending from $15,000,000 to over $25,000,000, which represents a real average annual growth rate of 5.9% over the decade. In comparison, the growth rate of Michigan's top 20% public peer institutions was flat over that same time period and remained under $10,000,000.

GVSU engages with its communities and responds to their needs through Charter Schools initiatives. GVSU Charter Schools has more than 70 school buildings, serving more than 35,000 students in grades K-12, making a difference in many educationally disadvantaged communities throughout Michigan.

GVSU's commitment to community engagement recently affirmed itself in three important ways:

1. The Office of Community Engagement was established to provide "mutually beneficial opportunities that employ assets, promote collective ownership and action, generate new knowledge, and resolve community challenges."
2. In the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan the university underscored the value of addressing community involvement of the students, faculty, and staff.
3. The Civic Action Plan has provided an opportunity to highlight, elevate, and further develop the work that many are already doing in the field of civic engagement, as well as grow and develop commitments.

Community engagement is a significant emphasis in one of the five institutional outcomes, and is

also embedded in several objectives.

The strategic planning process gathers input from external advisory boards in colleges and divisions and always seeks to develop new initiatives in ways that are guided by civic responsibility and public need. When developing new programs, the university requires a needs assessment. The master's program in health administration, for example, is guided by conversations and surveys of health administrators throughout West Michigan.

GVSU has a long tradition of engagement with the community and commitment to and awareness of its public mission. It has a pedagogical history of learning in the progressive tradition, and over the years this tradition has matured into a civic-minded pedagogy, evidence of which can be found across a wide range of academic programs.

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# 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

## Summary

Since the mission statement was developed and approved by the Board of Trustees in 2003 and reaffirmed in 2014, it has served as a guide and conceptual touchstone for developments and changes. The programs offered by eight academic colleges have been developed and delivered within the scope of the institution's mission. The mission has served as a dependable guide as GVSU has grown rapidly and the funding landscape has shifted unpredictability. The mission and strategic planning documents have also defined and articulated the student-centered culture of GVSU.

The mission has remained consistent through several strategic planning efforts over multiple years, which is a testament to its centrality and appropriateness to the institution. University, division, college and unit strategic plans, with progress updates, are all publicly available on the university website and their alignment with the university mission documents is evident.

GVSU has succeeded in connecting its mission to a diverse and multicultural community, with inclusiveness as one of the seven core values, and identifying diversity and inclusion as one of five institutional outcomes. The university has a long history of paying close attention to and developing its role in a multicultural society, as evidenced in its organizational structure, cultural centers, and programming to address and increase diversity.

Finally, the mission is demonstrably committed to the public good. Existing and proposed programs, curricula, and engagements have been guided by an effective effort to connect learning with the public good in ways that prepares students to think about the importance of integrating personal learning with making an impact on others. Accountability reports are published on the university website annually, summarizing benchmarks and progress, keeping the university on track and the public apprised of its progress.

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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

Integrity is one of GVSU's core values. GVSU has policies to promote ethical behavior by its governing board, administration, faculty and staff. Policies and procedures that demonstrate institutional integrity related to academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions are easily accessible on the University Policies website. GVSU operates with a shared governance model in which administration, faculty, and students share in making policy and curricular decisions. The Division of Legal, Compliance & Risk Management oversees and assists GVSU in carrying out its mission in a lawful and ethical manner. The Vice President and General Counsel leading the division also chairs the Financial and Information Security Team (FIST) charged with providing a framework for effective management of risks and controls, including financial and cyber-security, through the promotion of a culture of continuous improvement and assurance of integrity (see 2018 FIST report).

The university embraces its responsibilities as a public institution and acts with integrity in its operations. Accountability principles include measures of access, affordability, and efficiency; GVSU includes information in the Annual Accountability Report and the University Information & Disclosures page, published on the website and easily accessible to stakeholders. The institution employs both internal and external evaluations to ensure practices are consistent with principles. Legal, Compliance & Risk Management issues an annual report to President's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees, sharing both opportunities and progress related to integrity.

GVSU's organizational structure supports sound financial management and promotes fiscal responsibility. The University Budget Committee is chaired by the Provost and includes administrators from across divisions to ensure that budgetary decisions are made transparently, with broad input, and based on strategic plan priorities. The Business and Finance unit is responsible for the day-to-day financial operations of the university and oversight of most Auxiliary Operations. The Vice President for Finance oversees all financial affairs and serves as a member of the President's Cabinet as well as the University Budget Committee.

The division of Finance and Administration has several policies that guide its operations. Evidence of integrity in operations is available to the public on the Budget and Performance Transparency Reporting website. This includes annual financial reports, the annual operating budget, summary of current expenditures, general fund revenue/expenditure, and debt service obligations that demonstrate GVSU's responsible management of financial resources.

GVSU's general fund budget is approved by the Board of Trustees at its annual July meeting. An example of financial management is the use of stabilization accounts to help manage two of the most volatile major expenses: utilities and health costs. GVSU maintains a reserve stabilization account equal to 15 percent of the annual cost of utilities. GVSU also locks in the pricing of natural gas more than a year in advance to minimize price volatility and take advantage of any cost opportunities in the gas market. A medical stabilization account is in place for similar purposes. This account has a balance approximately equal to 10 percent of annual health costs to minimize or eliminate the probability of mid-year budget cuts resulting from unforeseen increases in health costs. Additionally, the university purchases coverage or reinsurance to limit the total out-of-pocket cost on its self-insured health plan.

GVSU's financial practices comply with federal, state, and local tax laws and generally accepted accounting principles. In accordance with its policy, GVSU conducts an annual financial audit and generates a report to share with the Board of Trustees, the Higher Learning Commission, and other stakeholders. The report is audited by an independent CPA firm, Plante & Moran, PLLC.  Plante & Moran also audits federal awards in compliance with the Federal Awards Report (Formerly OMB Circular A-133). The Financial Reports and the Federal Awards Reports are published on the university's website each year. In addition, several internal audits are performed (on a rotating three-year basis) by another independent CPA firm. Reports are made to the Finance & Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees. Financial policies of the Board of Trustees are published on the University Policies website. Internal controls include oversight of finances by each executive officer within a division, requirement of approval and review of expenses on a regular basis by each executive officer, and random purchase audits conducted by the accounting office.

All academic functions are executed within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs which is led by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. This division and its personnel are guided by published academic policies approved by the Board of Trustees which outline the academic governance structure and include policy statements on issues like academic freedom, academic tenure, and evaluation for promotion and tenure.

The following policies and practices help GVSU to operate with integrity:

- A conflict of interest policy guides the Board of Trustees. Trustees are required to complete a Conflict of Interest form annually, and the Board has adopted institutional policies for identifying and managing potential, actual, and perceived conflict of interest situations. Although rare, trustees abstain from voting when there may be a perceived conflict of interest in the decision-making process.
- The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity maintains processes for research surrounding animal care and human subjects, research safety, export control, responsible conduct training, and conflicts of interest and commitment. This oversight ensures that faculty, staff and students engaging in research act ethically and with integrity (See Criterion 2.E for more information).
- The Student Ombuds Office, supported by Student Senate, allows for students to privately report and discuss conflicts related to faculty, staff, and administration, and serves as a resource for students, assisting with university processes, procedures, and referral.
- The Student Code outlines two grievance processes for students. The Academic Grievance Process may be used to resolve academic issues such as grade appeal or graduation requirements. The Non Academic Grievance Process may be used to resolve any student complaint, except those covered by another specific University procedure.

- GVSU strives to create an inclusive and equitable campus community where people are treated with dignity and respect.  If anyone in the Grand Valley community feels belittled, disrespected, or isolated based on their identity, there is a mechanism, coordinated by the Division of Inclusion & Equity and the Division of Student Services  to report the incident anonymously online, in person, or by phone. Training is also provided by the Team Against Bias.
- In 2016 GVSU launched Grand Valley Anonymous Reporting, a system that allows for the anonymous reporting of behaviors that may be contradictory to university values or policies. The system is administered by the Legal, Compliance and Risk Management Division.
- Civil rights complaint reporting mechanisms are made available by the Division of Inclusion and Equity to all members of the community and visitors including reports of sexual harassment or misconduct, discrimination, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) discrimination, and other civil rights complaints. Both informal and formal resolution options are available.
- The Office of Human Resources and the Affirmative Action/EEO Office also provide a Conflict Resolution Process and Faculty/Staff Mediation Services with neutral facilitators who mediate the problem-solving process.
- Hiring processes are embedded with inclusive practices including resources to assist hiring managers. The Office of Human Resources develops and implements guidelines, policies, and procedures for recruitment, position approval, review, and retention of faculty and staff. The Affirmative Action/EEO Office reviews and approves all stages of the hire to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all candidates.
- Based on recommendation of a task force, the Provost has established the University Personnel Review Committee. This committee reviews personnel-level policy, ensuring fair and consistent implementation across the university.
- Procurement Services, guided by a code of ethics, establishes guidelines for contractors and vendors that wish to do business with the institution. Contractors and vendors must agree to GVSU terms and conditions that govern all supplier relationships to ensure integrity is maintained throughout the relationships. Likewise, the Auxiliary Services office uses the same expectations outlined by Procurement Services for the oversight of its departments/operations.
- University Development follows a code of ethics  and gift acceptance policies.

Significantly, the university's messaging when behavior contradictory to our community values is observed or experienced is swift, direct, and strong. President Haas and other members of  leadership regularly issue campus statements when incidents of violence, harassment, or other actions antithetical to the university's integrity impact the community.


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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 institution presents clear and complete information to the students and public.**

Grand Valley's public website is constructed to provide clear and accessible information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships. The website platform is built as a content management system that allows programs, departments, and administrative staff to easily update content on an ongoing basis. The university website is continually evaluated by GVSU Institutional Marketing to reflect user needs and interests. For example, the use of mobile devices increased from 9 to 26 percent between 2012 and 2016, so the website was optimized for mobile devices. Ease of use, readability, and accessibility drove the university's 2016 website redesign--a project that relied extensively on focus groups, surveys, analytics, and usability testing.

GVSU's website includes the following elements:

- *Comprehensive listing of all Academic Programs*: Listed alphabetically and one click away from the home page are all programs with accompanying curricular overviews, departmental contact information, and links to further information.
- *Admissions Requirements:* Easily found on the Admissions website, one click from the university's home page is information about transfer credit, program requirements, international issues, graduate programs, dual enrollment and much more.
- *Faculty and Staff Directory:* Faculty and staff profiles are searchable on the home page.
- *Costs and Tuition:* These are two of the most commonly searched terms and appropriate links appear at the top of the search results. Tuition and related costs are clearly presented under the Students tab of the home page, as well as on the tuition webpage and in the Board of Trustees policies, where it is broken down by credit hour and the categories for lower/upper level undergraduate and master's level and for both Michigan and non-Michigan residents. Differential tuition for master's level programs is also listed. The website provides cost estimates for housing, books, transportation, and personal expenses. Usability tests designed by Institutional Marketing have confirmed that users can find this important information. Tuition rates and information are also readily accessible and published in both the Annual Schedule of Classes, as well as the University Catalog.
- *Accountability Reporting*: Posted annually, this report provides information to demonstrate how the State of Michigan and its people are receiving excellent returns on investment in GVSU.
- *University Information and Disclosures:* To comply with federal and state guidelines, the University Information and Disclosures page aggregates required disclosures and other helpful resources, packaged in a manner consistent with The Higher Education Act (as amended).

- *Control:* The Controller's Office, under management of the Business and Finance Office, is responsible for accounting, accounts payable, grants accounting, payroll, and student accounts. Information and policies for the Controller's Office are found on the Business and Finance Office website under the Accounting menu. Students and the general public can find helpful information about the financial health of the university, particularly as it relates to enrollment, through the Annual Financial Reports made available at the top of the Business & Finance menu of the Office's website.
- *Accreditation:* Stakeholders can access the Accreditations and Approvals document at GVSU, which is found on the Assessment webpage.
- *Inclusion and Equity:* Information on university resources related to inclusion and equity and its commitment is linked directly from the home page.
- *Campus Safety:* In 2018, a new comprehensive website that details essential information and resources about campus safety was developed and linked from the home page.

Because usability research revealed that users were looking for facts about class size, degrees offered, study abroad programs, tuition, size of the library, student housing and other high-level information, an "About GVSU" panel was added to the homepage, allowing dynamic statistics accompanied by internal links for details on topics of interest to be quickly viewed and explored. This change was a response to stakeholders' interests, demonstrating GVSU's responsiveness and desire to be transparent.

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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

GVSU is a state institution of higher education originally chartered in 1960 and incorporated into the Michigan Constitution of 1963, governed by an eight member Board of Trustees. Article 8, Section 6 of the Michigan constitution provides that "the board shall have general supervision of the institution and the control and direction of all expenditures from the institution's funds." GVSU ensures that its governing board's deliberations and decisions reflect the priorities to preserve and enhance the institution by using a variety of mechanisms.

**The Board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution** in that they are closely connected to the university strategic plan. Trustees regularly receive updates on progress towards achieving strategic plan goals, which foregrounds the institution's mission and purposes as guiding principles for the Board. The Board reviewed and adopted the GVSU 2016-2021 Strategic Plan at its April 24, 2015 meeting.

The Board is kept current with ongoing institutional activities in its regular meetings. All actions of the Board are taken in public meetings and generally at the recommendation of one of two standing committees: the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. The Academic Affairs Committee reviews new degree program proposals and policies with a significant impact on institutional programs and activities, recommends appropriate action to the Board, and monitors results. The Finance and Audit Committee reviews proposed policies and Board actions that will have significant financial impact, recommends appropriate action to the Board, and monitors results. Additionally, ad hoc subcommittees are appointed for special purposes such as presidential searches or nominations for Board officers. Full discussion of action items takes place during subcommittee meetings ahead of full Board meetings. All board meeting minutes are posted publicly on GVSU's website. All committee meeting minutes are held in the Board Secretary's office and available upon request.

The Board is also kept abreast of the institution's activities and notable achievements at each meeting via the President's report. The board reviews the annual Accountability Report, which shows, as stated in its introduction, "the degree and quality of Grand Valley's proven results and the

desired outcomes identified in the university's strategic plan." Updates to the Board of Trustees Policies and personnel actions (including annual review of the President) are regularly on Board agendas.

In 2018, the State of Michigan began requiring increased oversight of the Board in reports of sexual misconduct. In response to increased requirements, the university and Board determined appropriate measures that both responded to the intent of the legislative requirements and appropriate role of the Trustees. As such, the Board Chair appointed a Trustee liaison to work with the President and Vice President for Inclusion and Equity, who oversees the university's Title IX functions. Additional legislative provisions are being responded to on an ongoing basis.

**Evidence that the board considers the reasonable and relevant interests of internal and external constituents can be found in a review of the public archive of agendas and minutes.**

Matters that are relevant to GVSU's internal and external constituents are reviewed on a regular schedule. The record in the archive of agendas and approved minutes reveals decisions made in the interests of internal constituents represented by students, faculty, the University Academic Senate, the university President, and others that bring motions before the Board. Budget review, including setting of tuition rates, is approved in a motion that reflects the university's commitment to external stakeholders at the July Board meetings. A two-day orientation for new board members includes discussion about the proper role of the board and its governance.

**GVSU's governing board preserves its independence from undue influence.**

The Board of Trustees consists of eight members appointed by the Michigan governor and confirmed by the Michigan Senate as an independent governing board for the institution. Each member serves an eight-year term; not more than two expire in the same year.

The Trustees are required to complete a Conflict of Interest form each year, and the Board has adopted an institutional policy for identifying and managing potential, actual, and perceived conflict of interest situations. There are examples when Board members abstained from decision making when a perceived conflict of interest might exist.

**The Board of Trustees delegates authority of the day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic affairs.**

The bylaws, Article VI, section 6.2, explain the duties and authority of the President. The President, appointed by the Board, is the chief executive officer of the university with duties and authority determined by the Board. As provided for in the bylaws, this delegation provides the President with the authority to manage day-to-day operations of the university.

The President utilizes this authority to plan and implement strategies to achieve the goals and objectives of the institution's strategic plan, to approve organizational structures, and to carry out the university's mission.

Fundamental to the operation of the university is the principle of shared governance. Faculty-led committees are therefore essential to Grand Valley's operations and progress. While each college has its own internal governance structure, these university-wide committees report to the University Academic Senate (UAS).

The UAS is the highest faculty governance body at GVSU. According to the bylaws, it has authority to deal with any academic issue or faculty concern. It makes recommendations to the Provost and/or President regarding such matters as curriculum, the academic organization of the university, faculty personnel policy, budget, and other issues considered relevant to academic affairs.

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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

**GVSU's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning** is revealed in an array of institutional structures, programs, initiatives, forums, practices, learning opportunities, and policies. These efforts have changed in recent years, having evolved from policy responses to particular incidents into holistic engagements with students, staff, faculty, and the community. Whereas the policies and procedures that GVSU has in place are important and may, at one time, have seemed sufficient, the university now leads in its commitment with a diverse and creative set of pedagogies implemented among administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community. These pedagogies constitute a range of initiatives where the institution can be seen developing progressive teaching and learning strategies that help make freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning not a slogan, but a pragmatic outcome.

Declared institutional value
One of GVSU's core values, as stated in Board policy and reflected in strategic planning documents, is inquiry, which is defined, in part, this way: *We promote global education and an internationalization of our curriculum that celebrates and encourages intellectual exploration, open discourse, and the unfettered expression that characterizes the academy. We celebrate and promote freedom of speech as foundational to the creation and dissemination of knowledge in every discipline.*

Policy and procedure
GVSU's commitment to freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is highlighted in the following codes and policies:

- Board-approved language, restated in the Faculty Handbook, fosters and sustains freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression, and freedom from institutional censorship or discipline for faculty.
- Section 4 of the Student Code of Conduct underscores the importance of academic honesty and integrity of scholarship in curricular and co-curricular activities.
- The Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students sends an annual message to the campus and provides on its website links and information on policies related to Academic Honesty, Student Code, and Context for Free Speech.
- The President's Cabinet policy on grounds and facility use defines expressive activity and states the university will not impose restrictions on students, student organizations, or university employees due to the content or viewpoint of their expressive activity.

