2018 Comprehensive Self-Study Report

Utah State University

Submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
February 2018
YEAR SEVEN SELF-STUDY

Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

February 2018
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Utah State University (USU), Utah’s land-grant and space-grant university, was founded in 1888 as the Agricultural College of Utah, later becoming Utah State Agricultural College. The college awarded its first advanced degree in 1916, and bestowed its first doctoral degrees in 1950. The state legislature designated the name change to Utah State University in 1957. Over a period of 129 years, more than 850,000 students have enrolled, as the institution has evolved from a small, agricultural college to a major, multi-campus, research university that is nationally and internationally recognized for its intellectual and technological leadership in land, water, space and life enhancement. The university has been continuously accredited for 100 years, starting with the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools.
Utah State University integrates teaching, research, extension and service to meet its unique role as Utah’s land-grant university. Students are the focus of the university as they seek intellectual, personal and cultural development. More than 27,600 students enrolled at USU in fall 2017 including over 3,000 graduate students. The university’s main campus, in Logan, comprises the majority of enrolled students with almost 18,000. In addition, there are more than 8,000 students enrolled at regional campuses and through distance education with approximately 2,000 students at USU’s comprehensive regional college, USU Eastern, with campuses in Price and Blanding. Those enrolled include more than 19,000 Utah students representing all 29 counties. The balance of USU’s students are from every state in the nation and 78 countries. The university offers 162 undergraduate and 127 graduate degrees, with numerous professional and specialized accreditations. The most popular majors at USU include general studies, economics, communicative disorders and deaf education, mechanical engineering, psychology and elementary education. USU also has a national and international reputation for its education, agricultural, aerospace engineering and natural resources academic programs.

Utah State University is a member of an eight-institution state system of higher education governed by the Utah State Board of Regents (Regents). In addition, each institution is served by an institutional Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor. The Board of Trustees acts in conjunction with the institutional president to assure quality and effective operations. The university has been accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) since 1924, and many of its degree programs are also approved by other specialized accrediting associations.

USU’s main campus is located in the city of Logan in northern Utah’s Cache Valley, 80 miles north of Salt Lake City. The surrounding area, including ski resorts, lakes, rivers and mountains, makes Cache Valley one of the finest recreational environments in the nation. For a region with a population of about 114,000, the community and the university offer a spectacular array of first-rate cultural offerings provided by visiting artists and touring companies, faculty, students and members of the local community. In addition, Cache Valley is a very safe location as Logan ranked #1 Safest Metro in the West by Law Street, May 2015. USU is an integral part of local economies and communities in Utah, and its contributions are appreciated by local residents, resulting in a unique living-learning community.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching remains the imperative for the university, in addition to research, extension and service. The mission of Utah State University is to provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate instruction, excellent general education and specialized academic and professional degree programs. "This corps of loyal and devoted instructors," wrote historian Joel E. Ricks on the eve of the institution’s semi-centennial, "sought . . . to give the students the mental stimulus that . . . would encourage them to face life unafraid." Ricks' declaration rings as true today as it did in 1938. The university’s mission statement affirms that “academics come first” and the vision statement aspires that USU will be “internationally recognized for its exceptional
learning opportunities.” Furthermore, USU Board of Trustees policy specifies that instruction of students is “the foremost activity of Utah State University.” Consequently, USU is committed to preparing students to serve the people of Utah, the nation and the world.

Classroom instruction is only part of a student's experience at USU. The university has been engaged in “high-impact practices” before the term was coined. Since 1890, students have participated in academic, research and social organizations. Students began publishing a newspaper in 1902 and drafted a constitution for student government in 1908, the predecessor of the current Utah State University Student Association (USUSA). The goal of a land-grant college, according to the institution's first president, Jeremiah W. Sanborn, is not just to provide training for students, but to provide for their "liberal education as . . . citizen[s]." All 16 of the university's presidents, from Sanborn through current President, Dr. Noelle E. Cockett, have embraced this charge.

RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY

Research and discovery are distinguishing characteristics of the university as USU provides nationally and internationally acclaimed programs of basic and applied research. USU engages in research to further the quest for knowledge and to help society meet its scientific, technological, environmental, economic and social challenges. The university is ranked by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a doctoral university with higher research activity. USU received more than $243 million in research awards during FY 2016. Research is a focus dating back to the start of Utah Agricultural Experiment Station operations in 1890. Hands-on learning opportunities for students are plentiful because of the scope of USU’s research activity. Based on a survey of graduating students in 2016, more than 1,400 undergraduate students engaged in research projects and creative works outside of classroom activities.

Discovery permeates all of USU’s eight academic colleges and 41 academic departments – from land, water and space to quality of life, human capital and economic development. Discovery at USU supports a diverse number of specialized centers and laboratories in the sciences, education, business, humanities, agriculture, natural resources and engineering.

EXTENSION AND ENGAGEMENT

Outreach to Utah’s citizens through extension and service programs is central to the university’s mission. The university’s outreach programs provide to individuals, communities, institutions and industries throughout the state services that help improve technology, the environment and quality of life. A distinguishing characteristic of USU is engagement with communities and people in economic development, improvements to quality of life and human capital. This is perhaps most evident with the USU Extension, which was founded in 1914 as the Utah Cooperative Extension Service and disseminates information and provides education through offices located throughout the state. USU Extension offices provide services to state
residents in all 29 offices of Utah’s 29 counties. However, the scope of USU’s off-campus engagement is much greater. International engagement has been an integral part of the university’s work and history, dating back to the aftermath of World War II, when it was selected to help develop the agricultural resources of Iran under the Point IV Program. By extensive engagement in the practical application of knowledge, the university and its faculty are preserving the historical land-grant tradition of providing service and expertise to the state, the nation and the world.
PREFACE

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

Utah State University has had several institutional changes since the 2013 Year Three Report. There have been significant leadership and administrative changes as USU has a new president. In December 2016, Dr. Stan Albrecht, who served as president for USU for nearly 12 years, retired. He was succeeded by Dr. Noelle E. Cockett, the 16th president of Utah State University, who began her official tenure in January 2017. Dr. Cockett has served USU in faculty and administrative roles since 1990. Most recently, Dr. Cockett served as executive vice president and provost at USU. Prior to that, she served as vice president for extension and agriculture, dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, and director of the Utah Agriculture Experiment Station. Dr. Laurens H. Smith will serve as interim provost of USU until completion of a national search for an executive vice president and provost. Dr. Smith has worked at USU in administrative roles since 2003, including interim dean of the School of Graduate Studies and, for the past several years, executive senior vice provost. A search is currently in progress for a new executive vice president and provost, the position vacated by President Cockett.