These policies are enhanced by the following initiatives, meant to engage students, faculty, and staff in exploring, valuing, and expressing fundamental freedoms.

Foundational outreach
GVSU makes a concerted effort to ground incoming faculty and students in an awareness of the

issues, initiatives, and resources that undergird support for freedom of expression and truth in teaching and learning. As part of new faculty orientations, incoming faculty are introduced to university policies, but also, more importantly, are challenged by the Division of Inclusion & Equity to explore--through case studies and peer dialogue--constructive responses to bias incidents and handling of free expression in a classroom setting. New faculty also hear from the Student Senate's Diversity Affairs Committee about the student experience as it relates to people from diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds, sexual/gender orientations, and other diverse identities.

Similarly, through the week-long Transitions Student Orientation, incoming students participate in the orientation curriculum that focuses on civility, respect, and the importance of engaging in positive and productive interactions with fellow students. Through the Transitions program, students get connected to the groups and resources on campus that can further their commitment to civic engagement and responsible discourse.

The Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students and Vice President for Inclusion and Equity, who coordinate campus response to expressive activity, meet annually with student leaders and organizations to discuss opportunities and expectations and maintain a campus guide for the implementation of this policy. This website helps faculty, students, and staff to better understand the context for free speech at GVSU, and includes a FAQ on the topic.

Organizational support
On holistic, organizational levels there are ongoing programs and initiatives that seek to sustain and foster engagement around issues of free expression and commitments to truth and teaching in learning. One such effort is the Shared Professional Development Committee, which brings together faculty and staff to mutually engage in professional development. Another effort is that of the Engaged Department Initiative, which seeks to advance civic engagement and democratic learning for faculty, staff, and students.

Leadership development
GVSU is committed to fostering a climate of engagement and is keen to train new leaders in these areas. The university has worked with donors to establish the Padnos/Sarosik Endowed Professorship of Civil Discourse in the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, with "hopes to strengthen the commitment to informed, peace-based, and respectful dialogue across the campus community and the neighboring areas of West Michigan."

The university benefits from its Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies, which trains leaders to uphold freedom of expression through the Common Ground Initiative. This initiative aims to prepare "a new generation of leaders to work constructively with people from diverse cultures and different worldviews." Through forum debates, workshops, and media outreach, the Common Ground Initiative brings together emergent community leaders from diverse backgrounds and opposing political orientations to explore, practice, and model respectful civic discourse both on campus and in the surrounding region.

The Office of Student Life offers numerous student leadership development programs and experiences predicated on the Social Change Model of Leadership and geared to students at various stages of their college career.

Education and training
The university commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is also supported by teaching and learning initiatives. For example, the 2016 Annual Fall

Conference on Teaching and Learning was organized around the theme of "Engaging Difference."

The Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center runs the Excellence in Teaching Institute. This three-day workshop selects 10-12 faculty each year who are new to the idea of engaging difference in the classroom and are ready to make inclusiveness a focus in their teaching and explore pedagogical approaches that promote an inclusive classroom environment.

The mission of the Community Service Learning Center (CSLC) is to "prepare students to become active, global citizens and challenges them to be committed to a life of community engagement and democratic participation." To this end, freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is a central concern. The office provides leadership for students to learn about their rights and responsibilities as a citizen at GVSU and beyond. The CSLC's Democracy 101 series educates students about citizens' democratic roles and responsibilities through presentations, panel discussions, and community engagement.

The GVSU Annual Teach-In grew out of concerns regarding bias and incivility on campus, but is now in its sixth year and consistently draws over 1,600 students, faculty and staff to convene for a full day of learning and dialogue on a variety of intersectional justice issues/civility topics related to the First Amendment, gender justice, racial inequality, poverty, disability rights, and transgender issues. This event is co-sponsored by the University Academic Senate and Student Senate, with administrative and financial support from the Division of Student Services and the Division of Inclusion and Equity.

A group of faculty and staff participated in the National Intergroup Dialogue Institute in 2005 at the University of Michigan. Intergroup dialogue is further supported by the new Social Justice Educator/Coordinator, a position created in 2016 to build intergroup dialogue opportunities through the co-curriculum. Additional trainings were held in 2016 and 2017, which resulted in the expansion of the dialogues into campus living centers.

The Team Against Bias developed the *Speak Up* Campaign, designed to teach students, faculty, and staff how to engage as active bystanders when they see or experience bias. The students selected as part of the campaign are called "*Speak Up* Educators" and take on additional responsibilities to train student peers in Housing and Resident Life and Student Organizations on the tools necessary to interrupt and address bias.

The Student Education Module is sent to all first-year students before fall classes begin. The two-minute video promotes freedom of expression and outlines the ways that students can participate as campus citizens and respect and take advantage of campus diversity.

Looking Ahead

Two areas that have been identified for future development are those of faculty and staff conflict resolution and bridging connections between different multicultural groups on campus. The Human Resources Office (HRO) actively explores new models and approaches for resolving disputes among faculty and staff. In 2018, the Division of Inclusion and Equity coordinated a training for a dozen employees on restorative circles--a conflict resolution process with a social justice framework. GVSU also continues to look to external partners such as the Dispute Resolution Center in Grand Rapids. Expanding resources and formalizing roles and partnerships is a key strategy going forward.

HRO also plays a role in conflict resolution through its Excellence Series: Mastering Tough Conversations, aimed at fostering good communication in conflict resolution. In 2016, the Excellence

Series expanded to include a Social Justice 101 workshop. The Division of Inclusion & Equity promotes this series as part of their outreach to build bridges between different cultural groups.

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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

**GVSU provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice.**

The Research Integrity Policy and Core Ethical Values are outlined in the General Personnel Policies for Faculty and Staff Section 4.1.10.4. Active scholarship is an essential component of GVSU's mission as an institution of higher learning. All staff, faculty, and students who participate in research are expected to perform their work to the highest degree of professional and ethical standards.

Ethical research
The Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence (CSCE) encourages, facilitates, and supports GVSU in its scholarly pursuits. The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity within the CSCE ensures the safe, ethical conduct of human, animal, and laboratory research compliant with university policy and regulatory requirements. Research training and review is provided to enhance the safety of researchers and participants and increase regulatory compliance in human research, animal research, lab safety, biosafety, and radiation safety.

- The Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) comprises GVSU faculty, staff, and community members who review proposed research studies involving living persons. All research involving human subjects performed at GVSU and/or by GVSU students, staff, and/or faculty must be reviewed and approved or found exempt by the HRRC prior to beginning the research. The HRRC also reviews HIPAA related research protocols.

- While the HRRC acts independently for reviews, it is governed by GVSU HRRC Policies and Procedures, in addition to state and federal regulations. The Human Research Review Policy and Procedures Committee (HRRPPC) meets regularly to discuss issues related to the function of the HRRC and its relationship with university researchers. The HRRPPC provides approval over adoption of new or substantive revisions of policies and procedures, processes, and submission forms, and sends recommendations to the Institutional Official (IO) for final approval.

- The Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) provides oversight in animal research activities. The committee ensures that all animal research is conducted in accordance with IACUC standards and complies with the Public Health Service policies and USDA animal welfare regulations. The IACUC regularly reviews and updates its policies to ensure proper

guidance, oversight and compliance.

- The Lab Safety Program is committed to providing a safe laboratory environment to employees, students and visitors. GVSU has established guidelines to ensure safe lab practices and training programs. In addition, Lab Safety staff provides additional resources to evaluate hazards and minimize the risk of injury or illness to students, faculty, and research staff.

- The Radiation Safety Committee is the team responsible for the safe use of radioactive materials and radiation emitting devices. The committee sets policies and procedures that are in accordance with state and federal regulations which are then carried out by the Radiation Safety Officer.

- The Institutional Biosafety Committee ensures that all research, teaching, and clinical activities involving the use of biohazardous materials are in compliance with regulatory requirements and applicable university policies.

- The Export Control Advisory Committee (ECAC) provides guidance regarding export control issues.

GVSU offers training and educational opportunities for faculty, staff, and students involved in all aspects of research. The Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training program satisfies both the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation requirements by incorporating online and face-to-face training. GVSU utilizes Epigeum course modules to provide a basic training in RCR. All graduate students are required to complete the five-hour Epigeum RCR module before beginning research. All faculty and undergraduate students receiving internal or external funding for their research are also required to complete the training. Also offered are face-to-face research ethics conversations that are facilitated by the CSCE.

Health compliance

Support for health-related activities is provided by the Office of the Vice Provost for Health as well as compliance and oversight bodies within academic departments and colleges. Students, faculty, staff, and volunteers (associates) may facilitate or participate in clinical, non-clinical experiential education or research at health-related affiliated facilities. In order to be protective of everyone involved, associates and the community served, participation requirements have been established through the Health Compliance Policy.

GVSU's Health Compliance Policy adheres to state and federal statutory regulations, and accreditation standards for academic programs, in addition to the health, safety, and legal requirements set forth by affiliated facilities. GVSU is contractually mandated to ensure all applicable associates attain and maintain full compliance as defined in its affiliation agreements. Health compliance is administered through GVSU's Blackboard course management system. Health compliance requirements are discipline-specific and are established in collaboration with each academic program.

**Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.**

Educating students on the ethical use of information resources takes the form of a holistic set of engagements at every level of research and scholarship during their time at GVSU.

General Education Program

Ethical use of information resources begins with GVSU's General Education program, in which students are introduced to Ethical Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Quantitative Literacy. These are just four of the nine skills student learning outcomes being taught and assessed in General Education courses.

Undergraduate Research

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (OURS) provides a wealth of resources for students on the ethical use of information resources. Specific programs, such as the Student Summer Scholars Program, Modified Student Summer Scholars Program, and (formerly) the McNair Scholars Program, participate in educational programs that support the ethical conduct of research and inquiry for their disciplines. All undergraduate student scholars and faculty mentors complete Epigeum or CITI training prior to beginning their research.

Graduate School Training

The Graduate School also has a policy and set of related training for Responsible Conduct of Research for Graduate Students. Each graduate student is required to complete RCR training prior to completion of 50% of the graduate program or prior to engaging in any research activity (e.g. voluntary, independent, or supervised research, projects, theses, and dissertations). Additional RCR training may be required by individual graduate programs.

Research Support Services

The GVSU Libraries and award-winning Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons houses the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship and the Knowledge Market where students can get ongoing help with their research. In addition, the Libraries also provide outreach and classroom instruction on information literacy, access to a variety of databases and information resources, information on copyright and fair use, and an assigned librarian and library guide for each discipline.

**GVSU has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.**

The policy on Academic Honesty-Integrity of Scholarships and Grades is outlined in the Student Code, and communicates the rights and responsibilities of students, student conduct, rules and regulations, the judicial process, and the process to follow for student grievance procedures.

In 2015, the Office of Student Conduct, Intervention and Support implemented new conduct software that allows for better tracking and communication in the area of Academic Integrity. In addition, a collaboration with the University Libraries offers consultation resources and workshops for students who violated the university's Academic Integrity Policies. These sessions assist students with understanding academic integrity, plagiarism, and proper citation practices.

GVSU has a Conflict of Interest Policy for faculty and staff, which covers employment, financial, and political candidates or office holders. Consistent with these values, the Board of Trustees has adopted institutional policies for identifying and managing potential, actual and perceived conflict of interest situations. The institution also requires compliance from the following offices to avoid or address conflicts of interest: procurement of goods and services (Business and Finance Office), PHS-funded research and externally-sponsored programs (Office of Sponsored Programs), human subjects research (Human Research Review Committee), animal care and use (Institutional Animal Care and

Use Committee).

As stated in the General Personnel Policies for Faculty and Staff, "Research, scholarship and creative activities are central to fulfilling the mission of the university. It is the policy of the university that all employees, students, partners and affiliates always perform their roles related to research, scholarship and creative activity with ethical integrity. This requirement reflects a culture publicly committed to developing and fostering the highest standards of professional ethics. Research integrity is demonstrated in the decisions and actions that exemplify our core ethical values."

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# 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

## Summary

GVSU values honesty, fairness, and openness in its actions, transactions, and communications. An emphasis on integrity compels the campus community to respect and teach the fundamental tenets of a liberal education which remain central to the university's identity and reputation. GVSU values the incorporation of ethics into critical thinking and decision-making institution-wide. Stakeholders can count on GVSU to make and execute wise decisions transparently and with fidelity to the university's mission. The campus community holds itself accountable to each other, the institution, and the broader public by employing policies and practices that promote ethical behavior of our governing board, administration, faculty and staff. Expectations for institutional integrity related to academic, personnel and auxiliary functions are described and publicly presented in a variety of documents. GVSU provides clear and comprehensive information to students and the public with regard to programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

The Board of Trustees provides institutional oversight, yet allows the administration to oversee day-to-day management of the university, and the faculty to oversee academic matters. The Board of Trustees is knowledgeable and regularly informed about progress made related to the university's strategic plan, assuring that the Board's deliberations and decisions reflect the mission and priorities of the institution.

The institution's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is evidenced in an array of institutional structures, programs, initiatives, forums, practices, learning opportunities, and policies. These efforts have evolved from reactive responses to particular incidents into holistic engagements with students, staff, faculty, and the community.

## Sources

*There are no sources.*

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

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

# 3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

## Argument

**Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.**

GVSU regularly reviews programs for currency through a program review process, as described in Core Component 4.A. The GVSU catalog describes the levels of performance expected for all undergraduate and graduate courses. GVSU's extensive review process ensures that courses, programs, and certificates require appropriate levels of performance.

All curricular proposals are created, submitted, and reviewed via an online curriculum development system (SAIL). Proposals initiated by academic units are reviewed by the bodies below, each of which has specific roles and responsibilities:

- Information Technology
- University Libraries
- College Curriculum Committee (CCC)
- Dean of the College
- General Education Committee (if appropriate)
- Graduate Council (if appropriate)
- University Curriculum Committee (UCC)
- Office of the Provost

For new programs, a prospectus is prepared and initially reviewed by the New Unit/New Program Council. New unit proposals are also reviewed by this council. The UCC verifies each proposal's soundness within the context of the university's Strategic Plan. Proposals for new degree programs are presented to the Board of Trustees and the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) for approval. MASU serves as the coordinating board for Michigan's 15 public universities, providing advocacy and fostering policy to maximize the collective value these institutions provide in

serving the public interest and the state of Michigan.

Units also benchmark against GVSU's peer institutions, as well as departmental identified peer units, in order to evaluate currency of their program. GVSU's externally accredited programs must periodically ensure programs are current with student levels of performance appropriate to the degree. Programs with licensing data (e.g., nursing, other health-related programs) report board passing rates as a way of demonstrating that GVSU students are achieving the required level of performance (see Accountability Report).

**GVSU clearly articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs.**

The university's learning outcomes for all undergraduate students are the skills outcomes that are delivered through the General Education Program (described in more detail in 3.B).

Due to the diversity of graduate programs, GVSU does not have a common set of graduate student learning outcomes. The Graduate Curriculum and Program Review Subcommittee of the Graduate Council and UCC ensures all graduate level programs and courses have student learning outcomes that are appropriate to that level (ex. MASI SAIL proposal).

Continual improvement is embedded in the curricular process. In response to the last HLC comprehensive visit, GVSU reviewed its approval process for graduate curriculum proposals.  As a result, Graduate Academic Program Review Guidelines and Procedures were created as well as Criteria and Standards of Graduate Academic Program Review. The new program review process conducted by the Graduate Curriculum and Program Review Subcommittee will reduce duplication and facilitate review at the graduate level to ensure excellence in program quality.

Effective Fall 2018, GVSU will require all programs to articulate student learning outcomes on a curriculum map when the program or certificate is initially created. Currently, student learning outcomes and an assessment plan for a program are entered into GVAssess (previously in WEAVE) and reviewed by the University Assessment Committee after the program is approved, but prior to the start of the program. The new process will ensure that specific program learning outcomes are reviewed prior to program approval.

All courses for the program or certificate are required to have learning objectives identified on the Syllabus of Record (SOR), and have historically been reviewed by UCC (ex. HNR 266, ART 389, NUR 752). The UCC has hardwired the student learning outcomes into each course's SOR in SAIL. The UCC ensures that increasingly progressing levels of performance are expected of students between lower and upper division courses.

Student outcomes for all programs are available on a GVSU website. Learning objectives for all courses are found on the SORs, which are maintained by the Records and Registration Office after the course is approved. The SORs are the referent syllabus for all course syllabi, and are accessible to faculty on a common Blackboard site.

Through its processes and procedures the UAC ensures academic programs provide annual evidence documenting student learning. Through the Guiding Principles for Assessment, the UAC ensures that student outcomes are appropriate. Every six years, academic and co-curricular units complete a

Self Study that describes student performance and strategies that units will use to ensure that students achieve a high level of learning (see Core Component 4.A and 4.B).

The expectations for students enrolled in a dual-listed course are appropriate for the level of degree program for each student enrolled in the course. The Graduate Council reviews such courses, and the individual program faculty ensure that dual-listed courses clearly differentiate expectations for students. For example, EGR 465 and 565 are differentiated in part by the additional student learning outcome of designing and simulating complex micro/nano systems for graduate students. Student learning outcomes for PSY 432 are lower on Blooms taxonomy (describe, discuss), whereas in PSY 532 they are generating support of principles, critiquing research, and connecting theoretical principles to other situations.

**GVSU ensures consistency of program quality and learning outcomes across all modes of delivery and locations, which includes satellite campuses and hybrid/online courses.**

The syllabus of record (SOR) governs all course offerings and guides curricular activities regardless of delivery mode or location.

The majority (90% for 2017-18) of course sections are delivered in traditional face-to-face mode. To ensure quality of online offerings, GVSU requires faculty to complete comprehensive training in teaching online or hybrid courses. Additionally, courses to be offered online or in hybrid format must be reviewed by the standing Online Education Council (OEC), the unit head, dean, and Provost. This process enables curricular innovation while ensuring consistency across modes of delivery.

Ongoing support is provided by the eLearning team for faculty teaching in an online or hybrid format. GVSU regularly reviews distance learning using a set of well-tested metrics based on the Quality Matters standard, the Penn State Peer Review Guide, and The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (Chickering and Gamson). GVSU has implemented an evaluation tool for use by faculty in peer reviewing the teaching of online courses that was recently cited in The Chronicle of Higher Education as a model for measuring teaching effectiveness.

The eLearning and Emerging Technologies team provides faculty with instructional design assistance, interactive digital media development resources, and guidance in the effective application of instructional technology in teaching. In looking toward the future, innovative emerging technologies are evaluated through the Atomic Object Technology Showcase. In addition, an eLearning strategy team, composed of representatives from the Provost's Office, Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, eLearning/IT, and University Libraries assists in providing institutional oversight and strategic planning for the advancement of distance education at GVSU.

One way GVSU ensures consistency is to analyze performance data by delivery mode. A recently OEC review found minor differences between course GPA for students in online, hybrid, and in-seat courses. The General Education Program found minor differences in student learning based on delivery mode. In addition, the University Assessment Committee will require units to compare assessment data of in-seat and online/hybrid delivery courses beginning in 2019-20 in GVAssess.

In Fall 2016, the HLC reviewed GVSU's campus locations and issued a Multi-Location Visit Report, which found the university in compliance in all areas, including in Instructional Oversight, Evaluation and Assessment, and Student Support. Courses offered at other locations are governed by

the same processes, policies, and personnel decisions as those at the main campus. For example, unit heads and deans approve the hiring and assignment to courses of faculty according to Faculty Qualification Guidelines. In many cases, faculty teach across multiple locations and delivery modes, which helps to ensure consistency among campuses.

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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 General Education program is appropriate for the institution.**

GVSU's General Education (GE) Program is designed to provide all students a common base of skills and knowledge valued by employers and society. GVSU's general education program is a traditional cafeteria-style program in which students select courses from three major components of the program: *Foundations*, *Cultures*, and *Issues*.

In *Foundations,* students are introduced to seven major areas of human thought and endeavor: Arts, Historical Perspectives, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Philosophy and Literature, Physical Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences and Writing. In *Cultures*, students are taught to recognize themselves as cultural beings and understand the diverse ways in which people organize life and perceive the world by taking courses in two categories: U.S. Diversity and Global Perspectives. In *Issues*, students are provided opportunities to integrate their coursework and out-of-classroom experiences by working in teams to solve problems.

The General Education Committee (GEC) periodically reviews the program to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate to the university's mission. The latest revision to the General Education Program occurred in 2012, when four new skills learning outcomes were added (collaboration, ethical reasoning, problem solving, and quantitative literacy) and a new structure to deliver these outcomes (Issues) was implemented.

**GVSU articulates the purpose, content and learning outcomes of the General Education requirements.**

The purpose and the description of each of the three components of the general education requirements are clearly articulated in the General Education Handbook. Students learn the knowledge outcomes associated with each of the Foundation, Cultures, and Issues categories through one or two courses. Students develop increasing proficiency in nine skills student learning outcomes distributed throughout the program: collaboration, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, information literacy, integration, oral communication, problem solving, quantitative literacy, and written communication. These outcomes are based on AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes. These nine outcomes are articulated in the GVSU Catalog, General Education Handbook and are distributed every semester to faculty to use as an attachment to their syllabus.

GEC modified the AAC&U VALUE skills rubrics to create skills rubrics that also help students understand the increasing levels of proficiency they are expected to achieve. The rubrics are used in the course-based assessment of general education courses -- the main components of GVSU's HLC Quality Initiative. The GEC has established a knowledge rubric to evaluate student learning in each category of the general education program.

The Honors Program, an alternate way to fulfill GE requirements, was revised after the 2012 change to ensure that students achieve the same knowledge and skills. The Honors Program reconfigured the existing general education categories into integrative multi-course sequences to address both the content and skills outcomes found in the traditional program. The Honors Program is currently in the early stages of undergoing revision.

**Every degree program offers coursework that helps students to learn to collect and analyze information and communicate what they learn to others.**

GVSU requires all undergraduates to complete the GE requirements in addition to completing two writing-across-the-curriculum courses (Supplemental Writing Skills) in which students learn the norms of genre and written communication in their respective disciplines. Each degree program includes a culminating capstone experience. In addition, the University Curriculum Committee ensures that every program has embedded within it a sustained focus on cultures for the BA degrees or on mathematics, statistics, quantitative reasoning, and scientific analysis for BS degrees.

Many programs (e.g., Engineering, Nursing, Writing) have internship/practicum/co-op requirements to ensure students have ample opportunities to practice their skills and integrate their knowledge successfully in the context of a work environment. Other programs, such as Cell and Molecular Biology, require students to complete a significant research project.

Each degree program articulates the learning outcomes for its majors consistent with the strategic mission of the university and the college. Units report assessment data annually, assessment and strategic planning progress are reviewed every two years, and a Self-Study for program review is completed every six years in parallel with the university's strategic planning time frame. Notable assessment reports are from Integrative Science and the Kirkhof College of Nursing, captured from the GVAssess site. Reports by academic and co-curricular units demonstrate progress made in achieving student learning outcomes and strategic planning objectives for their programs. These are first reviewed by the associated Dean's Office, and then by the University Assessment Committee (UAC). The UAC provides formative feedback to support units with achieving the desired outcomes.

All graduate programs require a culminating experience that allows students to demonstrate they have mastered the program's modes of inquiry or creative practice.

Student Scholars Day provides a special opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to showcase their scholarly and creative works. This event began in 1995 with a small group of science and mathematics majors and has grown to include student presentations from majors across the university. The event stands as ongoing evidence of an inclusive picture of collaboration and learning as well as the mastery of modes of learning and creative work. The 2018 event showcased over 400 presentations by more than 600 student presenters.

**GVSU recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work and ensures that students, faculty, and staff are prepared to achieve success in this rapidly changing environment.**

The university's curricular and co-curricular activities include many opportunities for members of the academic community to gain exposure, skills, and knowledge that will impact their ability to be successful in our diverse and changing community.

Curriculum-based activities include promotion of foreign language study, area study opportunities, and courses that include extensive international content. GVSU has established a two-course requirement in the Cultures category of the GE Program, which includes a required course in each of U.S. Diversity and Global Perspectives.

The university also offers an Intercultural Training Certificate, the opportunity for a one-semester or year-long study abroad through the Padnos International Center, and international service learning experiences for undergraduate or graduate credit. Co-curricular activities also include support for student organizations, programs, and events with a global or international focus or emphasis.

Foreign Language Program
GVSU's Language curriculum includes instruction in Spanish, French, German, Arabic, Greek, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Russian languages. To receive a Bachelor of Arts degree, students must demonstrate third-semester proficiency in a foreign language. Some majors require more language study than that. For example, the Seidman College of Business also requires students receiving a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) degree with a major in international business to minor in a foreign language and study abroad.

Study Abroad Opportunities
The mission of the Padnos International Center is to engage the university community in meaningful international experiences which foster an appreciation and awareness of diverse cultures, people, and ideas. For a university with its profile of significant numbers of first-generation and Pell-eligible students, it is noteworthy that GVSU provides approximately 850 students per year (counting credit-bearing experiences only) with the high-impact learning experience of studying abroad, accomplished partially through scholarships.

Global Grand Valley (GV) Initiative
In 2014, the GVSU Internationalization Task Force's primary recommendation to the university was to incorporate meaningful and measurable global learning in the majors beyond the global learning already part of the GE program. That recommendation is in the university's Strategic Plan as

Objective 1.D.1., which states "Global learning is a requirement in all undergraduate majors."

Student Organizations
The university has 17 student organizations representing a diversity of cultural backgrounds. Examples of these organizations include the Arab Culture Club, Black Student Union, Latino Student Union, Native American Student Association, and American Sign Language and Culture Club. The Student Senate elects a Vice President for Diversity and appoints student members of the Diversity Committee and Student Cultural Organization Funding Committee, which provides student-led extra- and co-curricular opportunities.

Social Justice Co-Curricular Programming
The university's five social justice centers provide programs focused on efforts to recruit and retain diverse students; to educate, engage and empower all students to live in a diverse world; and to advocate for a socially just campus environment. Regular programming includes Conversations of Color , Professionals of Color Lecture Series, Sacred Sites Tours, Queer and Trans 101 Training, and Feminist Film Fridays.

Training Programs Prepare Students for a Diverse Society
Several academic units sponsor diversity training programs for their undergraduate students via coursework and specialized programs. Three examples of diversity and global-knowledge courses offered by Seidman College of Business in the Management Department are *The Diversified Workforce, International Human Resource Management,* and *International Management and Multinational Corporations*. Such specialized courses prepare students to serve and lead in their neighborhoods, communities, and workplaces in a diverse society. The Social Justice Education Office provides opt-in training to student groups and classes including Intergroup Dialogue and by-stander intervention. Intersection Ambassadors are student-peers who are trained to deliver social justice workshops and co-curricular programs. All new students are required to complete an online Student Education Module that includes community expectations for inclusion and equity and an understanding of identity differences.

**Faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge.**

Faculty and students contribute to scholarly and creative work in many ways. The Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence houses the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (OURS), the Office of Research Compliance & Integrity, the Office of Sponsored Programs, and the Technology Commercialization Office. These programs all support the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and creative work. OURS manages the Student Summer Scholars program, which provides funding and support for student and faculty mentors to work together on research.

The university supports graduate research assistantships through the Office of Graduate Studies as well as sabbaticals for faculty engaged in research. The GVSU Strategic Plan 2016-2021 includes an objective to promote faculty and staff scholarship by increasing external support and grants by at least 7.5% using a $22.4 million baseline (see Objective 2.E.2).

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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 institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty.**

Oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance is the responsibility of faculty, as guided by the curriculum development process described in Criterion 3.A. Curriculum development and learning assessment are both valued aspects of faculty governance, and both provide important opportunities for faculty to be involved in the development and assessment of student learning.

To ensure that instructional staff are of sufficient quality and ability, faculty are integrally involved in the search process, including establishment of hiring criteria. Faculty also set the criteria used in our faculty qualifications assurance process (described below).

GVSU's Assessment Guiding Principles establish the expectation that faculty be involved in assessment of student learning. Although not all faculty are involved in every assessment project, process, or initiative, all faculty are routinely involved in the development of their academic units' overall assessment plans and review of assessment data. Moreover, faculty engage in discussion of how their units will respond to assessment results, including changes to be made based on these findings (see Criterion 4.B).

Tenured, tenure-track and affiliate faculty are considered the permanent faculty who provide long-term continuity for classroom and non-classroom roles. In Fall 2017, there were 917 tenured and tenure-track (regular) faculty at GVSU along with 185 Affiliate Faculty. GVSU also had 112 visiting faculty and 503 adjunct faculty.

GVSU has a sufficient number of faculty to enable an average class size of 26. The faculty ratio for students is 17:1, and the percentage of full-time faculty in the classroom is 81%.

The UCLA Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) survey, administered every three years since 2001, provides a positive portrait of our faculty and indicates a favorable comparison to similar institutions. According to the HERI survey, GVSU faculty have a commitment to teaching and working with students, their colleagues, and the local community.

**GVSU instructors are appropriately qualified.**

GVSU recruits and retains faculty for whom excellent teaching is a priority. The Faculty Handbook reflects the ongoing teaching commitment of the institution through its statements of teaching expectations for faculty and the requirements for tenure and promotion.

Assurance that all instructors are properly credentialed is a combined effort among units, academic deans, the Office of the Provost, the Human Resources Office (HRO), and the Division of Inclusion and Equity (I&E). The final verification of credentials is accomplished through the appointment process as executed by academic deans. Academic units have the responsibility for developing appropriate position requirements for all instructional staff based on professional standards, licensing, and university expectations. HRO has extensive materials to assist academic units to hire the most qualified and appropriate instructional staff. I&E has implemented practices like the Inclusion Advocate program that encourages the inclusive hiring of qualified, diverse candidates.

In addition to providing information and support, HRO and Affirmative Action monitor the search process and verify new hires have met all qualification and credential requirements. Part-time and adjunct faculty qualifications must meet the credential qualifications set by the academic deans' offices as well as those discipline-specific expectations set by the academic units. Specific requirements and the approval process for the appointment of graduate-level faculty are outlined in the Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual.

I&E ensures hiring practices are fair and inclusive; they provide extensive resources to help academic units hire the most qualified and appropriate instructional staff. The Vice President for Enrollment Development creates and maintains all overarching agreements with outside institutions. The policy that guides these agreements is titled Institutional Agreements Process and linked on the Office of the Provost's website.

The university has adopted Faculty Qualifications Guidelines and a Faculty Qualifications Assurance Form. These have been reviewed and approved by University Academic Senate (UAS)  and are posted on the Office of the Provost website. These guidelines apply to all faculty teaching any course in any capacity at GVSU. Units define criteria and develop rubrics for evaluating tested experience (ex. Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Visual and Media Arts, Movement Science). Completed forms include signatures from the faculty member, unit head and dean, and are kept in a central database.

Ninety-three percent of regular faculty have terminal degrees, and many of the institution's faculty members are in the beginning or middle of their academic careers. In Fall 2017, 256 were assistant professors, 335 were associate professors and 313 were full professors. According to I&E's Diversity Dashboard report on Faculty Trends, gender diversity remains high, with females comprising 53

percent of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Racial diversity is improving slightly year after year, with 15.8 percent individuals of color among tenured and tenure-track faculty in 2017.


**Faculty are evaluated regularly according to procedures established in our Faculty Handbook.**

All tenure-track faculty engage in an annual two-part planning process utilizing the Digital Measures system. Each fall, after consultation with their unit heads, faculty compose Faculty Activity Plans (FAP) that outline prospective activities and significant scholarly, teaching, or service focus for the upcoming year. Each winter faculty complete retrospective Faculty Activity Reports (FAR). These reports document work accomplished as planned on the prior year's FAP. According to the Faculty Handbook, "the Unit Head is required to collect the vitae and FAR, append to it the corresponding FAP, and distribute these three documents to the unit for peer review. The compiled results of the peer review and Unit Head's evaluation form the basis of the annual discussion between Unit Head and faculty to set salary. These documents also are used cumulatively to inform tenure and promotion decisions." A template provides prompts for information to be included in all FAPs and FARs. A comprehensive workbook is provided to faculty by the Office of the Provost and includes responsibilities, timetable, and written summary language. Following are examples of FAPs and FARs from Digital Measures: [FAP1 / FAR1; FAP2 / FAR2; FAP3 / FAR3; FAP4 / FAR4].

Both the annual evaluation and contract renewal/tenure review processes include consideration of student course evaluations, which are collected for every course. In 2016, GVSU adopted a university-wide course evaluation system known as Laker Impressions of Faculty Teaching (LIFT). This system is the outcome of the work completed by a task force appointed during Winter 2014 by the Executive Committee of UAS to make recommendations to adopt an appropriate, contemporary method that would standardize teacher evaluations across units and colleges. The history, rationale, and guidelines for LIFT are provided on a university website.

Each unit establishes criteria (ex. Chemistry,Literacy & Technology) for the evaluation of regular faculty in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service that are consistent with college-specific (ex. CLAS, CCPS) and university-wide criteria. To ensure faculty not yet fully promoted have annual feedback on their progress to tenure or promotion, unit heads write statements of progress towards tenure at the end of the FAR evaluation cycle; these statements, along with FAPs, FARs, LIFT scores, and peer evaluations become part of faculty members' review portfolios used in contract renewal, promotion, and tenure decisions.

The process for tenure and promotion decisions is clearly outlined in the BOT policies (BOT 4.2.7, 4.2.8, 4.2.9, 4.2.10). A comprehensive workbook is provided to faculty by the Office of the Provost and includes a progression chart, calendar, and flowchart. The roles of faculty, unit head, dean, and provost are outlined, including a Frequently Asked Questions document. These procedures are also summarized in the Faculty Handbook.

GVSU's last comprehensive review noted a need to ensure consistency of personnel reviews across colleges. To achieve this, the University Personnel Review Committee (UPRC) was added as a university governance committee; it is responsible for reviewing evaluation criteria of all units on campus and recommending to the UAS any actions to ensure consistent personnel reviews of faculty. The Faculty Handbook provides details about the UPRC.

Processes for reviewing Affiliate faculty are described in the Faculty Handbook. Like tenure-line

faculty, Affiliates receive merit-based salary adjustments annually, which are based on evaluations by their units. For contract renewal (every three years, or more frequently for new Affiliates or in special situations) or promotion to Senior Affiliate, departments and deans follow guidelines published by the Office of the Provost. In all cases, LIFT scores are used in the review. For contract renewal and promotion, some departments incorporate classroom visits by tenured faculty and the submission of a portfolio demonstrating teaching effectiveness compiled by the faculty member under review.

**GVSU offers a variety of resources to ensure instructors are current in their disciplines.**

The Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) offers numerous venues for both full- and part-time faculty to reflect upon and improve their skills and knowledge of teaching. Supporting the strong teaching culture at GVSU, FTLC provides customized individual consultations, peer learning opportunities, and financial support for teaching innovation projects. Highlights of FTLC activities include:

- An annual Teaching and Learning Conference, now in its 24th year
- Semester-long, outcome-driven Faculty Learning Communities, engaging over 100 faculty in ten or more topical Communities per semester
- A faculty-to-faculty mentoring program supporting new faculty, as well early career, midcareer and senior faculty
- Confidential consultations, including class observations and structured, formative mid-semester feedback.
- Intensive personnel portfolio workshops to help faculty prepare more complete documentation of teaching effectiveness beyond reliance on student evaluations
- Teaching Innovation Grants, along with five other mini-grants, funding innovative teaching projects, teaching-related conference travel, and collaborative faculty professional development efforts.