Table 1: Administrative Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year Appointed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Dr. Noelle E. Cockett</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>Dr. Laurens H. Smith</td>
<td>Interim, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President and Director of Athletics</td>
<td>John Hartwell</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean, College of Science</td>
<td>Dr. Maura E. Hagan</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Counsel</td>
<td>Mica McKinney</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean, College of Engineering</td>
<td>Dr. Jagath Kaluarachchi</td>
<td>Interim, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Dr. Joseph P. Ward</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Government Relations</td>
<td>Dr. Neil N. Abercrombie</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Academic and Instructional Services</td>
<td>Dr. Robert W. Wagner</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President for Advancement</td>
<td>Matthew T. White</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant Institutional Changes

R401 Process

A substantial change to the R401 process for academic program proposal review and approval went into effect in fall 2017. During the Utah legislature’s 2017 session, a senate bill was passed and signed into law by the governor that delegated more institutional decision-making powers to the USU Board of Trustees for approval of new academic programs and changes to existing programs. Previously, all academic program proposals required approval by both the Board of Trustees and the Utah State Board of Regents. Under the new policy, only proposed programs that fall outside the institutional mission must be approved by the Regents. Academic program proposals within the institutional mission are now sent only to the Trustees for approval. The Office of the Commissioner for Higher Education (OCHE) must still be notified of all academic program changes, and program changes continue to be submitted to NWCCU for pre-approval in line with the Commission’s Substantive Change Policy and procedures.

Implemented Civitas

Civitas Learning is an analytics platform and tool-set that identifies multiple indicators driving student success. Utah State University has partnered with Civitas Learning to analyze historical and current data to help students be more successful. This initiative was led by Academic Instructional Services (AIS). The Civitas platform processes data to find valuable student success insights often missed due to their complexity. The goal is to use this complex data to drive decision-making that will increase student retention as well as improve the student experience.

RESPONSE TO TOPICS PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED BY THE COMMISSION

This section responds to the recommendations of the Commission following the NWCCU Year One and Year Three Reports.

Recommendations Following the Year One Self-Study

1. The evaluation panel recommends that the university reword its objectives as measurable accomplishments and develop specific measurable indicators, benchmarks and criteria for each core theme, assigning specific designations of an acceptable level of performance for each outcome indicator and outlining in clear terms for each what successful mission fulfillment looks like (Standard 1.A.2, 1.B.2).

Utah State University carefully reviewed its objectives and indicators in light of the recommendation by the evaluation panel. Full details of the panel’s observations were discussed by the University Assessment Coordinating Council, the President’s Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees. Adjustments to the core themes, objectives and indicators were made, as indicated in the text for Standard 1.B, in this report.
Specifically, statistically measurable indicators with numeric scores were developed, and indicator-level scores are now aggregated as measurable, numeric accomplishments for all objectives. These measures, in turn, are aggregated at the core theme level to derive a numeric “core theme score” of the degree of successful mission fulfillment in each of the core theme areas. The university has set a standard that the minimum threshold for acceptable mission fulfillment at the institutional level is *meeting expectations* in all three of the core areas.

**Recommendations Following the Year Three Self-Study**

1. **The team recommends that USU clarifies its objectives and related indicators of achievement, ensuring that they are measurable, assessable and verifiable, so that USU can collect the necessary information to evaluate accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes for the Year Seven report (Standard 1.B.2).**

In response to the NWCCU Year Three report, Utah State University has clarified its objectives and indicators to ensure meaningful assessment. Changes to the indicators were made, as indicated in the text for Standard 1.B, in this report. Several measures were modified, with more direct measures added, and the metric for scoring “change” to each indicator over time was refined to better match historical performance and current goals, as suggested by the NWCCU peer reviewers. Variance, for scoring purposes (e.g., “meeting expectations,” “higher,” “lower”), is based on the rate of change compared to a statistical analysis of historical trends (e.g., mean, standard deviation, etc.). The current set of indicators measures a rate of change based on the standard deviation from the average score on each metric over the past 5-7 years. When those changes are within that range, a score of “3” (meeting expectations) is given. When those changes, up or down, exceed the standard deviation, a higher/lower “score” is given for that measure. For several measures, sub-scores were developed, and indicator-level scores are now aggregated as measurable, numeric accomplishments for all objectives. These measures, in turn, are aggregated at the core theme level to derive a numeric “balanced scorecard” of the degree of successful mission fulfillment in each of the core theme areas. The university has set a standard that the minimum threshold for mission fulfillment at the institutional level is an average of “meeting expectations” in each of the three core areas: learning, discovery and engagement.

2. **The evaluation committee recommends that USU intensify and focus its effort to identify, assess and publish in the catalogue or other appropriate manner readily available to students and stakeholders, program-level student learning outcomes for both general education and all major program components of its degrees (Standards 2.C.2, 2.C.10, 2.D.5).**

In response to this recommendation, program-level student learning outcomes are published on the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA) site with links to the assessment pages for all the degree programs. In addition, the AAA site links to the degree descriptions in the University Catalog. The general education learning outcomes are also located on the AAA
Effective, regular and comprehensive assessment is a consistent need, and challenge, for all higher education institutions that seek mission fulfillment and continuous improvement. In the years leading up to USU’s 2007 comprehensive self-study and review by NWCCU, the need for improvement and, more specifically, full participation by all programs in assessment activities, was a consistent theme in both internal and external review. Several reviewers identified one of the key challenges for the university: although program assessment is very robust for some programs and departments, particularly those with specialized accreditation, participation in accreditation efforts across the university has been uneven. This has been a longstanding challenge.

In response to feedback, and the continuing need for improvement, the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA), established in 2003 in part because of prior NWCCU peer review findings, worked with the University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC), academic leadership (provost’s office, deans and department heads) and faculty to implement a systematic assessment structure for all academic departments and programs. The resulting comprehensive institutional assessment plan required each department to establish program learning objectives, a mapping of courses to those objectives, an assessment plan, evidence of outcomes data and evidence of data-informed decisions. This structure was roughly in place for the 2007 self-study and review. That peer review team commended the efforts that had been made, but noted that “intended outcomes and mapping of courses to identify where the outcomes receive instructional attention, while essential to an outcomes assessment process, represent input variables and do not actually measure learning outcomes.”

A more fundamental flaw in the comprehensive assessment plan was identified in USU’s mid-cycle review in 2013. The peer review team identified that several of the departments had only a single set of program learning objectives, course mappings, assessment plans and outcome measurements. Because program learning objectives in these areas were established at the department rather than the program level, they lacked a specificity regarding program and degree-level. The focus of assessment efforts on learning outcomes at the course level, often measured only by students’ overall grades in those courses, lacked the specificity required to ensure students graduate from USU programs with program- and degree-specific competencies.