Information Technology (IT), through eLearning and Emerging Technologies, provides individual consultations, phone and email support, and workshops that help faculty to develop technology skills necessary for effective teaching as well as other professional activities. The eLearning and Emerging Technologies team supports faculty, contributing to teaching excellence, and enhancing student success through:

- Exemplary Instructional Design - IDeL (Instructional Design for eLearning)
- Effective Application of Instructional Technologies - Teaching with Technology
- Learning Management System Enhancement - Blackboard
- Interactive Digital Media Development - Digital Studio
- Innovative Emerging Technologies - Technology Showcase

The Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence (CSCE) promotes a culture of active, engaged and ethical scholarship through supporting innovative faculty and student research and collaborative partnerships across disciplines and in the broader community. Research, scholarship, and creative activity are essential components of the university's mission as an institution of higher learning. It drives performance and content in the classroom, laboratories and studios.

CSCE coordinates the efforts of the following units:

- The Office of Sponsored Programs supports faculty and staff in the identification, development, submission, and administration of externally sponsored agreements for scholarly research and creative activity.
- The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity works directly with researchers to create a culture of active, engaged, and ethical research by providing guidance and oversight in the following areas of research compliance: human subjects research, animal research, responsible conduct of research, conflict of interest in research, export controls, and research safety.
- The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship offers opportunities for undergraduates to pursue research and scholarship in various disciplines under the direction of a faculty mentor.
- The Technology Commercialization Office (TCO) creates productive relationships in the quest for discovery, learning and engagement between the university and businesses. The TCO supports university-industry relationships by creating valuable connections, facilitating the exchange of ideas, and supporting the development of collaborations that capitalize on value created by GVSU scholarship.
- High Performance Computing provides remote computing services—servers, storage, databases, software, and analytics—over the Internet. The system provides a scalable resource to assist with powerful computing needs and secure storage for research and teaching data.

**Faculty are accessible for student inquiry.**

Positive student/faculty relationships and mentoring is an essential aspect of GVSU's teaching and learning culture. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Profile for 2016 indicated GVSU scored higher than its peers in the category of "quality of interactions." As described in the Faculty Handbook, instructors are required to establish office hours, included on course syllabi, in an effort to provide assistance, support, advising and professional mentoring. All faculty have searchable profiles on the university website, making it easy for students to locate contact information. Student assessments about faculty accessibility are embedded in course evaluations and graduate exit surveys.

**Staff members providing student support services are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.**

Staff members meet hiring qualifications established through the HRO which regularly benchmarks qualifications for positions with peer institutions as well as professional standards established by national associations (e.g. NASPA, ACPA, NADOHE, NACUA). The university has position templates that outline specific qualifications for student support service positions. It has established uniform standards for qualifications for individuals serving in various academic advising roles. The university has received outside accreditation for some student support service areas including the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), Level 1 certification for the Tutoring program, National Association for Academic Advisers in Athletics certification for the LAKER Success Center, and the International Association of Counseling Services for the University Counseling Center.

The process of hiring staff mirrors that of hiring faculty as described above: a standardized electronic system manages the process; HRO and I&E advise on inclusive search practices and affirmative

action review; and a hiring committee makes a recommendation to an appointing officer. Each staff position has a job description that includes qualifications and responsibilities.

All staff with the exception of police, maintenance/grounds, and adjunct staff positions, regardless of location, use the electronic Performance Development Program (ePDP) as a communication program to help them understand their roles, continue to learn, and participate in their improvement. It includes a section addressing professional development goals and plans. The program is completed annually via a multi-stage electronic process that includes an automatic flow of forms between staff and supervisor. It starts with an Annual Planning document and is completed with a Final Assessment that reflects performance over the past year. These evaluations are also a basis for merit increases in salary.

Police and maintenance/grounds positions have specific state/industry certification processes that routinely test competency and provide relevant training. Maintenance/grounds staff have a separate performance evaluation.

Staff are supported in their professional development with designated funds to attend state, regional, and/or national training and conferences appropriate to their functional areas. The GVSU Strategic Plan 2016-2021 contains an objective of having at least 75% of staff participate in professional development to expand, enhance, or extend their competencies and capabilities within the context of the responsibilities of their positions. The baseline was determined to be 50-55% of staff annually participating in some form of professional development.

Professional development opportunities include the HRO Excellence Series and AP Leadership Series. There are departmental and work group focused opportunities such as the Academic Advising Professional Development Committee, the Division of Student Services monthly meetings, and the CRLA training program for tutors. Staff professional development opportunities can be accessed on the Sprout website.

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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

**Student Support Services are suited to the needs of GVSU's student populations.**

The university's student support services are tailored to the diverse needs of our students. Various offices provide a broad umbrella of support for student life, physical health, mental health , academic success, gender, sexual orientation, religious, cultural, international, and recreational needs. Student support services are led by the Division of Student Services, and other divisions provide some student services including the Provost's Office, Division of Inclusion and Equity, and Division of Enrollment Development.

The Office of Institutional Analysis, in the Enrollment Development Division, serves the university community as a source of aggregate data about students. The "Students" and "Enrollment Snapshots" tabs on the website provide overviews of student identity, geographic origin, enrollment status, and college of primary major. Summary reports from student surveys and customized tabulations are available through the Office of Institutional Analysis. The Division of Inclusion and Equity hosts the Diversity Dashboard and provides an overview of how students experience the campus environment through the Campus Climate Survey.

This information about the student population and student experience allows offices to tailor their initiatives to fit the needs of students and commitment to their success. Newer initiatives include the MoneySmart Lakers program, Campus Interfaith Resources, Religious Inclusion Policy, Team Against Bias (TAB), Social Justice Education, Victim Rights and Options, the anyBODYS application, and Laker Familia and Black Excellence Orientations.

Faculty-led initiatives to support student success are coordinated through the Office of the Provost and include the Student Success Network and a linked course initiative. Both programs are centered on first-year students to ensure a strong start and help students build faculty connections on campus. For student safety, there is an updated GVSUAlert! Emergency Notification System and campus safety website.

The Division of Student Services created new positions to address immediate student needs and to improve student success (ex., the Student Ombuds and the Director of Student Conduct, Intervention, & Support). An in-house survey is sent to all new Lakers during the fourth week of class to check for signs of problems in navigating campus life and academics. Staff in areas noted above, plus advisers from the colleges, follow up with students who answer the survey in ways indicating they are not thriving or that they are adopting habits likely to hamper academic success.

**GVSU provides learning support and preparatory instruction for entering students.**

Academic and faculty advisors assist students in course selection through the New Student Orientation Program and through ongoing academic advising. Initial student course selection is assisted through use of ACT and SAT test scores and math and language placement tests. There are developmental course options for students needing additional support as well as Structured Learning Assistance in courses with traditionally high D/F/W(ithdraw)/I(ncomplete) rates. The university provides a tutoring services through the Tutoring Center located above a primary dining area for first-year students, the Library-hosted Knowledge Market, the Statistics Center, and the Writing Center. Most of these support services are peer-to-peer and provide students the opportunity to learn from one another.

Because approximately 37.7% of GVSU's students are first generation, the university offers TRIO Student Services (formerly known as the Educational Support Program), a federally-funded support program for first-generation and limited-income college students. The goal of the program is to offer various forms of support for participants along their journey toward graduation. Students are assigned an advisor and have access to peer mentors who can help them achieve success while in college.

Graduate students comprise about 11.82% of the overall student population. A range of support resources are provided, including Graduate Student Life, GradSense Financial Education, Professional Development for Graduate Students (PACES), and the Academic Conference Fund. The goal of the Graduate School is to prepare graduates to be effective leaders in their field, to be engaged, lifelong learners, and to excel in a global environment.

International students get a comprehensive orientation prior to the start of the fall semester. GVSU also hosts dedicated orientations designed for underrepresented students that include both academic and social engagement opportunities for transitioning first-year students. The success of Laker Familia and Black Excellence Orientations is significant. Participants in Laker Familia had 82.7% first-year retention compared to 74.9% for Latino students who did not participate in the program. Participants in Black Excellence had 84.6% first-year retention in fall 2018 compared to Black students who did not participate (70.9%), and only slightly lower than White students (85.4%). Plans are underway to expand opportunities to Native American and Asian/Asian American students.

**GVSU's academic advising is suited to its programs and to the needs of its students.**

The university employs a decentralized and shared model for academic advising. The majority of academic advising is managed through the individual colleges and is assigned by major. Students are

assigned a faculty advisor from their major(s) and/or a staff academic advisor from the college's academic advising center. Student athletes, Honors College students, and students admitted through the Oliver Wilson Freshman Academy program are advised by trained faculty and staff academic advisors who supplement the major advisor. Students who are undecided, deciding, or transitioning between majors participate in Exploratory Study programming, which is housed in the College of Liberal Arts & Science (CLAS). Though all CLAS advisors are trained to work with Exploratory Study students, some advisors specialize in this area. Students entering the university as new or transfer students are initially advised through a centrally coordinated first-year orientation program, and then subsequently by a group of trained faculty advisors, staff advisors, and peer advisors who are directed by a Faculty Director and Assistant Director.

**GVSU provides its students and instructors support for effective teaching and learning.**

GVSU ensures that faculty and students have the support they need to maximize student learning.

Faculty Teaching & Learning Center
The Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC), guided by the ideals of liberal education and the principles of inclusive excellence, strengthens the university in carrying out its primary mission of teaching and learning. The FTLC fosters dialog and community-building and responds to both the needs of the faculty, at all ranks and career stages, as well as the needs of the campus community.

Computing & Technology
Students have access to computing labs across all campuses. All classrooms have a computer, projector, and internet access to ensure that faculty can use technology to teach. Facility or technology issues can be reported directly from the classroom. Facilities and Information Technology (IT) routinely inspect classrooms to ensure all equipment is working properly and determine needed updates, which happen on a recurring and managed schedule. Some software is available for students to install on their personal computers (e.g., SAS, SPSS, ArcInfo).  Students, faculty, and staff may also purchase reduced price software and hardware. Information about such resources are found on the Information Technology website.

IT provides students and instructors with the infrastructure and support to enable teaching excellence and student success. The eLearning and Emerging Technologies team provides an array of services and resources designed to facilitate the support of faculty teaching hybrid and online classes, and to assist faculty in delivering innovative classroom-based instruction. Faculty receive timely and high quality support in instructional design, the effective application of instructional technologies in teaching, and interactive digital media development resources. Unique to GVSU, the Atomic Object Technology Showcase, located in the Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons (MIP Library), provides faculty, staff, and students with an immersive and engaging environment to: interact, discover, learn, and share how innovative emerging technologies can enhance teaching and improve student learning such as virtual reality, augmented reality, mobile computing, wearable technology, and 3D printing.

GVSU Libraries
The MIP Library, built in 2013, on the Allendale Campus provides the latest technologies associated with learning, including student collaboration spaces, computer labs, and other technology spaces. Specialized libraries include the Steelcase Library at the Richard M. DeVos Center, the Frey

Foundation Learning Center at the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences, the Curriculum Materials Library associated with the College of Education, and the Seidman House associated with special collections. Information about these branches and services are found on the "About Us" page of the library website.

Clinical Practice Sites

These sites are critical resources for health and health-related program students to apply knowledge to practice and refine clinical skills, and to participate in critical thinking within actual healthcare delivery environments. Local, regional, national, and international clinical sites are identified by the academic programs; the Vice Provost for Health formally negotiates written affiliation agreements between the sites, the colleges, and the university.

Buildings Designed with Teaching and Learning at the Focus

Since the last accreditation visit, several new academic buildings have been designed and constructed. For all projects, faculty were regularly consulted on questions of classroom needs, scholarship space, and student study areas (ex., development of plans for Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall). Academic space requests, particularly classroom assignments and modifications, are addressed by the Academic Space Committee (created in 2016). Faculty also have a permanent voice in facilities matters via the Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee whose role is "to provide recommendations to Facilities Planning on planning, remodeling, and building academic facilities at Grand Valley, with the goal of providing an optimal teaching and learning environment."

Recent new construction and renovated spaces have resulted in new classrooms, teaching laboratories, faculty and student research facilities, study areas, and offices. The P. Douglas Kindschi Hall of Science in Allendale features spaces designed for STEM disciplines, particularly biology; Finkelstein Hall on the Health Campus supports 19 health profession and nursing programs, including occupational therapy and speech-language pathology. By 2019, new space for engineering programs will be open at 227 Winter Avenue. This building will house programs in power mobility, electromagnetic compatibility, robotics and digital design, as well as K-12 outreach. These new facilities join an extensive collection of technology-intensive instructional laboratories for School of Engineering academic programs, including a clean room with scanning electron and atomic force microscopes, the "DEN" (Distributed Computing Environment) for teaching virtual reality and distributed computing, two biomedical engineering laboratories, and a fabrication/rapid prototyping area.

Performing Arts Center

In 2017, the Thomas J. and Marcia J. Haas Center for Performing Arts expanded to attend to the need for more student performing spaces and includes:

- Three ensemble rooms (New Music, Early Music, Jazz)
- New student study space
- Enlarged student study space in the building's primary lobby (Louis Armstrong Theatre)
- Seven offices, storage space
- A black box theater that will seat approximately 140 people
- Associated theater support spaces, including theater lab, four dressing rooms
- Two theater classrooms

Art Galleries

GVSU owns 16,000 pieces of art, of which 10,000 are displayed at any one time across all campuses. The Art Gallery manages six exhibition venues: on the Allendale campus: the Art Gallery in the

Performing Arts Center, the Red Wall Gallery in Lake Ontario Hall, and Kirkhof Center. On the Pew campus: the Blue Wall Gallery, the George and Barbara Gordon Gallery in DeVos Center and the West Wall Gallery in the Eberhard Center. Academic departments manage galleries in the MIP Library, Calder Art Center, and Lake Michigan Hall. Specific courses integrate the art in unique ways. For example, students enrolled in Drawing II engaged with artwork in the Ebb & Flow exhibition to gain a different perspective on stroke technique while History students routinely visit the Gallery to enrich their understanding of course content.

Living-Learning Communities

Housing and Residence Life offers living-learning communities in a number of on-campus apartments. Students living in these buildings have chosen to expand their education through shared learning experiences, and each community is built upon a specific theme, major, or area of interest. Professional and graduate staff work closely with a faculty coordinator in these communities to provide a rich living-learning experience that extends outside of the classroom (e.g., through programs, events, field trips, research, etc.).

Financial Support for High-Impact Learning

Faculty and students are provided many resources to financially support high-impact learning experiences including the areas of research, experiential learning, and international travel.

**GVSU provides guidance to students in the use of research and information resources.**

In 2006, the Graduate Studies and Grants Administration (GSGA) division established an Office of Grants Development and Administration (Office of Sponsored Programs) to better coordinate and support research development, conduct, and oversight. The Office of Sponsored Programs provides oversight to the development of explicit policies and procedures to ensure ethical conduct in its approved research activities.

The Human Research Review Committee (HRRC), and the associated Institutional Review Board (IRB), as well as the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) are comprised of experienced faculty and community members dedicated to the protection of human and animal research subjects. The Lab Safety Program oversees compliance with standards for the handling of hazardous materials. Together, these three committees foster the responsible conduct of research throughout the university.

The research enterprise is not limited to faculty; GVSU requires its undergraduate and graduate students to conduct research in conformity to the ethical principles in the Belmont Report. Students pursuing graduate degrees must complete rigorous research project requirements. Every academic unit offers courses in research methods, ethics, and standards. A significant majority of faculty teaching research courses in each college are tenure-track faculty.

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (OURS), provides a unique opportunity for undergraduate students to work with faculty on their scholarship and produce an original output that contributes to the knowledge or activity of a particular academic discipline. The mission of OURS is to establish comprehensive services and programs that support students in their pursuit of inquiry, creativity, scholarship, and research.

The extensive Library system has many faculty and staff consultants available to assist students in

finding, assessing, and using research and information literature. A [Library liaison](#) is assigned to each department as a specific link between the faculty and students to the library; liaisons are available to help students in-person, via email, and in office hours. The Libraries offer space where students can collaborate together or study alone, get help with research or writing assignments, practice public speaking, or develop digital projects:

- [OURS](#), housed in the MIP Library, provides support for students who want to pursue research and creative practice to further their academic experiences.
- Highly trained peer consultants from the Library-hosted [Knowledge Market](#) work with students to develop research strategies, analyze data, improve writing, or polish presentations.
- The [Data Inquiry Lab](#), also hosted within the MIP Library, provides support for student-led quantitative data management, visualization, and analysis. The Data Inquiry Lab's purpose is to foster students' development of practical data skills through workshops, in-classroom demonstrations, and one-on-one consultation.
- The [IT Help Desk](#) loans laptop computers and tablets, as well as provides hardware and software support, for current students, faculty, and staff.

The [Statistics Department](#) offers consultation to students as well. Students who are working on research projects and are in need of information specific to the statistical design of their project are encouraged to work with the [Statistics Consulting Center](#). Information, training and one-on-one consultation are available to students and faculty.

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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

**GVSU's co-curricular programs complement and support its mission.**

GVSU offers a wide range of co-curricular programming, most of which can be viewed on the university events calendar. Students can also find an interactive listing of co-curricular activities for each academic year in the Blueprint for Student Success. The co-curricular programming is learner-focused, experiential and outcomes-driven. In addition to being able to share programs and events on the events calendar, students have access to a private online community management system--LakerLINK--where they are able to explore over 400 registered student organization programs and connect with other students on areas of interest at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The Division of Student Services developed a process, Co-Curricular Connections, which highlights the commitment to enhance classroom learning with out-of-class learning opportunities. The intent of the co-curriculum is to provide an opportunity for intentional student learning and development which complements the content and skills goals of the General Education curriculum, including the LIB 100 (*Introduction to Liberal Education*) and LIB 201 (*Diversity in the United States*) courses. The advanced search tool for the events calendar allows students to search for events tagged with specific learning outcomes (civic responsibility, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, foundations and skills for lifelong learning, integrative learning, and intercultural knowledge and competence). Co-curricular opportunities are also highlighted for online/distance learning at designated additional locations and other off-campus locations.

Courses that incorporate community engagement into their work may be formally designated as such by earning an Community-Based Learning (CBL) identity via the University Curriculum Committee's review process. Faculty members from diverse disciplines have long engaged students in community projects and initiatives throughout West Michigan and beyond; the CBL designation now highlights these co-curricular experiences during registration and on students' transcripts. CBL courses enable students to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings. By working with members of the community, students are better prepared for both careers and civic participation in a democratic society.

The Division of Student Services, Division of Inclusion and Equity, and Finance and Administration Division also support various co-curricular programming through their departments: Housing Residence Life, Campus Recreation, Career Center, Office of Student Life, University Counseling Center, Student Academic Support Services, Center for Women and Gender Equity, LGBT Resource Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Disability Support Resources, Campus Interfaith Resources,

and Intercollegiate Athletics.

**GVSU fulfills the claims it makes about contributions to students' educational experience, particularly in the areas of community engagement, student research, service learning, and economic development.**

GVSU created the Office for Community Engagement in 2012 as a way to coordinate the disparate activities of students, faculty, staff, departments and offices. The center connects campus members with community entities for a variety of purposes and showcases work done by the campus related to community engagement. The Community Service Learning Center (CSLC) posts volunteer opportunities to help students find ways to engage with the community. The Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center provides support for faculty members who are interested in the development of community based teaching and learning in their courses.

In 2016, President Thomas Haas signed the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement on Civic Engagement, strengthening the university's commitment to civic engagement. The agreement includes five action statements that call for preparing students for civic engagement, creating partnerships and contributing to the strength and health of local communities. GVSU was one of three pioneering institutions of higher education in Michigan to sign. As part of this initiative, the university created a Civic Action Plan that was commissioned in March 2017, integrated with the overall University Strategic Plan.

GVSU provides students the opportunity to conduct research or engage in creative activity, some of which is showcased at the annual Student Scholars Day. Students can compete in the Laker Effect Challenge to win seed money for their innovations, or present their work at the Community Engagement Showcase. In addition the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship provides funding support for students to present their work at local, regional, national, and international conferences. They also administer a Student Summer Scholars Program. Many undergraduate programs, and most graduate programs, have research courses available. The Engaged Department Initiative provides funds to support activities around increasing Community Engagement opportunities.

Many students take courses that have a service learning component. Students are encouraged to record their efforts and their reflections in the Service Tracker database. There are several programs where students participate in service learning on an international level, including programs that emphasize long-term healthcare efforts in Ghana, bringing clean water to Haiti, and interdisciplinary efforts to teach, serve and learn in Nicaragua. Since 2008, GVSU has been nationally recognized for community service (including service-learning) through the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. The Division of Student Services also expands student opportunities for applied learning through, Career Center internship assistance and mini-grants.

Grand Valley's activities and efforts--on campus and in the community--have made a significant, direct impact in West Michigan. GVSU contributes to economic development through direct employment, purchasing, and students who receive certificates or graduate then work in the area. In 2017-2018 this contribution was valued at $816 million according to the annual Accountability Report. "For Grand Valley, in 2015, the estimated annualized positive economic impact to the West Michigan region through the use of sustainable development best practices was approximately $265 million in direct economic impact and avoided costs" (see Collective Sustainability Impact Report 2015).

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# 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

## Summary

GVSU provides high-quality education to its students in all of our courses, programs, and degrees in all formats. GVSU is committed to its mission, emphasizing a liberal arts education for all undergraduates accompanied by strategic development of masters and professional doctoral programs as appropriate to a masters large institution.

Curricular and assessment processes ensure that GVSU programs equip students to carry out its mission. The General Education Program is designed to be relevant to the needs of society and ensures that all undergraduates are well-versed in intellectual inquiry, application, and integration of general material. At the graduate level, there is all an integrative culminating experience (thesis, project, dissertation, practicum).

GVSU supports a host of undergraduate and graduate research opportunities and provides students with support for internal and external dissemination of scholarly activity.

The university pays careful attention to hiring qualified faculty and staff who support a student-centered approach to education. Faculty and staff are appropriately trained and supported in their professional development.

GVSU's well-established review processes ensure faculty and staff continue to meet expectations.

Support services are relevant and easily accessible and reflective of a hands-on approach. For example, faculty involved in tutoring in math, chemistry, and accounting are also involved in tutoring programs within their respective department.

Because GVSU has the academic resources of a large university and a commitment to individual student success, the learning experience is personal, challenging, and transformational.

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*There are no sources.*

# 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

# 4.A - Core Component 4.A

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

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

## Argument

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

Program review is accomplished through a combination of internal self study with resource analysis, student outcomes assessment, strategic planning, accreditation reporting (where applicable), and external program review. Program review at GVSU is bottom-up, as individual units and select university-wide committees have specific perspectives to bring to the process, which is communicated to central administration for review and synthesis. The purpose is for units, colleges, and the Office of the Provost make informed decisions about curricular change, program launches and sunsets, and resource allocation.

Program review is coordinated through a new site developed in-house, called *GVAdvance*. In the component of *GVAdvance* called *GVAssess,* individual academic units complete annual student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessment for every undergraduate and graduate major and certificate; co-curricular units assess student centered outcomes (SCOs). Additionally, all units complete annual

progress reports for strategic plans in *GVPlan*. Both the SLO/SCO and strategic planning progress reports are reviewed on a 2-year cycle by the University Assessment Committee (UAC), as evidenced by the UAC's year-end report. Units' reports and accompanying UAC feedback are accessible for decision making at any time.

Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) reviews undergraduate and graduate academic programs, with enrollment and budget metrics displayed for units and deans in dashboard format and reported in *GVStability*. The FSBC's annual reviews are sent to the Provost's Office for consideration in allocating budgets and faculty lines.

At the end of each 6-year cycle, which parallels the university's strategic planning cycle, all academic and co-curricular units complete self-study reports in *GVReview* that include an analysis of student outcomes assessment, updates on the strategic plan, and analysis of the unit's resources. The self-study is reviewed by the UAC and FSBC; they provide feedback to the unit, dean, and Provost's Office (see master review schedule).

*GVAdvance* was launched in Fall 2018, bringing all four components of program review into a common site, allowing for easier collective review:

- *GVAssess* (assessment of student outcomes--see examples in criterion 4B)
- *GVPlan* (strategic planning progress--ex. Music, Theatre & Dance, College of Education, Division of Student Services, Institutional Marketing, University Development
- *GVStability* (enrollment and budget metrics--ex. Biology, Occupational Safety & Health, Physical Therapy, Statistics, Chemistry, Cell & Molecular Biology with FSBC feedback--ex. Biology, OSH, Physical Therapy,Statistics, Chemistry)
- *GVReview* (self-study--no examples yet in *GVAdvance*).

Prior to using *GVAdvance*, self-study reports were submitted directly to UAC for review (ex. Liberal Studies (BA/BS), Hospitality & Tourism Management (BA/BS), Philosophy (BA/BS), School of Communication (BA/BS, MS), Movement Science (BA/BS), Statistics (BA/BS), Public & Nonprofit Administration (BA/BS), Biology (MS), Medical and Bioinformatics (MS), Criminal Justice (MS), University Libraries, Women's Center, Padnos International Center, Career Center.

The Graduate Council (GC) began reviewing graduate programs in 2017-2018, focusing on enrollment trends, professional development opportunities, student success, and resource needs. This process includes an external review. The GC's final report is sent to the Provost, with copies to the program director and appointing dean, recommending changes to the program and/or its resource allocation (ex. CMB).

External reviews also occur on a regular basis for all accredited programs. In addition, several areas such as the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the Division of Student Services, support external reviews by disciplinary consultants/experts (ex. Geology, Geography, History, English, Speaking Lab, Psychology, Student Life, Campus Recreation).

The Provost's Office Assistant Vice Presidents are *ex officio* members of all university governance committees, including the UAC, UCC, FSBC, and GC. The Provost consults with her team in making budget and faculty line allocation decisions. When budget requests are considered (each fall) and faculty lines are determined (each spring), the Provost and her team rely on data to help make those decisions. These data include enrollment trends across the university, and retention and persistence rates of students in various programs, as well as data that have been examined and

reported on by FSBC.

Annually, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs responsible for curriculum and program review examines data, assessment reports, and recent curricular actions to flag programs experiencing dramatic enrollment growth or decline, as well as programs in need of curricular refreshing. Programs are flagged for potential further resource review by the provost's and dean's offices, with curricular and programmatic review involving the faculty in the unit and the appropriate dean(s). In these cases, benchmarking of the curriculum and enrollments at peer institutions as well as commissioned market research are tools used in the review.

The focus this year (2018-2019) is on better synthesizing the various levels and forms of review, such that reviews are meaningful, comprehensive, efficient, and informative. The following challenges have been identified to be addressed:

- There is some duplication of effort among university-wide committees that should be eliminated.
- There should be a mechanism for committees to share findings with one another as appropriate and to ensure a clearer understanding of how each committee's review fits into the whole.
- Committees should have a better understanding of how their program review work has resulted in particular decisions being made about budget and faculty line allocations. A mechanism for closing this loop should be created.

**The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts.**

The three types of credit transcripted by the institution are GVSU courses, credit-by-exam programs, and transfer courses. The GVSU courses go through a rigorous curriculum review process as detailed in Core Component 3.A. Credit-by-exam programs include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, College Level Examination Program, and Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES). Credit earned while serving in the military is evaluated according to DANTES and guidelines set by the American Council on Education Joint Services Transcript. Academic units evaluate the credit-by-exam courses which are then reviewed by a university committee.

GVSU does not award transfer credit for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning. It also does not rely on third parties for evaluation of credit from international institutions.

**GVSU assures the quality of the credit accepted in transfer.**

GVSU has a clear and transparent policy and process for evaluating credit from accredited institutions. Most transfer courses come from accredited schools, with the Catalog (undergraduate and graduate) outlining exceptions. The Course Equivalencies self-service website allows students to determine how courses can be transferred from other universities.

As a member of the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO), GVSU follows the Michigan Transfer Agreement between two-year and four-year institutions. This agreement articulates a block of credits transferable from any of Michigan's 28 community colleges to GVSU. The accompanying Federal Compliance Filing document describes our

process for accepting transfer credit.

Course equivalencies have been developed and approved for many study abroad courses from our partner institutions. Students can receive credit from other institutions by obtaining approval for a course from the appropriate GVSU department.

**The institution assures the quality of all courses.**

Prerequisites, Rigor, and Student Learning Expectations

The university maintains and exercises authority over course quality (curriculum review process described in Core Component 3.A and the Program Review process). The UCC ensures that all programs and courses are well-designed, rigorous, and have the appropriate prerequisites so students can successfully complete them. Students prerequisites are automatically enforced by the Banner student registration system. All course syllabi must include student learning expectations.

Access to Learning Resources

GVSU ensures that all students have access to advising, tutoring, library, writing center, technology, and other resources that support and enhance learning. Learning resources are further described in Core Component 3.D. Financial commitments to academic support staff are described in Core Component 5.A.

Faculty Qualifications

In the hiring and performance evaluation processes, the university ensures that all faculty are qualified to teach courses, as detailed in Core Component 3.C.

Dual-Credit Offerings

To ensure that dual credit courses for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes, GVSU has clearly defined the process and course credit criteria (See Dual Enrollment in the Undergraduate Admissions). Dual enrolled students are held to the same standards and expectations as other GVSU students. Faculty who teach in these programs meet faculty qualifications guidelines. Students are issued GVSU IDs and have access to all learning support services.

**GVSU maintains accreditation for its programs as appropriate to educational purposes.**

The Office of the Provost strategically facilitates accreditation in keeping with the mission of the institution. In addition to the Higher Learning Commission accreditation, 40 nationally recognized accreditation agencies have certified programs across the university for high quality and integrity. The university's college and program accreditation information appears in the Catalog and on the GVSU website. While all of our programs with accreditation status have historically been in good standing, one program, Physician Assistant Studies, was placed on probation in 2016 primarily due to insufficient documentation of program analysis. Corrective measures were taken, and a very positive site visit was completed in August 2018. A decision on program status change is expected in October 2018. This program has consistently generated excellent outcomes with graduates regularly

achieving [100% pass rates](#) the first time they attempt the national certifying exam.


**GVSU evaluates the success of its graduates.**

National Exams

The [Office of Institutional Analysis](#) collects information on pass rates of GVSU graduates on licensure and certification exams. According to the university's [2017-2018 Accountability Report](#), of the 10 programs with licensure and certification exams, six have had 100 percent pass rates, the remaining four programs had more than 90% pass rates. The board reviews and licensing exam results are frequently used for differentiating student-learning goals and for program evaluation.

Employment and Advanced Degree Programs

Success of its graduates is measured in part by [Postgraduate Employment survey](#) conducted by the Career Center, an [Alumni Employment Survey](#) administered by the Alumni Relations Office, and the [GVSU Community Survey](#) sent to advisory boards, community partners, and other community stakeholders. These surveys provide the information contained in the [GVSU Postgraduate Employment Report](#). The latest report conducted by the Career Center noted that [83%](#) of graduates were employed and another [11%](#) were actively continuing their education. Additionally, [90%](#) of survey respondents acknowledged accepting an offer within three months of graduating.

Fellowships, Internships, and Special Programs

Students are able to explore [internship](#) possibilities individually, through departments or colleges, or through structured programs offered by the Career Center. More than [8,200 students received experiential learning](#) during the past year. Experiential learning offerings included co-ops (8%), clinical rotation (13%), student teaching/assisting (16%), and internship/practicum/field work (67%). The [Career Center](#) also offers students an opportunity to meet with companies and other organizations about employment opportunities, internships, and career mentoring. GVSU has been very successful helping students achieve [national and international fellowships](#).

GVSU gathers information regarding student perception of the quality of their educational experience. The Office of Institutional Analysis and the Registrar jointly conduct a survey of graduates every even-numbered year. The results from the 2016-2017 [GVSU Survey of Graduates](#) show that over 97% of the respondents were moderately to extremely satisfied with their overall experience.


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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

**GVSU has institution-level undergraduate student learning outcomes and effective processes to systematically assess achievement of learning.**

GVSU is committed to assessment and improvement of student learning at the institution and the program/unit levels. The assessment program focuses on outcomes as opposed to goals.The undergraduate institution-level learning outcomes are adopted from the General Education Program--a hallmark of a GVSU undergraduate education:

- collaboration
- critical thinking
- ethical reasoning
- information literacy
- integration
- oral communication
- problem solving
- quantitative literacy
- written communication

These outcomes were endorsed campus-wide by the President's Cabinet**,** Office of the Provost, and UAS.

Since 2007, the General Education (GE) Program has engaged faculty from across the university in a robust assessment process. The General Education Committee's (GEC) course-based assessment process requires faculty to assess student learning outcomes in every course on a three-year cycle, using standardized rubrics. In the Course Assessment Report (CAR), faculty reflect on the process of teaching and assessing the outcomes, including how they plan to use the results to improve student learning. GEC provides summative and formative feedback on these reports to the faculty and the units. Every three years, the GEC publishes a report summarizing student learning and the resulting programmatic improvements made in the GE Program. In addition, information about program improvement will be summarized annually and reviewed by the University Assessment Committee (UAC).

**GVSU assesses achievement of the learning outcomes for our curricular and co-curricular programs.**

In addition to the institution-level outcomes, GVSU assesses student learning for each academic and co-curricular program. Outcomes are posted publicly on the university's website and programs' websites (ex.English, Biology, Housing). Strategic planning and assessment of learning outcomes are closely connected activities at GVSU. Both activities are recorded, tracked, assessed and reviewed in a common, in-house built web system called *GVAdvance*: the assessment component is *GVAssess* and the planning component is *GVPlan*.

Assessment Process Overview

The learning/student outcomes of all academic and co-curricular programs are assessed and reported annually in the *GVAssess* section of *GVAdvance*. The UAC reviews all curricular and co-curricular programs every two years, as part of a regular review schedule. Each undergraduate degree, graduate degree, and certificate program have learning outcomes that are reviewed by the program, college, and UAC. Likewise, each co-curricular program has student outcomes that are reviewed by the unit, division, and UAC. All academic and co-curricular units prepare a student learning/student outcomes assessment plan, housed in *GVAssess* (ex: Integrated Science (BS), Liberal Studies (BA/BS), Mathematics (BA/BS), Social Work (MSW), Nursing (DNP), Urban and Regional Planning certificate, Housing, LGBT Center). Units collect and analyze data on an ongoing basis, review findings, develop action plans, and record progress annually. Outcomes are assessed and reviewed by faculty and staff at the program level, taking appropriate corrective actions when results indicate improvement is needed.

Assessment activities are reviewed by each college dean's office before submission to UAC. Reporting in the *GVAssess* site details: (a) student learning outcomes, (b) measurable objectives, (c) actual measures/metrics, (d) data collected over the course of each year, and (e) analysis of the findings, including plans for improvement. The UAC reviews progress made on assessment of learning/student outcomes and on achieving objectives in the strategic plan, ensuring that all units are provided with timely, formative feedback (ex. UAC feedback on Music & Dance assessment). Teams of UAC members review the assessment materials according to a standardized rubric, and the UAC chair reviews the feedback for consistency before making it available in *GVAssess* to the unit and college.

Assessment, Strategic Planning, and Self Study Integration

An assessment reporting cycle for academic and co-curricular units has been in place since 2003. GVSU is currently in the midst of the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan cycle, and due to the two-year review cycle by UAC, each curricular and co-curricular program is reviewed twice between 2016 and 2019 (see master review schedule). In 2020-2021, programs/units will culminate the strategic planning cycle with a six-year self-study, housed in the *GVReview* section of *GVAdvance*, which involves reflection on the progress made in strategic planning and assessment of learning/student outcomes, as described in 4.A. In addition, the self-study also includes a stability report (a resource analysis of faculty/staff, enrollment, facilities and budget - in the *GVStability* section of *GVAdvance*), conducted by the Faculty Salary and Budget Committee. Examples of self-study reports that illustrate the integration of assessment and strategic planning include: Liberal Studies (BA/BS), with UAC feedback; Philosophy (BA/BS), with UAC feedback; Criminal Justice (MS), with UAC feedback;

and Career Center, with UAC feedback.