Immediately following the mid-cycle review, the UACC, working with the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation, undertook a re-review of departmental assessment efforts. It quickly became clear that the 2007 comprehensive assessment plan did not account for important distinctions between programs offered at different degree levels as the primary focus of the plan was on undergraduate degrees. In addition, it was not sufficiently granular to be able to ensure measurement at the student level of the specific skills and competencies achieved by students in each program of study at the university. Perhaps more importantly, reopening this conversation enabled departments to express that one-size did not fit all. Several
departments, particularly those subject to external specialized accreditation, objected to the prior process and the reliance on standardized templates and expressed frustration for not getting credit for the specialized accreditation work they had been doing for several years. Because of this feedback and the need to address the recommendation from the NWCCU peer review team, the UACC and AAA Office went back to the drawing board. A consensus grew that there was a need to respect the de-centralized nature of assessment efforts at USU and to better leverage the work that was already being done, as a resource for departments with less experience in developing measurable student learning outcomes for each program of study.

The UACC reviewed and discussed current efforts, and the college representatives agreed to return to the departments with an assignment to review their learning objectives and assessment plans to make sure they were appropriately focused at the program level, not at the departmental level. Efforts were made to share the resources available through USU departments participating in the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) and National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) efforts. Programs subject to external accreditation were instructed to better document their processes and results. After 24 months (2013 – 2015) of work on these issues, however, initial results were not what had been anticipated. The departments that were strong continued to be strong with somewhat better online documentation. However, those that had historically not been as strong, continued to struggle or neglect the effort.

What was lacking was a comprehensive, university-wide accountability system for program assessment efforts. In consultation with the UACC, the director of AAA proposed that a report card of assessment efforts be established with annual review of each department’s published program-level assessments by staff in the AAA Office. Results, including grades and detailed notes, would be provided to the department, dean and provost for review and improvement.

An assessment rubric was established and approved by the UACC to serve as the basis for grades given to each department for their programs of study. Each program is judged concerning the following items:

- Learning Objectives (for each individual program of study)
- Assessment Plan
- Outcomes Data
- Data-Informed Decisions (evidence of continuous improvement)

The programs reviewed in each department are taken directly from the University Catalog each year to ensure comprehensive coverage. Following extensive discussion in the UACC, USU set a minimum target of “4” on the scoring rubric for all departments in the categories of learning objectives and assessment plan, and (recognizing the lag in data collection) a time-based threshold for outcomes data and data-informed decisions: a minimum score of “4” for outcomes data and data-informed decisions across 50% of departments within one year, 75% of departments within two years and 95% of departments within three years. Once these thresholds have been achieved, the UACC will review the report card results and consider a recommendation to raise the expected threshold to “5” for all programs and departments. Response to the new system, implemented in 2016, has been rapid. Subject to written
accountability and review by the UACC, several departments that had failed to make conceivable progress in the last five years have worked hard to catch up.
STANDARD 1
MISSION AND CORE THEMES

The institution articulates its purpose in a mission statement and identifies core themes that comprise essential elements of that mission. In an examination of its purpose, characteristics and expectations, the institution defines the parameters for mission fulfillment. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 2 AND 3

REQUIREMENT 2. AUTHORITY
The institution is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by the appropriate governmental organization, agency or governing board as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates.

USU is authorized to operate and award degrees by the Utah State Board of Regents.

REQUIREMENT 3. MISSION AND CORE THEMES
The institution’s mission and core themes are clearly defined and adopted by its governing board(s) consistent with its legal authorization, and are appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education. The institution’s purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students, and its principal programs lead to recognized degrees. The institution devotes all, or substantially all, of its resources to support its mission and core themes.

USU’s mission statement, core themes, objectives and indicators of success are consistent with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) requirements that institutions serve the educational interests of students with principal programs leading to recognized degrees. USU devotes substantial resources to support its mission and core themes. USU’s mission, core themes and objectives were approved by the Utah State University Board of Trustees on August 26, 2011, and were subsequently affirmed by the university’s Faculty Senate at their meeting on September 12, 2011.
STANDARD 1.A: MISSION

1.A.1 The institution has a widely published mission statement – approved by its governing board – that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.

The mission of Utah State University is to be one of the nation's premier student-centered land-grant and space-grant universities by fostering the principle that academics come first, by cultivating diversity of thought and culture and by serving the public through learning, discovery and engagement.

Utah State University exercises this primary mission by:

- Integrating teaching, research, extension and service to meet the unique role as Utah’s land-grant university. Students are the focus of the university as they seek intellectual, personal and cultural development.
- Providing high-quality undergraduate and graduate instruction, excellent general education and specialized academic and professional degree programs. USU is committed to preparing students to serve the people of Utah, the nation and the world.
- Providing nationally and internationally acclaimed programs of basic and applied research. USU engages in research to further the quest for knowledge and to help society meet its scientific, technological, environmental, economic and social challenges.
- Outreach to Utah’s citizens through extension and service programs. The university’s outreach programs provide to individuals, communities, institutions and industries throughout the state, services that help improve technology, the environment and quality of life.
- Committing to developing responsible citizens through freedom of inquiry and expression and through best efforts in teaching, research, creative arts, extension and service, and encouraging cultural diversity.
The mission statement and core themes articulate university priorities and direct institutional planning. Colleges and departments are expected to plan academic programming in alignment with the university goals.

The mission statement is published in the University Catalog, on the president’s webpage and on the accreditation webpage.

1.A.2 The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

As a land-grant and space-grant university, the core themes of learning, discovery and engagement individually manifest the essential elements of the mission of Utah State University and collectively represent its fulfillment. Together, they are the essence of what makes Utah State University special. In that context, mission fulfillment can only be described as achieving success in all three areas, not just success in one dimension or another. Lack of successful mission fulfillment in any one of these three areas is unacceptable and inappropriate and will be addressed through detailed reflection, action plans and strategic investment.

In alignment with mission fulfillment, the specific goals of the university are to:

- Maintain a strong undergraduate program that encourages the intellectual and personal development of students.
- Conduct major research programs that broaden the horizons of knowledge and seek answers to problems of importance.
- Make available to the public the benefits of modern discovery, of creative achievement and of cultural developments.
- Maintain a strong graduate program that encourages the intellectual, research and personal development of graduate students.
- Expand the services and educational resources offered by the university through the development of cooperative educational programs with other institutions and other local, state, federal and international agencies.
- Provide for each student the opportunity to understand her or his relation to the human family and the natural world; the opportunity to learn and understand basic political and economic principles of democracy and the American system and the opportunity to develop the skills of civic, social and political participation and leadership in local, national and international affairs.