Additional Assessment Mechanisms

Complementing the university-level review process, many individual units and colleges have their own active assessment committees responsible for the planning and execution of student learning outcomes assessment efforts. Each college Dean's Office works with the UAC and the Office of the Provost to ensure faculty and staff are actively involved in the assessment efforts for the units within the college. On-demand professional development in the area of assessment of student learning is provided by the UAC, the Office of Planning, Assessment and Accreditation (in the Office of the Provost), and the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC). In addition to face-to-face consultations with individuals or units and online resources are provided and updated regularly.

As part of the curriculum approval process, all new course and curricular revision proposals are accompanied by a syllabus of record. The syllabus of record must contain learning objectives that complete the sentence, "After successful completion of this course students will be able to...." Course learning objectives align with the program's student learning outcomes. The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and FTLC websites provide helpful materials for faculty proposing courses and for committees reviewing proposals.

The Division of Student Services conducts internal and external assessments of its departments on a regular cycle; the Office of Student Life assesses student learning in its programmatic efforts and its Community Service Learning Center regularly evaluates programs with community partners using the AAC&U VALUE rubrics.

Recent Improvements to the Assessment Process

The processes and tools for reporting and tracking strategic planning and assessment activities were revamped and improved in 2016. Extensive campus feedback indicated the need for a system that better aligned institutional planning with student outcomes assessment, and for a better tool to track the planning and assessment activities. Prior to 2016, program/unit self study reporting was regularly conducted, but done in a rotational format with assigned programs/units submitting an assessment of outcomes report every three years and a self-study report once per six-year cycle. However, this cycle of reporting was not aligned with strategic planning for the institution, and the strategic planning process was not systematically recorded in a common format. Faculty and staff requested a tool with better navigation and better reporting functions than the *WEAVEOnline* system that was used since 2008 (examples of assessment work from *WEAVEOnline* include: Studio Art (BA/BS/BFA),Integrated Science (BS), Economics (BA/BS), Product Design Engineering (BSE), Medical & Bioinformatics (MS), Criminal Justice (MS),Student Life, University Libraries). Several vendor systems were reviewed, including LiveText and Chalk and Wire which are used by the College of Education and the School of Social Work, respectively. However, none of these systems were found to meet the university's needs. Therefore, a new reporting and review system captured in the *GVAdvance* site was built in-house. *GVAdvance* aligns strategic planning, assessment of outcomes, resource analysis, and self-study, providing stronger integration of these activities as well as better usability and reporting.

**GVSU uses information gained from assessment to improve student learning.**

Continuous improvement is a standard component of the assessment process. The following are examples demonstrating the use of assessment information to improve student learning.

Institution-Level Examples

**General Education:** From 2013-2017, the university's Quality Initiative project focused on improving the assessment of learning outcomes in the GE Program, introducing standardized rubrics, and increasing faculty involvement in the process. Data were collected from faculty assessors for over 11,000 students in 222 courses between 2013-2016. The Quality Initiative Report and a more detailed report describe the changes to the GE Program and the assessment processes that were made to improve student learning including modifying rubrics and student learning outcomes. The results were used to establish a baseline and targets for student performance for each student learning outcome. For the 2016-2019 assessment cycle, GEC modified the Course Assessment Report to prompt faculty to reflect on how they will revise their teaching and assessment based on what they learned from the previous assessment and how they plan to modify their teaching or assessment (ex. of faculty who have made changes). GEC continues to make programmatic changes and support faculty development activities to improve student performance across all of the learning outcomes. The Quality Initiative Report was endorsed by the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, Office of the Provost, UAS, and Student Senate.

**Student Complaints:** The Committee for Review of Student Complaints was established in 2017, and at its meeting in February 2018, complaints were reviewed and a number of systems, processes, or policies were improved, including:

- **Avoiding conflicts between university events and religious holidays:** While GVSU policy holds that major events are not to be scheduled on religious holidays, student complaints were received about the scheduling of a major event in March 2017. To help reduce the likelihood of such mistakes occurring in the future, a detailed version of the university calendar is distributed to faculty, staff, and administrators. Conference services has also adopted a practice of consulting the calendar when booking major events.

- **Exam schedule concerns:** In 2017, several first-year students wrote letters of complaint about their exam schedule, reporting that they had exams on different campuses during back-to-back time slots, or because they had three or more exams in one day.  The Registrar and the Office of the Provost worked together to revise the exam schedule website to clarify the mechanism by which students can request alternate exam times.

- **Graduation delays for Allied Health Sciences (AHS) students:**  In 2018, two AHS students complained because they believed they were ready to graduate but were not because they failed to declare the 'general emphasis' necessary for the major. Although the catalog and advising materials clearly state that the emphasis must be declared, there was no process in place to catch an oversight made by students. Beginning Winter 2018, AHS Advising was charged with actively seeking out students working toward the AHS degree who had not yet declared the emphasis, notifying them to declare the emphasis.

Undergraduate Examples

In 2014, the Modern Languages and Literatures department conducted an extensive self-study that resulted in improvement of student writing in the program. Prior to 2013, students in French, German, and Spanish were struggling with the Writing subarea of the Michigan Test for Teacher

Certification (MTTC). A small-scale study of 300-level composition courses revealed that students' proficiency levels in spontaneous writing weren't at the expected level. It was recommended that instructors teaching the composition courses give students more opportunities to practice spontaneous writing. Writing scores on the Spanish MTTC improved steadily from 50% passing in 2013-2014 to 77% in 2014-2015. A follow-up study in the composition courses was conducted in Winter 2017. Findings showed that students' writing skills in spontaneous format improved, with a 100% pass rate on the writing subarea of the MTTC.

The Writing Department pairs faculty to examine learning outcomes in a course, reporting to the rest of the faculty the assessment findings and facilitating discussion about improving teaching and learning. One pair assessed students' team presentations in an introductory professional writing course, finding that students excelled in developing content and visuals for their presentations but struggled in delivery. Teaching recommendations to improve students' mastery of these areas included: peer review of team presentation delivery "drafts" ahead of final delivery for a grade, and clarification of terminology and rhetorical strategies to emphasize across sections in this introductory course and in later writing courses.

For the Classics Department, a notable outcome of the self-study process was how the unit demonstrated accountability to external audiences and constituencies. The conceptual map of the departmental work as it relates to these interrelationships has proven to be a powerful visual for communication as well as a nonlinear way of evaluating the unit's accomplishments and assessment strengths and weaknesses. The process and product of this student-centered assessment project are models for other units to follow.

In 2015 the Liberal Studies Department found students in LIB 495: Capstone underperformed in either integrative learning or critical thinking in terms of their thesis writing or integrative statement. As a result, LIB 301: Interdisciplinary Research Methods was added to the core curriculum. As reported in 2017, student performance has since improved and faculty continue to refine instruction of the integrative assignment and strengthen a departmental rubric to better align with the goals of the assignment, ensuring multiple instructors share common expectations of student work.

In addition to formal assessment reports, College of Education programs regularly review data, including course embedded assessments, MTTC scores, and feedback from stakeholders. Curricular changes resulting from assessment data analysis include: (a) creation of distinct sections of EDF 310: Organizing and Managing Classroom Environments for elementary and secondary education candidates so that the classroom management and the unique development needs and characteristics of students could be addressed; and (b) addition of more explicit instruction, resources, and guided practice in EDI 610: Advanced Study of Child Development around creating developmentally and culturally effective curriculum and learning experiences.

School of Engineering & University Libraries Collaboration: Faculty in the School of Engineering and the University Libraries collaborated to assess the ability of students to seek and effectively use information, demonstrating information literacy skills through an independent research project in a first-year engineering course.

The Bachelor of Nursing Practice program has an objective for graduates to implement holistic, patient-centered care that reflects an understanding of human growth and development, pathophysiology, pharmacology, medical management, and nursing management. In 2016, NCLEX-RN administered a new test plan that added a different question format. In response to the first time

test-taker pass rate findings, faculty incorporated this question format into their course delivery. It was found that between 2015-2016, NCLEX-RN first-time test-taker results decreased from 93.6% to 81.03%. In May 2017, new products supporting critical thinking/clinical judgement/clinical reasoning specific to the NCLEX-RN examination were evaluated. It was decided to replace the existing HESI exit examination with the Prep-U test bank, along with a comprehensive ATI learning resource and assessment platform. The result was between 2016 and 2017, NCLEX-RN first-time test-taker results increased from 81.03% to 89.95%.

Graduate Examples

In the School of Social Work, both the Grand Rapids and Traverse City MSW program options have made identical changes based on assessment data. In response to poorer student outcomes on four competencies, a practice was initiated in 2017-2018 to increase dialogue between faculty field liaisons and the generalist field education supervisors to achieve a better understanding of the common assignment in each course used for assessing each competency and the observable behaviors in the field practicum. Additional training is also being offered to all users of the ratings rubrics to address disparities between the classroom faculty and field education supervisors.

In the Seidman College of Business M.B.A. program, findings collected in 2015 around the program goal of international literacy demonstrated that improvement was needed to help students identify cultural issues within a business decision-making situation. Following a college-wide meeting, a plan to improve BUS 671: Global Competitiveness was implemented, including increased contact hours in teaching models and theories of national cultural differences and how to use them to gain cultural competency in business decision-making. Students were also required to apply the knowledge to at least two discussion cases and/or exercises improve their cultural competency.

Co-Curricular Examples

The Division of Student Services uses Standards of the Council for the Advancement of Higher Education (CAS), and Essential Learning Outcomes developed by the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U ) to evaluate its offerings. For example:

- Housing and Residence Life (HRL) assessed student knowledge related to student learning and development core values, finding that its Student Academic Mentors gained confidence in their understanding of educational and academic resources. This outcome and others are used to continuously improve the residential curriculum.
- A 2017 Campus Recreation assessment revealed unintended impacts of fee-based programs on Pell Grant eligible students as well as students of color, thereby implicating GVSU's commitment to inclusiveness.  As a result, Campus Recreation now offers some free exercise classes, a growing range of identity-based programming, and culturally-sensitive staff and student employee training.

- The Padnos International Center employs student peer advisors to guide students through the study abroad process. An assessment was conducted to determine the impact peer advisors had on students' professional lives after graduation. Based on the findings, following were some of the new activities added to the program: 1) created a networking group to allow current peer advisers to connect with past peer advisers to act as mentors, offer career advice and network; and 2) provided bi-weekly meetings to offer education on particular themes in international education

- The Fred Meijer Center for Writing and Michigan Authors provides writing tutorials by trained peer consultants. Peer consultants were trained in observation methods and 20 sessions were observed to determine the extent to which students left the center with a plan for revision. Findings indicated that sessions focused on more revision strategies than are captured in the end-of-session notes sent to faculty. When shared with the full staff of tutors, a number of changes were implemented: training consultants more thoroughly in how to help students build revision plans during the session; assisting consultants with time management strategies; and making technical adjustments to the session notes system to ensure more robust revision plans could be written and shared with students using the center's services.

Online/Hybrid Examples

In the College of Education, the graduate cognitive impairment endorsement program is a largely online program with six of the seven core courses offered online. In response to findings that showed students performing below threshold on two subtests of a state content knowledge test, program faculty implemented revisions to course content, assignments, and assessment rubrics to better address the subtests in several courses across the program. Student performance across a new three-part Academic Needs Report is now monitored closely and used to provide students in EDS 619: Programs for Mild Cognitive Impairment detailed feedback on their progress relative to the Council on Exception Children standards.

Additional Locations Example

Physician's Assistant Studies assesses student performance, in part, by reviewing students' performance on two national exams. In assessing the class of 2017 and comparing cohorts of students at the Health Campus location (primary location) and the Traverse City location, student supports and curricular changes were implemented: an intervention program was developed for students scoring below a defined threshold on the PACKRAT national exam; coverage of topics such as glaucoma and optic neuritis was strengthened in the pathophysiology course; and students were provided increased opportunities to develop treatment plans in the clinical applications and clinical problem-solving course series.

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

Assessment and improvement processes are designed and implemented by faculty and staff, ensuring student learning, as well as institutional, program/unit and course effectiveness. GVSU follows assessment best practices. Colleges and units often have designated faculty and staff as leaders in assessment, such as the Director of Assessment in the Seidman College of Business and the College of Engineering Chair of Assessment, Accreditation and Cooperative Education. All unit and program assessment reports are reviewed by UAC, which is composed of faculty and staff representatives. Further engagement of faculty/staff in assessment efforts occurs through the annual review of UAC reports by the University Academic Senate.

One best practice is obtaining external accreditation where appropriate. Accrediting agencies, such as the Accreditation Board of Engineers and Technology (ABET) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) provide invaluable professional development and as well as feedback opportunities that inform assessment efforts. GVSU has almost 40 programs and units that have

achieved and maintain accreditation and approvals from external review agencies.

Another best practice is to involve external constituencies. GVSU engages community members, employers and alumni through advisory boards and surveys. Faculty and staff lead these efforts, and the feedback is incorporated into unit and program assessment. (Examples: Hospitality and Tourism Management, Kirkhof College of Nursing and Annis Water Resources Institute .

Another best practice is the use of nationally normed surveys. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered every three years, with results informing student engagement campus-wide including in the Division of Student Services and the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies. Data from additional surveys administered by the Office of Institutional Analysis are publicly available and inform assessment activities campus-wide. The MySuccessCheck tool helped the HRL Office implement programming to address student homesickness, such as implementing Community Development Plans, to improve student retention.

GVSU also use nationally normed exams and standards to help guide curriculum decisions, resulting in high pass rates. Most of the health professions programs utilize data from national exams as an integral part of its assessment process (see physical therapy and medical laboratory science). The psychology department administers the ETS major field test on a regular basis as part of their assessment process. The Division of Student Services uses the Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Standards in planning and assessment work; and Campus Recreation specifically administered the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment through the American College Health Association as well the NASPA Assessment and Knowledge Consortium's Recreation and Wellness Benchmark Assessment.

GVSU uses standardized rubrics based on the AAC&U VALUE rubrics. The rubrics are used in the GE Program assessment and by academic programs when appropriate (see economics for written communication and biology for quantitative literacy).

Faculty and staff assessment efforts are shared through events such as the university-wide 2011 Assessment Conference and the 2018 Assessment Conference. Assessment results are also shared with the campus by the Robert & Mary Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center and the GE Committee.

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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

**GVSU has defined goals for student retention and completion that are ambitious but attainable.**

The commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention and completion rates is a strategic priority evident in GVSU's organizational structures and practices. From 2008-2015, enrollment goals were developed and monitored by a collaborative effort led by the Enrollment Development, Planning, and Assessment Committee (EDPAC) and guided by the EDPAC Enrollment Plan (2008-2012) and the Strategic Plan (2010-2015). EDPAC establishes general goals for retention and completion, as well as sets goals and fosters programs for specific student populations including FTIAC, transfer, undergraduate, graduate, athletes, domestic, minority, international, non-traditional students, and veterans. EDPAC subcommittees implement processes and policies to address the retention goals.

In 2015, the university structure changed to reflect the importance of enrollment management with the creation of the Division of Enrollment Development led by a vice president who reports directly to the president. The vice president oversees admissions, financial aid and scholarships, information technology, institutional analysis, records and registration, and student employment.

In the current Strategic Plan (2016-2021), Objective 1.A.3 calls for development of a more robust retention and completion plan. The 2017-2021 Retention and Completion Plan was approved by the President's Cabinet in June 2018. The plan defines the following outcomes for the institution:

Undergraduate

- Total annual undergraduate student credit hours will increase by 1% per year.
- The six-year completion rate will be at least 77% for the 2020 entering cohort.

Graduate

- Total annual graduate student credit hours will increase by 1% per year.
- The three-year and six-year graduation rates for graduate students will increase by 0.5% annually.

**We collect and analyze information on student retention and completion of our programs.**

Student retention and completion information is collected by the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA), including:

Completion rates

The six-year undergraduate completion rate for the 2011 cohort (most recent) was 65.3% which ranks in the top quarter of Michigan public universities. The three-year graduate program completion rate for the 2014-2015 cohort was 61.8%. Data are disaggregated by major and race, ethnicity, first generation, Pell eligible and other categories on the OIA website.

Retention rates

GVSU's first-year retention rate from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 was 83%, which ranks in the top third of Michigan public universities. The three-year graduate program retention rate for the 2014-15 cohort was 73.5%. Data are disaggregated by major, race, ethnicity, first generation, Pell eligible, and other categories on the OIA website.

An analysis of the retention and completion data is disseminated to the campus community through newsletters. Weekly reports sent to approximately 130 members of university leadership provide comparative enrollment data for the previous year. In addition, the OIA regularly updates enrollment and retention data on its website, and notifies leadership each semester after the official enrollment reports are completed. The transparency of this data allows units to make evidence-based decisions at the program level.

**GVSU uses information on student retention and completion to make improvements.**

GVSU is among the top regional public universities in the U.S. in terms of the proportion of entering undergraduate students who graduate. According to the most recent federal IPEDS graduation rate data, GVSU's six-year graduation rate is in the top 15% of public master's-level universities. The university has implemented a coordinated, multipronged approach to address retention and completion since the last comprehensive visit in 2008. Interventions include academic and co-curricular activities, student support services, and faculty/staff communication and training activities. Due to these efforts, overall undergraduate first-year retention rates for FTIAC students have increased from 83.0% in 2008 to 84.5% in 2017. Likewise, undergraduate 6-year completion rates have improved from 57% for those starting in 2002 to 66% for those starting in 2011. This success reflects decades of effort by faculty, staff, and students to develop a culture that supports and encourages students' success. Although overall rates have increased, there is still work to be done in closing the gap on retention and completion rates for some student populations, as described below.

Curriculum Examples

- Retention and completion data are components of the annual review conducted of all academic units by the Faculty Salary & Budget Committee, called stability reporting. These same data are reviewed annually by the Office of the Provost for each program. These data are used to make decisions, such as determining the replacement of vacated, or newly established, faculty lines for academic programs.
- Several new initiatives were implemented in 2017-18 following the annual review of the 2017-2021 Retention and Completion Plan.
  - Undeclared students will be offered more opportunities to explore majors by through the new option of a "major" of Exploratory Study.
  - A pilot program was begun in Fall 2018 to keep students on track by offering a series of late-start course sections to offer to students needing to drop a course after the regular drop/add period.
  - The Chemistry department began a "parachute" program to help students who are enrolled in CHM 115 change enrollment to CHM 100, if they find themselves struggling.
  - A First-Year Learning Community was piloted in 2018-2019, consisting of seven sets of paired thematic courses fulfilling general education requirements. The sections are taught by faculty with a passion for first-year student success, and classroom content is enhanced with co-curricular activities.