In the context of the new accreditation standards and cycle adopted by the NWCCU, member institutions have been asked to consider how they will know when they have achieved their mission, core themes, objectives and indicators of success. For USU, meeting expectations is the successful achievement of the objectives for each core theme, as measured by the indicators. An overall indicator score or threshold is noted for each core theme. Successful achievement is measured quantitatively for each indicator, and those results are aggregated at the objective and core-theme levels.
STANDARD 1.B: CORE THEMES

1.B.1 The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.

1.B.2 The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.

Through a rigorous participatory process (see Year Three report), Utah State University identified and adopted three core themes that individually manifest the essential elements of USU’s mission and that collectively encompass its mission, vision and values. The core themes are:

- Learning
- Discovery
- Engagement
Core Theme: Learning

USU’s statement of mission and roles, most recently amended by the State Board of Regents in 2009, directly charges the university with specific responsibilities pertaining to learning. The mission of USU is to provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate instruction, excellent general education and specialized academic and professional degree programs. USU is committed to preparing students to serve the people of Utah, the nation and the world. The learning process encompasses functional activities including recruitment and retention inclusive of a diverse population; provision of the educational and financial resources students need to succeed; creation of student-centered learning environments; investment in an appropriate learning infrastructure; and use of ongoing and effective assessment processes to measure learning outcomes and inform the changes and investments needed to improve those outcomes, with a focus on degree qualifications, discipline mastery and professional development. Student development, one of the outcomes of resident instruction, has a specific set of goals at USU:

- Develop skills of critical thinking and reasoning and foster intellectual discovery.
- Develop an awareness of and interest in the breadth of human intellectual achievement and cultural experience.
- Prepare students for personally satisfying careers.
- Facilitate emotional development, health and clarification of personal values.
- Facilitate physical development, health and well-being.
- Maintain a campus environment that will foster a sense of community and social responsibility and that will facilitate social development and interpersonal relationships.

Beyond this structural and governance mandate, learning has always been at the core of USU’s history, work and mission. In this context, the term learning embodies both undergraduate and graduate education at USU. It is closely connected, and interwoven, with USU’s other core themes, discovery and engagement.
Table 1.1: Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty teach well, students learn and achieve success</td>
<td>1. Assessment of student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Department-led assessment of program learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Student self-assessment of learning (IDEA SRIs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Graduating student outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Employment at graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Met educational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Post-graduate education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student retention and completion rates are strong and improving</td>
<td>1. Retention rates (full cohort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Graduation rates (full cohort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USU provides inclusive access to a diverse population; course offerings</td>
<td>1. Regional campus and distance education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and student enrollments support the land-grant mission to provide</td>
<td>a. Student/course ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education throughout Utah</td>
<td>b. Breadth of course offerings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Total enrollment through distance education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Inclusive enrollment trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Utah residency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. First-generation college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Pell eligibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core Theme: Discovery

At USU, discovery is the creation and development of knowledge through the achievement of productivity and excellence in research, scholarship and the creative and performing arts. As a land-grant and space-grant institution, the focus of USU's discovery outcomes has particular importance. Research is a major function of the university and includes scholarly and creative endeavors in the humanities as well as in science. USU provides nationally and internationally acclaimed programs of basic and applied research and engages in research to further the quest for knowledge to help society meet its scientific, technological, environmental, economic and social challenges. The university accomplishes this by conducting major research programs that broaden the horizons of knowledge, seeking answers to problems of importance and maintaining a strong graduate program encouraging the intellectual, research and personal development of graduate students. While knowledge is considered to have intrinsic worth apart from its application in problem solving, and research in universities is appropriately conducted as an end in itself, the land-grant universities have the added tradition and responsibility of
conducting mission-oriented research. The goal for creative arts and humanities is to contribute to artistic and humanistic endeavors. This contribution includes creation in various media of works of art, architecture, dance, film, music, literature and theater. The outcomes articulated below focus primarily on productivity and excellence in research and creative works, with connections to both learning and engagement.

Table 1.2: Discovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Faculty are engaged with productive and critically recognized programs of research and creative endeavors | 1. Faculty awards and honors  
2. Peer-reviewed contributions per FTE  
3. Total research expenditures (NSF) |
| Students participate in strong research and creative programs and achieve success | 1. Student participation  
   a. In research/creative programs  
   b. Graduate student assistantships  
2. Evidence of student success  
   a. Number of peer-reviewed student publications  
   b. Enrollment in creative programs  
3. Graduate enrollments and degrees  
   a. Graduate student FTE  
   b. PhD degrees awarded |

Core Theme: Engagement

Outreach to Utah’s citizens through extension and service programs is central to the university’s mission. The university’s outreach programs provide to individuals, communities, institutions and industries throughout the state services that help improve technology, the environment and quality of life. Knowledge is a source of solutions to societal problems and a force in the advancement of civilization. Researchers across campus are recognized and rewarded for their ability to contribute to their field of knowledge, but also for their contributions to the improvement of local, state, national and global communities. Researchers make available to the public the benefits of modern discovery, of creative achievement and of cultural developments. USU Extension is the arm of the university responsible for formalized outreach and engagement and distinguishes the university and its land-grant mission from all other institutions of higher learning in Utah. It fosters positive outcomes that enhance the quality of life; improve economic well-being; promote sustainability of agriculture, the environment and communities, and develop leadership and citizenship through community, youth and volunteer programs. USU is also dedicated to expanding the services and educational resources offered by the university through the development of cooperative educational programs with other institutions and other local, state, federal and international agencies. As a
land-grant and space-grant university, outcomes at USU are often measured in terms of both their academic and societal impact.

Table 1.3: Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to grow human</td>
<td>1. USU Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capital, encourage lifelong learning and improve quality of life</td>
<td>a. Direct contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Indirect contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Faculty delivered activities and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Sustainability rating based on AASHE STARS standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to identify,</td>
<td>1. Create economic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secure and create economic development</td>
<td>a. Patents filed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Innovation disclosures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Patents awarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. USU’s direct financial impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Investment in Utah employees (payroll)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Investment in Utah businesses (procurement)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STANDARD 2
RESOURCES AND CAPACITY

By documenting the adequacy of its resources and capacity, the institution demonstrates the potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives and achieve the intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. Through its governance and decision-making structures, the institution establishes, reviews regularly and revises, as necessary, policies and procedures that promote effective management and operation of the institution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 4 - 21

REQUIREMENT 4. OPERATIONAL FOCUS AND INDEPENDENCE
The institution's programs and services are predominantly concerned with higher education. The institution has sufficient organizational and operational independence to be held accountable and responsible for meeting the Commission's standards and eligibility requirements.

Utah State University is Utah’s land-grant and space-grant institution and is part of an eight-institution state system of higher education governed by the State Board of Regents (Regents). Utah State University’s organizational structure, described in Standard 2.A.10-11, offers sufficient operational independence for the university to be held accountable and responsible for meeting the Commission’s standards and eligibility requirements.