Student Support Examples

- Grand Finish: A special cash grant to assist students in good academic standing to encourage timely completion of their degree.
- MyPath: A tool to help students and their advisors with degree completion planning. It produces an easy-to-read and user-friendly degree audit, and gives students clearly defined information for selecting coursework toward degree requirements.
- MAP-works and mySuccessCheck: Early alert surveys that capture student feedback about their initial college experiences and have a strong predictive relationship with first-semester and first-year persistence. Responses indicating students at risk are immediately available to advising and student support staff, who implement actions to guide the student toward success. For example, Housing and Residence Life (HRL) increased community building programming in the first three weeks of the semester and followed up within 24 hours of students reporting homesickness on the survey. Between 2016 and 2017 they increased retention of homesick students from 42% to 86%. In 2018, the Social Justice Centers identify students of color who indicate social isolation and provide outreach and opportunities for participation in Laker Connections programming.
- Blueprint for Student Success: An interactive site map created to help future and current students better understand the pathway to degree completion and have quick access to the online resources to accomplish this goal. The Blueprint is built around a foundation of *challenging*, *supporting,* and *engaging* students, in and out of the classroom. HRL uses the Blueprint to focus its programmatic efforts, resulting in data showing students on campus are retained at a higher rate and have shorter times to graduation.
- Student Care Reports, managed by the Office of Student Conduct, Intervention and Support, allow faculty, staff, and students to refer students who may be struggling academically or personally. Staff subsequently conduct outreach to the student of concern to coordinate or provide necessary support and resources.
- The Academic Recovery Camp was launched in 2015 to provide a structured opportunity for students at risk of dismissal for poor academic performance to get guidance and instruction on academic and social behaviors to help them succeed. Of the 85 students who took the class the

first year, 84 passed and 61 returned the following fall.

- The Student Success Collaborative: This project combines predictive analytics pertaining to student persistence and success with resources and support for active intervention by faculty and staff advisors. Advisors have access to a dashboard interface for each student that highlights individualized challenges and accomplishments en route to degree completion. Recognizing the university's responsibility to support historically underrepresented student populations, the Social Justice Center staff have been trained on use of the Collaborative and as student success coaches to provide additional outreach and support.
- Student Retention Training for faculty and staff awareness and engagement in Winter 2018, a partnership between Office of the Provost, Division of Enrollment Management, and Office of Human Resources.
- The Laker for a Lifetime Initiative: This student philanthropy initiative bonds students to the university through focused events beginning with Summer Sendoffs and culminating with a celebratory "Toast with T. Haas" before graduation.

The following changes to institutional practices and organizational structures represent the university's commitment to routine improvements that facilitate persistence, retention, and encourage program completion.

- Restructuring academic advising and clarifying collaborative student support model. This university-wide approach of coordinated services, including multiple campus locations of advising services, allows the institution to meet a wide range of student needs. A website crafted by the GVSU Advising Council addresses the advising concerns of undergraduates, graduate students, professional staff, and faculty. An Advising Guidebook for Graduate Students was created to meet the advising needs of incoming and continuing graduate students.
- Student academic support services were reorganized into a centralized model and renamed the Student Academic Success Center. The center provides learning skills development, tutoring, and other instructional support. This unit focuses on the specific academic needs of select student populations including pre-major students, students exploring or transitioning through majors, first-generation students, student-athletes, and other academically at-risk student populations. Programs under the leadership of the Student Academic Success Center include the federally-funded TRIO Student Support Services for first-generation students of limited income and the LAKER Academic Success Center for student athletes.
- College- and unit-level decision making have also been impacted by the collection and broad dissemination of retention and completion information. Bottleneck courses have been identified and remedied where possible. A university-wide effort to streamline course prerequisites and coordinate course scheduling has been undertaken in recent years.
- An analysis of the seats in the upper division component of the General Education Program-- then called *Themes*--led to several actions to resolve students' difficulty in completing the requirement. The most recent General Education Program revisions also addressed the time to completion issue with creation of a more flexible *Issues* requirement.

Currently, retention rates for first-generation and other non-traditional undergraduates are below those of traditional students and have improved for some populations while declining for others. The university is actively working to reduce the gap in retention with several strategies:

- The Provost asked the Equity and Inclusion faculty governance committee to create professional development opportunities for faculty around student experiences of bias in the

classroom.
- The Social Justice Centers and Registrar's Office staff began connecting students with members of affinity groups in Winter 2018.

**GVSU's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention and completion reflect good practice**.

GVSU's best practices include collecting and using national standardized data and internal data, while making it easily available to campus users and the public. The university also disaggregates data for various populations.

The OIA facilitates data collection and analysis. We participate in several national data sets, including the Integrated Post secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), National Center for Education Statistics, Student Achievement Measure, and the NCAA. Longitudinal data is available, as well as data that compares GVSU to other Michigan public universities.

Where possible, GVSU also utilizes external benchmarks and best practice tools for tracking student retention and completion, and also for helping students track their own progress. GVSU subscribes to two services: Educational Advisory Board Student Success Collaborative and MyPath. Through these organizations, the institution has greater access to best practices in advising and tracking student success. External measures and reports are widely accessible to constituencies.

Retention and completion reports are available on the OIA website. The reports are easily understandable by the general public (Sample Graduate Program report).

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# 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

## Summary

GVSU demonstrates responsibility for quality of educational programs, employing a practice of regular program review, maintaining appropriate specialized accreditation for its programs that ensures the success of its graduates.

GVSU has established a comprehensive, continuous multi-level assessment structure, including clearly stated student learning goals and effective processes to inform the extent that student education and societal enrichment are occurring, and the quality of outcomes achieved as the result of the university's activities. Well-established assessment processes promote continuous improvement at all levels.

GVSU has a clear commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs. The enrollment plan includes well-defined and ambitious goals for retention and completion that are appropriate to the university's mission and the populations it serves.

## Sources

*There are no sources.*

# 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

# 5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

## Argument

**We have the appropriate resources to support our operations.**

GVSU grew to a population of over 25,000 students very rapidly considering the university was founded in 1960. (The first class of 228 students entered in the fall of 1963). In the past 10 years, enrollment has increased by 1,585 students.

GVSU has a very conservative approach to budgeting, with total assets in 2017 of $1,189,794, total liabilities of $438,922,382, and a 4.3% increase in operating revenues, resulting in a total net position of $710,570,000--an increase of 8.3% from 2015 to 2017. Increases in tuition revenue, housing, and dining revenue were partially offset by higher scholarship allowances, resulting in a net increase of $15.2 million. State appropriations increased by 4.5 percent as a result of $2.95 million in performance funding. Endowment cash and investments increased to $118.2 million as a result of strong financial markets, adding $13.9 million of investment income and generous donor support of $4.6 million in new gifts.

Annual university Financial Reports (2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013) are independently audited, posted on the university web site, and are presented annually at a meeting of the Board of Trustees. The most recent report affirms that university funds are spent in support of the mission to educate students. The university has received an A1 bond credit rating from Moody's Investors Service, and an A+ rating from Standard & Poors.

Although there are often more requests for positions than the budget allows, GVSU has made it a priority to provide the faculty and staff to support our endeavors. Since 2013, GVSU has added 64 permanent faculty lines in order to maintain a student-to-faculty ratio of 17:1. It has also added 39 new academic support staff positions over the same period.

A clear priority of the university has been to strategically plan for and fund additional facilities to support the mission. Since 2008, GVSU has funded and constructed over 1.27 million square feet of academic and support space, which includes new buildings and other physical and infrastructure improvements and remodeling projects. The majority of this work has been funded by GVSU and its generous donors. Additional funding for two projects (Kindschi Hall of Science and the 333 Michigan building) has included State of Michigan capital outlay funds.

GVSU continuously invests in its technology infrastructure. Information Technology (IT) supports the institution's educational mission by providing standard equipment and software in all instructional classrooms, at all GVSU locations, allowing faculty to easily transition between classrooms. IT provides and supports smart classrooms and specialized software in some labs and classrooms. Blackboard, the university's Learning Management System, provides a seamless, consistent and accessible platform for traditional, hybrid, and online courses.

IT has made several organizational changes in response to changing technologies and academic programs, such as converting positions for obsolete functions such as telephony; switching from hardware to software support; and creating an eLearning and Emerging Technology department to support faculty, staff and students. Additional software and positions have been added to support hybrid and online courses.

**GVSU'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.**

Resource allocations are solely connected to the educational purposes of GVSU's mission and are not affected by using resources for any other elective sources. GVSU is a public institution of higher education incorporated into the State of Michigan Constitution that does not report to a superordinate body. The Board sets tuition and has exclusive control of State appropriations.

**GVSU's goals are realistic in light of its organization, resources, and opportunities.**

Internal processes ensure the university meets its strategic planning goals. An overview of these efforts can be seen in the strategic plan annual progress reports (2015, 2016, 2017) posted publicly and presented to the Board of Trustees. As of the end of the second year of the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, there are 43 (81.1%) objectives that have had substantive or substantial progress. The strategic plan is treated as a living document and the contents of the plan are periodically reviewed for appropriateness given the current environment and the institution's resources.

The 2016-2021 Strategic Plan states an intent to maintain a stable annual student population of 24,000 to 26,000, while offering a combination of degrees consistent with a Carnegie Foundation classification as a "Masters Large" institution. GVSU will maintain its emphasis on student-centered

teaching and learning in support of its liberal arts mission. An example of how the strategic plan and resources align is that GVSU will not pursue classification as a "research university" or add medical or law programs. Also, it will maintain NCAA Division II status in athletics.

**Staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.**

The Human Resources Office has a standard hiring process for faculty, administrative staff and hourly staff, from recruitment to onboarding. All position descriptions include minimum qualifications to ensure that staff are appropriately qualified. Recruitment plans are approved by Human Resources, Affirmative Action and appointing officers.

Robust and dynamic professional development opportunities (for professional support staff and administrative staff) are a priority at GVSU. New faculty and staff are required to participate in an on-line or in-person orientation. Human Resources provides support to help supervisors with onboarding of new staff. Annually, each staff member is evaluated relative to their job responsibilities, GVSU values, and professional development goals through the Performance Development Process (ePDP). In addition, all employees complete mandatory training, such as Cyber Security and Sexual Harassment for Cleary Act Compliance. Faculty and staff with access to student records receive FERPA training from the Registrar's Office.

**GVSU has a well-developed process for budgeting and for monitoring expenses.**

Budget priorities are established by the President and Vice Presidents within the broad context of the university's Mission, Vision and Values Statement. Overall direction is also provided by the Board of Trustees.

The University Budget Committee develops and oversees the budget. The committee has a procedure for budget development and an accompanying budget life-cycle revised each year to ensure that critical budget decisions are made in a timely manner.

The budgeting process is informed by requests that originate at the departmental level and are then prioritized and advanced to the dean/appointing officer level. Requests must describe how the budget addition supports the university's Strategic Plan. Budgets are further prioritized by the appointing officer considering all unit requests and then advanced to the vice presidential level.

The budget is monitored and controlled in a variety of ways. Compensation, the most significant expense in the budget, follows a position control process that requires review and approval by the appointing officer, Human Resources, University Budgets, Affirmative Action, and Vice President. New positions added during the year require Budget Committee approval, and are monitored through the Treasurer's report, which is reviewed quarterly with the President, Provost, and Vice President for Finance.

A quarterly comparison of actual versus budgeted expenditures identifies any potential budget shortfalls. Actual expenditures are consistently below budget. Several budget monitoring tools are available to appointing officers throughout the year. Reports are available following each month-end close, and labor distribution reports are available following each payroll. University Budgets prepares monthly reports, shared with departments, for institutional expenses such as utilities, bus service, and

space rental. Some divisions have appointing officers review actual versus budgeted expenditures on a monthly or quarterly basis.

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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

**GVSU's Board of Trustees oversees the institution's financial and academic practices, fulfilling their legal and fiduciary responsibilities.**

The eight members of the Board of Trustees are appointed by the Governor of Michigan, each serving staggered eight-year terms. Members serve on one of two committees: the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. Additional subcommittees are appointed for special purposes such as presidential searches or nominations for Board officers. The bylaws and policies of the Board are available on the university website, as are the agendas and minutes of its meetings.

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee reviews policies and programs that have a significant impact on institutional activities, to recommend appropriate action to the Board, and to monitor results. The Finance and Audit Committee reviews proposed policies and board actions that have significant financial impact, to recommend appropriate action to the Board, and to monitor results.

The Secretary to the Board of Trustees and Executive Associate to the President conducts a thorough orientation for newly appointed Board members to ensure all members understand the structure, policies, and procedures that GVSU uses to guide its day-to-day operations. Board members periodically attend training such as that offered by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

Example items reviewed and approved by the Board include mission documents, strategic planning updates, personnel appointments, institutional policies, new academic degree programs, setting tuition and housing rates, capital construction, bond issues, endowment and investment spending, and annual appointment of external auditors.

The Board receives routine reports including the Annual Accountability Report, the Annual Financial Reports, and the Annual Federal Awards Audit Reports (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017). Trustees also receive updates on the university's progress in achieving strategic planning objectives.

**GVSU uses policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies in governance.**

University-wide policies governing the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff and students are collected and published on the University Policies website. It contains the President's Cabinet Policies, which includes the procedure for creating new policies and the policy approval process.

The Board of Trustees establishes policies that provide high-level guiding principles and direction for policies that are proposed by the administration. Board members are invited to participate on most major committees such as the Strategic Positioning Committee and the Assurance Argument Leadership Committee.

Faculty-led governance committees are essential to GVSU's operations. The University Academic Senate (UAS) is the highest faculty governance body. It makes recommendations to the Provost and/or the President. Senate membership consists of faculty members elected from and by the faculty of each college and the University Libraries, and students selected by the Student Senate, including the President of the Student Senate. The powers and duties of UAS include reviewing changes to the curriculum, changes to the academic organization of the university, recommendations regarding faculty personnel policy, budget matters, and other academic issues (see example).

To ensure that professional standards guide the university's decision making, numerous subcommittees compose, review, and oversee policies and proposals. The UAS has 11 standing committees. While each college has its own internal governance structure, the UAS standing committees serve the entire university and report via the Executive Committee (ECS) of the UAS. Committee members are elected annually and have policies that dictate the committee structure and membership to ensure that the university community is well represented. Every year the UAS provides annual charges to the 11 committees in addition to their standing charges.

GVSU has several administrative committees that provide institutional direction and achievement of mission and objectives: President's Cabinet, Provost's Cabinet, Budget Committee, and Enrollment Development Planning and Assessment Committee (EDPAC). In 2018, after noting declines in student retention, particularly for students of color, the long-time EDPAC structure was enhanced to focus specifically on student retention. In its place, the Provost and Vice President for Enrollment Development created a multi-layered structure to address both short- and long-term opportunities. A Student Experience Group was formed to ensure on-the-ground staff had opportunities to share student experiences and needs while providing input into retention strategies. A Steering Committee was created to oversee overall student retention strategies. A retention tactics plan, including a registration campaign was developed and implemented.

Two other committees help to shape GVSU policy: the Administrative/Professional Committee (A/P) and the Professional Support Staff Committee. The A/P committee, which has three standing subcommittees: Awards, Professional Development, and Salary and Benefits, meets monthly and actively engages in institutional governance through collaborations with UAS and other groups/individuals. The Professional Support Staff Development Committee provides workshops of two types to its members: Technical (e.g., Spreadsheets, Access, Powerpoint, SIS Training, Specialized Departmental Training) and Non-Technical (e.g., Conflict Management, Interpersonal Communication, Cultural Diversity). The committee also mentors new Professional Support Staff. To ensure all voices are included in deliberations, a Faculty/Staff Affinity Group Council, composed of representatives from the University's eight employee affinity groups, was established in 2016 to give regular feedback to the VP for Inclusion & Equity and Associate VP for Human Resources on university initiatives and policies, as well as share insights about campus climate.

GVSU students are represented by the Student Senate. The Student Senate is composed of 50 students who serve on seven different committees. The committees are Senate Resources, Finance, Campus Affairs, Educational Affairs, Diversity Affairs, External Relations, and Public Relations. The Student Senate works to:

- Investigate and resolve common student problems;
- Advocate for the inclusion of students in the overall policy and decision-making processes of the university community;
- Promote awareness of the role students play in the academic community;
- Enhance the quality and scope of education at the university both inside and outside the classroom; and
- Empower students with leadership opportunities.

The Student Senate represents the student voice to the university governing bodies, the administration, and the Board of Trustees in matters of institutional policies.

Administration, faculty, staff and students work collaboratively to set academic requirements, policy, and processes. A fundamental aspect of the university's operation is the principle of shared governance, including representation from all constituencies. Collaborative work is a hallmark of university governance. Policy revision and curricular changes often begin at the unit or department level and follow a well-established procedure including approvals from college-level committees, subcommittees of the UAS, and finally the UAS. UAS and its subcommittees have representation from the faculty, the student body and administration.

Recent accomplishments of this shared governance process include:

- Developing an Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee;
- Reorganizing the College of Education;
- Defining faculty accountability in the areas of significant focus and reassigned time;
- Further defining faculty service for consistency across units and colleges;
- Updating the graduate admissions policy;
- Adding required international components to all academic programs;
- Restructuring University Assessment Committee processes and membership;
- Reviewing retirement benefits, conducted by the Administrative/Professional Salary and Benefits Committee
- Implementing a new Fall Break, an initiative led by Student Senate
- Organizing an annual Teach-In around equity and inclusion on campus, led by Student Senate and University Academic Senate, engaging students, faculty and staff

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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

**GVSU ensures that resources are allocated in alignment with the university's mission and strategic priorities.**

The University Budget Office leads the development of the annual General Fund Budget, presented to the Board of Trustees for approval each year in July. The Budget Office coordinates the annual schedule, communicates due dates for budget requests, executes revenue and expenditure assumptions, and prepares various budget presentation materials for review and approval.