REQUIREMENT 5. NON-DISCRIMINATION
The institution is governed and administered with respect for the individual in a nondiscriminatory manner while responding to the educational needs and legitimate claims of the constituencies it serves as determined by its charter, its mission and its core themes.

Utah State University is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (40 and older), disability or veteran's status. USU also prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment and academic-related practices and decisions. In addition, employees and students cannot discriminate in the classroom, residential halls or in on/off-campus USU-sponsored events and activities. Policy 305 describes the Utah State University
policy and process for handling discrimination complaints. This policy is in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws, orders and policies. Responsibility for implementation of the policy and for responding to complaints is vested in the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Office and director.

**REQUIREMENT 6. INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY**
The institution establishes and adheres to ethical standards in all of its operations and relationships.

Utah State University is committed to maintaining high standards of integrity and ethical practice in the discharge of its three-fold mission in learning, discovery and engagement. In keeping with this commitment, conduct by all members of the community must be characterized by integrity and dignity, and they should expect and encourage such conduct by others. Students are accountable to the student code. Faculty and staff also have a code of conduct to safeguard USU’s reputation for excellence and integrity.

**REQUIREMENT 7. GOVERNING BOARD**
The institution has a functioning governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for each unit within a multiple-unit institution to ensure that the institution’s mission and core themes are being achieved. The governing board has at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual or employment relationship or personal financial interest with the institution.

The Utah State Board of Regents is the governing body for the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE). The Board of Regents consists of 17 Utah residents, all appointed by the governor, three non-voting members (two from the Utah State Board of Education, and one from the Utah College of Applied Technology Board of Trustees) and one student Regent. The Regents select and evaluate institutional presidents; establish policies; approve programs, institutional mission statements and degrees and oversee the budget process for higher education.

The Board of Trustees is the governing board of the university. Its functions and responsibilities are derived from Utah statutes and those delegated to it by the State Board of Regents. Membership of the Board of Trustees consists of nine persons each appointed to four-year terms by the governor of the state and two ex-officio members who are the president of the university's Alumni Association and the president of the USU Student Association.

**REQUIREMENT 8. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**
The institution employs a chief executive officer who is appointed by the governing board and whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. Neither the chief executive officer nor an executive officer of the institution chairs the institution’s governing board.

The Board of Regents has final authority to appoint the president of the university, who has a fulltime responsibility to guide the institution. The president is not a member of the Board of Regents or the USU Board of Trustees.
**REQUIREMENT 9. ADMINISTRATION**

In addition to a chief executive officer, the institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution’s major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution’s mission and achievement of its core themes.

The Regents have delegated to the president of the university overall authority and responsibility for carrying out the Regents’ policies and procedures. The responsibilities of the president are articulated in the USU Policy 104. This policy also defines the responsibilities and duties of other university administrators who are appointed by the president with the approval of the Board of Trustees. These other administrative leaders, under the direction of the president of the university, are responsible for assembling a well-trained faculty and administrative staff and for organizing it in such a way that the university will receive maximum service from each faculty member and administrative staff member in achieving the objectives of the university and maintaining standards that contribute to the overall educational, research and service functions of the university.

**REQUIREMENT 10. FACULTY**

Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution employs and regularly evaluates the performance of appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs wherever offered and however delivered.

The university is committed to hiring qualified faculty members to ensure excellence in teaching, research and service. Faculty searches and appointments require review and prior approval from the provost. Consistent with its mission and core themes, Utah State University employs and evaluates all faculty pursuant to USU Policy 400 (Faculty Policies). Evaluation of faculty is conducted according to Sub-Section 405, “Tenured and Term Appointments: Evaluation, Promotion and Retention.”

**REQUIREMENT 11. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

The institution provides one or more educational programs that include appropriate content and rigor consistent with its mission and core themes. The educational program(s) culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes, and lead to collegiate-level degree(s) with degree designation consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

The university offers 162 undergraduate degrees and 127 graduate degrees. All new certificates, minors and degrees must be approved by the Board of Regents under Regents’ Policy R401. Each degree program has specific student learning outcomes published on the departmental websites. In accordance with Regents’ policy, student learning outcomes must be clearly defined and programs of study are held to high standards of quality. Student learning outcomes are assessed annually, and the academic departments undergo external reviews every seven years by the Trustees and the Regents under Regents’ Policy 411. Many programs of study at USU also undergo external review by specialized accrediting bodies. New degrees
are reviewed three years after their initiation. Policies for the awarding of credits and requirements for graduation at USU are consistent with those of other institutions.

**REQUIREMENT 12. GENERAL EDUCATION AND RELATED INSTRUCTION**

The institution’s baccalaureate degree programs and/or academic or transfer associate degree programs require a substantial and coherent component of general education as a prerequisite to or as an essential element of the programs offered. All other associate degree programs (e.g., applied, specialized or technical) and programs of study of either 30 semester or 45 quarter credits or more for which certificates are granted contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Bachelor and graduate degree programs also require a planned program of major specialization or concentration.

All undergraduate degree programs at USU require the completion of the General Education Program in compliance with the Utah Board of Regents’ Policy R470. Specifically, general education at USU includes breadth and depth requirements. The breadth education core requires courses in communication literacy (6 credits) and quantitative literacy (3-4 credits). It also requires completion of breadth courses in seven different areas. The minimum number of breadth course credits is 18. General education requires a minimum of 30 credit hours.

Transfer students may be deemed to have completed all or a portion of their general education requirements. Students transferring from institutions that participate in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Interstate Passport program are not required to repeat or take additional course work to meet lower-division general education requirements when they transfer, with the exception of the American Institutions course required by Utah State Statutes.

All students graduating with a bachelor’s degree must also complete the University Studies depth education requirements. These are communications intensive (two courses), quantitative intensive (one course) and depth in two areas out of the humanities/arts, sciences and social sciences. Students are required to take depth courses in areas outside of their major to ensure that skills and habits of thought developed in breadth courses are reinforced at the upper division.

**REQUIREMENT 13. LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES**

Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution maintains and/or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth and breadth to support the institution’s programs and services wherever offered and however delivered.

The Utah State University Libraries are a central resource for the university community. The libraries’ overarching goal is to support the university mission, core themes, programs and services wherever offered and however delivered. While the libraries consider the students, faculty and staff of the university as their primary clientele, the libraries also offer services to
the general public to fulfill the obligations of a public land-grant institution. The USU libraries are involved in many successful collaborations across campus to advance specific objectives derived from the core themes. These partnerships arise from the libraries’ role in supporting research across its lifecycle in innovative ways that directly align with the initiatives and needs of the institution. The libraries continuously review and renew their resources to meet the current needs of scholarship and mission.

**REQUIREMENT 14. PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

*The institution provides the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to achieve its mission and core themes.*

The physical and technological infrastructure of the university is well-maintained, carefully planned and a safe place for all campus users. The university regularly assesses the condition of its facilities and strives for efficient operations. The Campus Master Plan defines the campus structure and organization of land uses including general land and building area requirements necessary to accommodate long-range enrollment growth consistent with the mission, core themes and objectives of USU.

Utah State University provides comprehensive technology services to meet the needs of students, faculty and staff. The university devotes significant resources, including dedicated support units, to the training and effective use of technology systems spanning the institution. This is supported by a cyclical technology capital replacement plan.

**REQUIREMENT 15. ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

*The institution maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist. Faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic/educational community in general.*

Freedom and independence of thought are guaranteed and practiced at USU per Policy 403.2 governing faculty and staff. The Faculty Senate maintains a committee on academic freedom and tenure charged with review and to hear complaints.

**REQUIREMENT 16. ADMISSIONS**

*The institution publishes its student admission policy that specifies the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs, and it adheres to that policy in its admissions procedures and practices.*

The institution adopts student admission policies consistent with its mission as a land-grant university. The USU undergraduate admissions policy is designed to admit students who have the best chance to successfully complete a university program of study. USU grants admission, without regard to race, creed, sex or national origin, to those students who satisfy the admissions requirements. Admissions policies and procedures are published in the University Catalog and are also available on the admissions website.
REQUIREMENT 17. PUBLIC INFORMATION
The institution publishes in a catalog and/or on a website current and accurate information regarding: its mission and core themes; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names, titles and academic credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and regulations for student conduct; rights and responsibilities of students; tuition, fees and other program costs; refund policies and procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.

USU publishes an online University Catalog that is updated and archived once a year. The University Catalog provides information essential to students and prospective students including the institutional mission; entrance requirements; grading policy; academic programs; administrators and faculty; rules, regulations for conduct, regulations and responsibilities; tuition, fees and refund policies; financial aid regulations and the academic calendar. In addition, the University Catalog covers the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and information on student activities including student government, student affairs, academic support programs and services and special academic programs.

REQUIREMENT 18. FINANCIAL RESOURCES
The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and, as appropriate, reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and long-term financial sustainability.

The university has adequate financial resources to fulfill its mission and is engaged in rigorous planning to assure future financial stability. By law, the university is required to balance the budget each year. The university identifies long-term budget items and uses a five-year planning horizon to anticipate operational needs.

REQUIREMENT 19. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate and comprehensive manner by the administration and governing board.

The university undergoes an annual audit performed by the Office of the Utah State Auditor and received a clean audit in 2017. Recent financial statements and state audit reports are located on the controller’s office website. Cash flows and other indicators were examined and determined to be within acceptable operating ranges. The audit examined internal controls and the university’s compliance with auditing standards. The state auditors do not audit the Utah State University Research Foundation (USURF) as this audit is completed by a separate firm. However, that audit report is provided to the State Auditor, and the opinions of the State Auditor about USU’s overall financial position includes USURF.
The Board of Trustees has an active, functioning audit subcommittee as prescribed in its bylaws. This committee reviews all audits, both internal and external, with the university leadership.

**REQUIREMENT 20. DISCLOSURE**
The Institution accurately discloses to the Commission all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions.

USU regularly discloses the information necessary for the NWCCU to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions. USU provides detailed annual reports to NWCCU and such periodic reports as may be required by NWCCU accreditation guidelines.

**REQUIREMENT 21. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION**
The institution accepts the standards and related policies of the Commission and agrees to comply with these standards and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with Commission policy. Further, the institution agrees that the Commission may, at its discretion, make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the institution’s status with the Commission to any agency or members of the public requesting such information.

USU accepts and agrees to comply with the standards and policies established by NWCCU. The university agrees that actions regarding the status of the university with the Commission may be made public.
THE INSTITUTION DEMONSTRATES AN EFFECTIVE AND WIDELY UNDERSTOOD SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE WITH CLEARLY DEFINED AUTHORITY, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. ITS DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES MAKE PROVISION FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE VIEWS OF FACULTY, STAFF, ADMINISTRATORS AND STUDENTS ON MATTERS IN WHICH THEY HAVE A DIRECT AND REASONABLE INTEREST.

The Board of Regents has final authority to appoint the president of the university who has fulltime responsibility to guide the institution. The Regents have delegated overall authority for carrying out the Regents’ policies and procedures to the president. The responsibilities of the president are articulated in Policy 104.3. This policy also defines in clear terms the responsibilities and duties of the following administrators who are appointed by the president with the approval of the Board of Trustees: executive vice president and provost, vice president for business and finance, vice president for extension and dean of agriculture and applied sciences, vice president for research and dean of graduate studies, vice president for student affairs, vice president for advancement, chancellor of USU Eastern, deans, regional campus executive directors, deans of libraries, department heads, directors of research units and vice president and director of athletics.

The roles of Trustees, administrators, faculty and staff are clearly and directly outlined in the institutional policies that have subsections with general information, authority and amendments, personnel policies, faculty policies (the Faculty Code) and operating policies.

In the spirit of the collegial governance of the university, representative groups of faculty, students and others serve in advisory capacities to the administration and otherwise contribute to the policy-making and operational functions of the university. These groups are organized into university councils, university committees, Faculty Senate committees, advisory councils, advisory boards and advisory committees. Duties and membership determination of these councils, committees and boards are governed by USU Policy 105. Some groups are responsible to the president, college and division administrators and receive their appointments.
administratively. Some of these groups are responsible to the Faculty Senate and are appointed by the Senate (Policy 402). The executive council of the Utah State University Student Association (USUSA) designates members of the student body to serve with faculty and staff and share in the deliberations and responsibilities of group participation. These councils, committees and boards are advisory to the appropriate administrator, usually the chair of the council, committee or board. However, where the council, committee or board formulates educational policies, these are referred to the Faculty Senate for action.

Faculty Senate members and/or faculty officially sit on the following councils and committees: Graduate Council, Research Council, Calendar Committee, Facilities Naming Committee, Honorary Degrees and Awards Committee, Honors Program Advisory Board, Parking and Transportation Advisory Committee, Department Teaching Excellence Award Committee, University Assessment Coordinating Council and Student Conduct Hearing Board. Also, the Faculty Senate president has a seat on the Executive Committee as indicated in Standard 2.A.9.

2.A.2 In a multi-unit governance system, the division of authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated. System policies, regulations and procedures concerning the institution are clearly defined and equitably administered.