As part of these annual budget building procedures units are required to detail how their budget requests align with the institution's mission and specific institutional priorities. Budget requests are reviewed by the appropriate leadership team (Deans and Provost Office for Academic & Student Affairs, and Vice Presidents' offices for other divisions) and the University Budget Committee, chaired by the Provost, and then implemented in the operational budget process by the Board of Trustees.

**GVSU links processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.**

Strategic planning, as documented in GVPlan, guides assessment, evaluation, and budgeting processes at GVSU. As described in Criterion 1.A, the iterative strategic planning processes involves all constituents of the university and provides the framework and roadmap for how GVSU develops and structures its curricular, co-curricular and operational functions. The Assistant Vice President (AVP) for Academic Affairs is responsible for integrating Assessment, Accreditation and Planning efforts. The AVP works closely with the University Assessment Committee (UAC) ensuring the university is not only maintaining the short-term relevancy and impact of its program offerings, but consistently improving these programs to meet changing needs.

In collaboration with faculty governance committees and the university's administration, a

comprehensive institutional assessment program (documented in GVAssess ) spanning all locations and delivery modes is carried out. This on-going multilayered assessment process includes evaluation of learning outcomes, program/department effectiveness (ex. CLAS Dean's Report, FSBC Smart Growth, and CMB Graduate Council Review), and strategic budget allocations for facilities and personnel (ex. Health Campus expansion with budgeting, expansion of Digital Studio staffing in response to growth in online/hybrid course delivery).

**The strategic planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.**

Strategic planning, assessment and accreditation processes draw on perspectives from diverse internal and external stakeholders. Most recently, the 2016-2021 Strategic Planning Process included 10 "strategic positioning conversations" with students, faculty, administrators, staff, and others on campus, as well as a Community Survey sent to advisory boards, community partners, and other community stakeholders. The input from constituents informed development of the plan. For example, a theme that emerged from the strategic positioning conversations around diversity, resulted in development of Institutional Outcome B: Grand Valley is Diverse and Inclusive. Transparency of the pursuit of these ideals is illustrated by regular reporting to a range of internal and external constituents and inclusion on public websites.

**GVSU plans on the basis of a sound understanding of our current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in revenue sources, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.**

GVSU actively engages in resource estimation and planning through a variety of offices and committees, and ensures that budgetary contingencies are in place to manage changing economic circumstances.

Managing enrollment fluctuations
The Enrollment Development Planning and Assessment Committee (EDPAC) is the goal-setting and planning group for enrollment development at the university. Several leadership groups across the university work actively on projects and tasks initiated by EDPAC. The assessment work of enrollment development and action plans are implemented through these groups. The leadership groups report their progress to EDPAC on a regular basis. The groups are instrumental in setting action items and performance indicators. Each group is represented by members from EDPAC and includes members from across the university based on the work of the group and expected outcomes.

EDPAC bases its assessment work from projections developed by the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA). OIA undertakes a systematic review of the various factors that impact enrollment. These factors include graduation rates in the source communities for student recruiting, achievement rates within the student population, application flow, yield dynamics for enrollment and credit hours, retention rates, and graduation rates. Included in the analysis is the availability of faculty and capacity of the teaching spaces. The projections are initially generated in September (about nine months before the adoption of the official budget), then are reviewed and adjusted at established points during the budget development process as additional data become known. This is done in consultation with the Vice President for Enrollment Development, Associate Vice President for

Admissions, and other university leaders. The adjustments account for changes in the institutional environment, changes within the institution, or early indicators of shifting enrollment behavior. On average, the projections are accurate to within 0.7%.

Managing fluctuations in state support
When developing its operating budget, the University Budget Committee develops various scenarios that reflect the impact of enrollment, tuition, and state support. The committee analyzes detailed scenarios during the budget setting process with particular emphasis placed on the impact of potential changes in state support.

The overall budget process includes assessment of the budget contingencies and other reserve funds. The annual operating budget is developed with a predetermined contingency allocation. The contingency is intended to address the uncertainty within the enrollment process. Reserve funds are identified and allocated by the operating unit. For instance, the building and ground unit has a reserve fund designed to address unanticipated failure of equipment or an unusually seasonal weather. Reserve funds are permitted to grow; excess reserve funds are utilized for one-time non-recurring expenditures. Spending of the reserve funds is permitted with approval of senior administrators and the University Budget Committee according to University Designated and Plant Reserve Funds Policy

Final budget approval, as already mentioned above, occurs at an annual Board of Trustees meeting. The university submits a five-year Capital Outlay Plan to the State of Michigan annually. This plan is also typically approved at a fall Board of Trustees meeting.

**Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.**

Emerging technologies
Consistent with the university's strategic objectives, IT assesses technological needs, and supports university planning efforts across the institutional continuum. IT strives to anticipate capacity needs to improve scalability of systems, as well as consistently evaluate emerging technologies that contribute to teaching excellence while enhancing student success. The vision statement of the eLearning and Emerging Technologies team is to be "nationally recognized as a leader in the application of innovative instructional technologies that facilitate the next generation of teaching and learning." The eLearning team includes institutional support for: 1) instructional design, 2) the effective application of instructional technology, 3) learning management system enhancement, 4) digital media development, and 5) the purposeful exploration of emerging technologies through the Atomic Object Technology Showcase.

Maximizing cyber safety (and the ethical use of technology) and minimizing potential threats is a growing IT focus. This is operationalized through policy development and implementation, hardware and software enhancements, mandatory cyber security training for GVSU faculty and staff, and regular communications with university faculty and staff. Given the satellite campuses, the mobility of technology consumers, and the diversity of devices, the IT Technical Support team focuses on how the university's network communicates across institutional sites and how to facilitate easy and secure access to data regardless of location. These advances may be through new hardware (e.g., new Windows laptops with encrypted drives that mask whether a user is on- or off- campus, and secure access to campus data from on or off campus) or new software to enhance data security. The IT

Technical Support and Academic Support teams facilitate at least annual updates to the system, including Blackboard upgrades, and appropriate classroom technology upgrades.

Shifting demographics

The shifting demographics relevant to GVSU include the increasing emphasis on health care employment opportunities in the region and declining number of high school graduates in Michigan.

In response to emerging needs and careers in health care, the institution supported the development of online and hybrid education and expansion of health care programs and facilities. For example, Allied Health Sciences (AHS) developed new programs, including Health Information Management, Respiratory Care in a cooperative with Muskegon Community College), and Histotechnology. This department has also engaged with members of the regional community by offering AHS courses through the Kent Intermediate School District (KISD) "Early College Program" and Rockford Public Schools with dual-enrollment courses, and the GVSU Traverse City location, where the AHS emphasis in Pre-Physician Assistant Studies is offered to complement the satellite graduate Physician Assistant Studies program approved for the Traverse City location.

In 2015, GVSU created an Enrollment Development Division headed by a Vice President for Enrollment Development position, signaling the central role of admissions, retention, and completion in the university's strategic vision. EDPAC carries out the strategic enrollment management work of the university, and is supported by the work of its various topical subcommittees. Despite declining populations of high school graduates, GVSU has maintained its enrollment, while ensuring retention and graduation rates rank us as one of the top performers in the State of Michigan. This has been accomplished, in part, due to an increase in scholarships.

In order to increase student access and retention, GVSU has an enhanced focus on programming for nontraditional learners. The Center for Adult and Continuing Studies was recently restructured to coordinate these efforts and now reports to the Office of the Provost. The center operates several regional locations across the state offering leadership degree completion, skill training and certification or remote participation in traditional programs. Additionally the institution has a well-established program of support for veterans and active duty military individuals. One relatively unique program is the Military Police Veterans Police Academy that offers military police veterans the training needed to transition effectively to civilian law enforcement service.

Globalization

Globalization is an integral part of the efforts at GVSU, with many of these efforts coordinated by the Padnos International Center. In 2012, the Provost appointed a Global GV task force as part of the American Council on Education Internationalization Lab to assess the university's internationalization efforts. Many of the recommendations are being implemented, including increased recruitment efforts for international students. GVSU faculty, staff and students also have a long tradition of participation in study abroad programs. As a part of the General Education program, students are required to take courses in the Global Perspectives category that provide a basis for understanding and interpreting the variety of world cultures, institutions, societies and issues. In 2017, GVSU developed a new program in Global Studies and Social Impact.

In the context of changing federal guidelines that affect international study and travel, employment of international faculty, and enrollment of international students, GVSU remains committed to continuing its long tradition of study abroad and welcoming international students and faculty to campus. These activities enrich campus and prepare graduates to succeed wherever their learning

takes them. Engagement with the world is part of GVSU's mission, is a hallmark of GVSU, and has strong support from university administration.

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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

**GVSU systematically develops and documents evidence to improve performance.**

Since 2007, the President has issued an annual Accountability Report to demonstrate how the state and its people are receiving excellent returns on their investment. GVSU continues to be efficient and student-centered while providing a powerful economic catalyst. Enrollment data assists in understanding the composition of the institution and supports planning exercises. The website of the Office of Institutional Analysis is a rich repository of information reporting performance.

The university produces high-quality graduates to improve Michigan's future. As recent Accountability Reports indicate, graduates in Finance, Military Police Basic Training, Nursing, Physician Assistant, Police Academy, and Speech and Language Pathology have pass rates of 100% on their licensure and certification exams. Nearly 95% of recent graduates are employed or in graduate school, 86% of our graduates are employed in Michigan. GVSU is responsible for 13% of the increase in bachelor's degree awards in the past 10 years and remarkably, with the least state investment per degree. The most recent figures show that the state invested $11,698 per degree. The state average is $19,030 per degree with the most costly at $31,463.

GVSU monitors progress on the strategic plan annually through a publicly available strategic planning website and an annual progress update given to the Board. The April 2018 report concludes, "Grand Valley was successful in launching activities and making progress on most all of the 53 objectives in the 2016–2021 Strategic Plan. There are 43 (81.1%) objectives that have been evaluated as having attained a level of substantive progress or substantial progress, meaning that the objective has been achieved with at least 50% completion in the second year of the plan. This type of progress is commendable for the second year of a six-year plan. The university is on track to complete the work needed to accomplish the objectives, and realize the Institutional Outcomes, of the strategic plan by 2021."

The Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC), a standing subcommittee of the University Academic Senate (UAS), works to provide an informed understanding of the financial health of the university. The committee's reports and guidance help units and programs improve operations and performance. Along these lines, the FSBC, in an effort to better inform faculty of the costs of curricular decisions and stimulate faculty involvement and innovation, provides units with stability metrics. Units are asked to reflect on the five year trends in each of these metrics and provide commentary on the analysis. A 2016 Resource Analysis from the Biology Department provides an example of how a department can use this analysis to understand and improve its performance and operations. This process has since been integrated into the *GVAdvance* site within the section called GVStability (ex. Chemistry).

Another example of how GVSU documents performance is the FSBC annual report to faculty at the end of each academic year. This report includes progress on annual charges to the committee (such as monitoring long-term academic unit stability), comparisons of faculty salaries with Michigan institutions, explanations of the university budget, and analysis of faculty compensation and budget constraints.

GVSU's achievements are also recognized and documented by external constituents. In 2014, the Business Leaders for Michigan (BLM) partnered with the President's Council, State Universities of Michigan (currently Michigan Association of State Universities) to dig deeper into the measures and outcomes that public universities generate. GVSU ranked Best in Class Performance from BLM in high retention rates, high graduation rates, degrees awarded in critical skills, low administrative costs, and high economic impact.

Starting in 2012, Governor Snyder declared that 50% of new money to be appropriated to higher education would be awarded on the basis of performance measures compared to our National Carnegie Peers. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, for the sixth straight year, GVSU was awarded performance-based funding. GVSU was recognized by the State of Michigan for high 6-year graduation rates, total degrees awarded, institutional support as percentage of expenditures, and percentage of students receiving Pell grants.

GVSU further develops and documents evidence of performance by engaging an independent auditing firm to conduct an audit on internal control over financial reporting and compliance and an audit of financial statements. The most recent audit identified no deficiencies in internal control that would be considered weaknesses.

**GVSU learns from its operational experience and apply that learning to improve effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability.**

In keeping with the mission, a hallmark of GVSU's operation has been continuous improvement, rooted in evidence-based decision making. GVSU carefully monitors the environment in an effort to respond appropriately to emerging trends so the university plays an integral role in Michigan's growth and change.

General Education Assessment
Part of GVSU's HLC Quality Initiative focused on improving the quality of the General Education (GE) program by performing assessment of student learning outcomes across all 222 courses in the program. This initiative introduced standardized rubrics to assess student learning and increased the compliance rate of faculty who collect assessment data to nearly 98%. The student assessment data has also been instrumental in charting new pathways for fulfilling course requirements through study abroad. The Quality Initiative has successfully established an on-going assessment program between the General Education Committee and the University Assessment Committee to further expand the use of the skills rubrics to additional departments, and compare data to national sources (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement).

Expanded Health Care Programs and Facilities
Over the past 20 years, Grand Rapids has intentionally invested in becoming a world-class health care destination. As a result the university have experienced increased demand for its health-related programs. GVSU's response has been multifaceted, observing enrollment trends, resource allocation,

staffing, developing partnerships and academic structures. Since 2007, there has been an accompanying allocation of faculty positions to STEM and health units, including 146 new faculty lines. Such additions ensure GVSU offers enough opportunities for students choosing to study in these areas.

In 2003, GVSU expanded its Grand Rapids presence with the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences, located in the heart of Medical Mile. From 2011 through 2014 GVSU purchased over six acres of land adjacent to our facilities on the Medical Mile and campus buildings in downtown Grand Rapids. The Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall at 500 Lafayette and a yet-to-be-named building at 333 Michigan will add much-needed instructional space for health programs. Additionally Kindschi Hall of Science opened on the Allendale Campus in 2015.

The university has expanded the number of health care-related programs, including professional doctorates in nursing practice, physical therapy, audiology and occupational therapy; masters degrees in public health and speech language pathology; and undergraduate programs such as sonography and health information management. Each new program requires a proposal that includes evidence of its desirability and feasibility, as well as a detailed budget. In addition, the Vice Provost for Health position was created to promote collaboration with  community partners and organizations to provide innovative clinical opportunities for GVSU students.

Inclusion and Equity Efforts
One of the six core values of the Division of Inclusion and Equity is to advance the university's culture of assessment and data-driven decision-making. Diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice are not just rhetoric at Grand Valley. Enacting equity requires a continual process of learning, disaggregating data, and questioning assumptions about relevance and effectiveness. The University's campus climate actions webpage provides updates on data-driven recommendations. In addition, focus groups with employees and students from underrepresented backgrounds have been held. In 2017 and 2018, the University hosted multiple employees of color forums, attended by President's Cabinet, to obtain a "pulse check" on climate. Themes and recommendations for action were identified at these forums and communicated back to participants. In addition, all Division of Inclusion and Equity programming includes assessment and evaluation that result in program enhancements and require connections to the university strategic plan (ex. Inclusion Advocates program evaluation, Social Justice Center Co-Curricular Report and Social Justice Center Year-End Report).

Growth of Sustainability Initiatives
Sustainability is identified as an institutional value in the GVSU Strategic Plan, and the university has grown substantially relative to this value since the last comprehensive visit. In 2008, GVSU became a signatory to the American College and University Presidents Climate Agreement, as well as a charter member of the American Association of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Reporting System (STARS). In 2015, GVSU's Sustainable Community Development Initiative became the Office of Sustainability Practices, indicating a shift from an initiative to integrated sustainable development best practices across the campus and in the community. Through numerous efforts including development of curricula and courses, a sustainable agriculture project, and improved campus operations, GVSU raised its AASHE STARS score from 54.2 (silver status) in 2011 to 69.4 (gold status) in 2017. In August 2018, the Sierra Club ranked GVSU 56th nationally on its Cool Schools list, at the top for Michigan universities.

Strengthening Graduate Education

In response to GVSU's 2008 HLC comprehensive review, the following have been developed:

- New policies and procedures around graduate education.
- Support for student professional development.
- Faculty qualifications to teach graduate courses.
- Expanded graduate education content in university catalog.

Additionally, graduate education has been further enhanced by:

- Developing a graduate program review process.
- Initiating combined degree programs.
- Fostering graduate student participation in shared governance.

GVSU recognizes there is still work to be done. In the 2008 HLC comprehensive review report, it was noted that "neither the staffing structure of the campus nor the teaching load of the faculty comport well with the migration to a more research-oriented expectation that will inevitably find expression in promotion, tenure and merit documents, as well as scientific instrumentation needs." This continues to be a challenge. The Graduate Council and academic administration are still working to address how supervision of graduate student research is recognized in faculty workload and resource allocation.

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# 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

## Summary

A challenge GVSU faces is the investment in human resources and infrastructure to support its mission and future plans. GVSU leads Michigan's public universities in enrollment growth over the past 15 years with a 62.5% growth in our student population. GVSU has the second-largest population of Michigan-resident undergraduate students among the state universities.

GVSU has been careful and strategic in its budgeting process so as not to strap students with excessive tuition increases. It is currently just below the middle of the 15 Michigan public universities in annual tuition costs. This challenge can best be illustrated by the "scissor chart" in the 2014-2015 Accountability Report and the Appropriation per Student Chart, pages 24 and 25. The scissor chart got its name by the tangents of the two data points demonstrating the ratio of state aid versus tuition paid by GVSU students. In 1997 there was a near 50-50 split. In 2014, 82.5% of the two sources is derived from tuition revenue, with 17.5% coming from the State.

Another view of this challenge is state appropriations per student, where GVSU sits last among the 15 state schools. In 2014-15 GVSU received $2,835 per student, the state average was $5,079 and the highest appropriation per student in Michigan was $8,176. A sobering fact: in 2010-2011 GVSU's appropriation per student was higher than it was in 2014.

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