USU is part of an eight institution state system of higher education governed by the Utah State Board of Regents (Regents). The Utah Legislature grants the Regents the power to control, manage and supervise the system, and this makes the Regents the governing board for the entire system as well as for each individual institution. Each institution in the system has a unique institutional mission and role statement, approved by the Regents. The Regents have the final authority for establishing policies and procedures, appointing institutional presidents, approval of institutional budgets, legislative proposals, governmental relations and administrative unit and program approval.

Each individual institution is served by an institutional Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor. The Trustees act in conjunction with the institutional president to assure quality and effective operations. System policies, regulations and procedures are clearly defined.

2.A.3 The institution monitors its compliance with the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation, including the impact of collective bargaining agreements, legislative actions and external mandates.

USU submits annual reports to the Commission and continuously monitors compliance with the Standards for Accreditation. The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) regularly attends NWCCU trainings and works with the University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC) to ensure that all university policies and procedures comply with the latest standards. The university administration is constantly alert for any potential conflict between the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation and pending legislative actions or external mandates. There is no collective bargaining at USU.
GOVERNING BOARD

2.A.4 The institution has a functioning governing board consisting of at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual, employment or financial interest in the institution. If the institution is governed by a hierarchical structure of multiple boards, the roles, responsibilities and authority of each board — as they relate to the institution — are clearly defined, widely communicated and broadly understood.

The Regents, established in 1969 as a governing body for the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE), is made up of 17 Utah residents (16 members and one student member) appointed by the governor of Utah, and three additional non-voting members from the State Board of Education and Utah College of Applied Technology who are appointed by the Board chair. The Regents elect a new chair every two years, and the Commissioner of Higher Education serves as the executive officer. Provisions for change in membership of the Regents are governed by the Utah Code and Regent’s policies. These include clearly defined duties, responsibilities, ethical obligations, operating procedures and organizational structure. The Utah Legislature grants the Regents the power to control, manage and supervise the system.

Each institution is served by an institutional Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor. The Board of Trustees acts in conjunction with the president to assure quality and effective operations. The USU Board of Trustees consists of 11 members: nine of whom are appointed by the governor including one from southeastern Utah as mandated in the Utah State University-College of Eastern Utah Memorandum of Understanding and two ex officio members who are represented by the president of the USU Alumni Association and the president of the USU Student Association. The nine appointed members serve for four-year terms, four expiring on June 30 of each odd-numbered year. The two ex officio members serve for the term of their respective offices. The university’s mission, core themes and objectives are regularly reviewed and approved by the Trustees. The roles, responsibilities and authority of the USU Board of Trustees are clearly defined in Policy Section 102.4. The president, provost, vice presidents and representatives of USU employee groups meet with the Trustees during regularly scheduled meetings. They provide information and participate in the discussion but do not vote. The university president represents the interests of the institution to the Trustees and participates in Trustee retreats.

2.A.5 The board acts only as a committee of the whole; no member or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole.

Both the Board of Regents and the USU Board of Trustees have subcommittees to facilitate their work, but these subcommittees are only empowered to make recommendations to the entire board, which then takes formal action. In certain circumstances, consistent with the policies established in their bylaws, the executive committees of the boards can take formal action on behalf of their respective bodies.
2.A.6 The board establishes, reviews regularly, revises as necessary and exercises broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation.

The Regents maintain control, management and supervision of the institutions in the state system of higher education in the state of Utah. They establish statewide policies and procedures but delegate administrative responsibilities for institutional operations to the respective presidents and the Trustees. The Trustees act in behalf of the institution in performing duties, responsibilities and functions specifically authorized by the Regents.

2.A.7 The board selects and evaluates regularly a chief executive officer who is accountable for the operation of the institution. It delegates authority and responsibility to the CEO to implement and administer board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution.

Presidential appointments in the Utah System of Higher Education are made by the Regents in accordance with State law (Regents’ Policy R205-3.2). Presidents are appointed without a specified term of office and serve at the pleasure of the Board of Regents. The Regents determine presidential salaries and require that performance of each president be comprehensively evaluated following the first year of his or her tenure (during year 2) and every four years thereafter (during years six and 10) (Regents’ Policy R209-4.1). Either the Regents or the president may request a comprehensive evaluation at a shorter interval. The Regents have delegated to the president of the university overall authority and responsibility for carrying out the Regents’ policies and procedures. The responsibilities of the president are articulated in Policy 104.

2.A.8 The board regularly evaluates its performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner.

Regents’ self-evaluation is governed by Regents’ policy R123, which mandates an annual evaluation “of its performance as a governing and policy making body.” The USU Board of Trustees typically engages in self-evaluation when a new chair is elected to a two-year term.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

2.A.9 The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability, who are charged with planning, organizing and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

The administrative organization of the university is headed by the president. The president has general responsibility for the direction and supervision of the university, its divisions and branches. The president is responsible for developing and maintaining good relations with state, national and international organizations. Other responsibilities of the president are clearly articulated in Policy 104.
The following university divisions and offices report to the president: Office of the Provost, business and finance, extension, research, student services, university advancement, athletics, government relations, public relations and marketing, general counsel, chief audit executive and the chancellor of USU Eastern. The current members of the President’s Executive Committee (Executive Committee), also known as the administrative council, are listed on the Office of the President website.

The following report to the executive vice president and provost: the vice provosts and assistant provost, deans of the colleges/schools, dean of the libraries, regional campus executive directors and directors of other academic and administrative units on campus.

2.A.10 The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive officer may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board, but may not serve as its chair.

The chief executive officer of Utah State University is the president, who is appointed by the Regents and who has fulltime responsibility to guide the institution. The president is not a member of the Board of Regents or the USU Board of Trustees.

2.A.11 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution’s major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution’s mission and accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

The Regents have delegated to the president of the university overall authority and responsibility for carrying out the Regents’ policies and procedures including appointment of senior administrators who will provide leadership to fulfill the university mission and core themes.

USU has an administrative structure that supports the mission and accomplishment of the core theme objectives. Qualified senior administrators and deans are generally hired through comprehensive, national searches with specific qualifications. Internal candidates, if qualified, may be promoted to leadership roles through this competitive hiring process. In addition to the president and provost, the university’s senior administrative structure includes chancellor of USU Eastern, vice president for business and finance, vice president for student affairs, vice president for research and dean of graduate studies, vice president for extension and dean of agriculture and applied sciences, vice president and director of athletics, vice president for university advancement, vice president for federal and state relations, chief information officer, general counsel and chief audit executive. Full details of USU’s organizational structure are publicly available here.

The administrative structure provides enough leadership positions to effectively support the
operative functions of the university. Deans are administratively responsible and report to the executive vice president and provost for functions and duties of their positions. Each dean has responsibility for all programs in the respective college including academic, research, extension programs and student activities related to the college.

Each department is an academic unit within a college. The department head is the leader of the department and is directly responsible to the dean of the college. Departmental decisions are made by the department head following consultation with the faculty.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Academics

2.A.12 Academic policies — including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research and artistic creation — are clearly communicated to students and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas.

USU is committed to maintaining high standards of integrity and ethical practice in teaching, service, scholarship, research and artistic creation. To ensure this, USU has developed extensive written policies to guide conduct, created committees and offices to support compliance and has involved stakeholders at all levels of university operations to provide feedback and assistance in formulating policy. Written policies and procedures, in turn, are clearly communicated to students, faculty, administrators and staff to ensure that all those with responsibilities related to these areas maintain the highest standards in practice.

Faculty members play a key role in the development of academic policies and practices. Their most important roles are as independent, self-directed scholars and researchers. Faculty members fill multiple roles of collegial engagement, as members and leaders of committees that provide administrators at all levels with feedback on strategic research policies and practices. Academic policies governing faculty conduct are outlined in the faculty policies. The primary vehicle for communication and implementation of those policies is the Faculty Senate. The role of the Faculty Senate in university governance, planning, budgeting and policy development is described in the Faculty Senate Handbook. The Faculty Senate has a strong voice in decisions that typically fall under the authority of faculty (e.g., curriculum, admissions and exam schedules). In addition, many other USU decision-making committees include faculty and staff representation.

Moreover, faculty members serve on the University Research Council, which advises in all matters pertaining to research and other scholarly or creative activity of the university. The Research Council has specific responsibility for: formulation of policy, including research priorities and procedures for attaining them; encouragement and stimulation of research in the context of instruction and other goals of the university; monitoring, reviewing and evaluating cross-college research programs in the university; and recommending allocation of all funds available for research and related purposes to be expended through the research office.
USU's research policy provides guidance to the university’s research community to initiate and implement research programs and provides the information needed to conduct business properly within and outside the university. The document also communicates USU’s positions and expectations to both the university audience and the public, and it helps to establish a higher degree of openness in the operation of the university. Issues covered by the policy include:

- Harmony with USU’s institutional mission
- Sources of research support
- Criteria for submission, approval and negotiation of contracts and grants
- Proprietary information, data and research
- Publication policy
- Secret or national defense research
- Consulting activities and outside interests
- Use of human participants in research
- Use of animals in research
- Safety and health in research
- Patents, copyrights and creative works
- Research misconduct

Standards of ethical conduct for faculty related to teaching, service, scholarship, research and creative activity at the university are clearly articulated in Policy 403.3 and cover obligations that faculty have to students, the university, the general citizenry and in relation to professional scholarship, research and creative endeavor. These expectations for ethical conduct are clearly articulated and faculty are held to them through the review process.

The university conflict of interest policy was established to ensure that all university employees avoid, disclose and/or manage financial conflicts, conflicts of commitment and conflicts of interest. The purposes of this policy are to:

- Enhance the integrity of institutional research.
- Enhance the quality of the institution's educational program.
- Enhance the viability of the institution’s outreach mission, especially as it relates to information diffusion and technology development and commercialization.
- Prevent a conflict of interest from harming the university and/or the employee.

2.A.13 Policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources — regardless of format, location and delivery method — are documented, published and enforced.

The University Libraries serve USU students, faculty and researchers throughout the state of Utah and beyond from the main campus location in Logan, satellite libraries at the USU Eastern campuses in Price and Blanding and online. All policies and procedures related to the use of library material regardless of format, location and delivery method are easily accessible through
the library website. To facilitate end-user understanding and use of these policies, the library website represents the policies and procedures through a continually updated set of FAQs. Appropriate use of computing, networking and information resources is covered by USU Policy 550.

**2.A.14** *The institution develops, publishes widely and follows an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions in completing their educational programs.*

The policies guiding the transfer and acceptance of credit are clearly articulated including the transfer of credit to fulfill degree requirements. In that process, the institution ensures that the credits accepted are comparable to its own courses and, whenever patterns of transfer from other institutions are established, articulation agreements have been completed. Articulation decisions regarding the application of transfer credit to both the university core and major requirements are handled by the individual academic departments. Results are compiled and maintained by the articulation team in the Registrar’s Office.

Provided USU residency requirements are met, a student’s supervisory committee may recommend transfer of graduate credits earned at another accredited institution including credits with earned P grades. The credits must not have been used for another degree. Only 12 semester credits may be transferred into a doctoral program at USU prior to matriculation. Credits with P grades may be transferred only with committee approval. Transfer credits cannot replace required residency credits. Transfer credits are subject to approval of the supervisory committee and the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Credits more than eight years old may not be acceptable. Transfer credits will be shown on official USU transcripts upon completion of the degree. These stipulations apply to non-matriculated credits.

**Students**

**2.A.15** *Policies and procedures regarding students’ rights and responsibilities — including academic honesty, appeals, grievances and accommodations for persons with disabilities — are clearly stated, readily available and administered in a fair and consistent manner.*

The policies and procedures regarding student rights and responsibilities are found in the University Catalog and on the Office of Student Conduct website. The Student Code contains specific sections on student’s rights and responsibilities. It addresses misconduct matters, academic integrity violations and provides for a student grievance procedure. Matters dealing with the Student Code are handled by the student conduct coordinator in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. The code establishes for each of the above matters a board that consists of four students and two faculty or staff.

Persons with disabilities are served through the Disability Resource Center (DRC), which operates under the vice president for student affairs. As part of its mission to assist those with disabilities, the DRC does the following:
• Evaluates requests for reasonable accommodations from students to ensure adherence to the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
• Promotes university disability awareness through workshops, in-service training and consultation with departments, faculty and community activities.
• Provides academic, personal and career counseling to assist students in the development of personal and financial independence.
• Provides supportive services to individuals with disabilities, including academic assistance, adaptive equipment, counseling, readers, transcribers, interpreters and advocacy to ensure equal access to all of the university programs, activities and services.
• Reviews architectural and program accessibility and makes recommendations for the removal of barriers.
• Provides support to faculty by providing training, designing accommodations and consulting on disability-related issues.
• Assists the university in achieving compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. This responsibility includes providing services and accommodations to students.

2.A.16 The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution’s expectations. Its policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs — including its appeals process and readmission policy — are clearly defined, widely published and administered in a fair and timely manner.

The institution adopts student admission policies consistent with its mission as both a land-grant and research university. Students attending the university for the first time are admitted on the basis of an index score, which is a reflection of high school grades and ACT or SAT scores. Entering students must have an acceptable index score to be admitted. Current USU policies stipulate that incoming freshmen have an index score of 90 or higher. Students must also have an ACT composite score of 17 or higher and a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher.

An ACT/SAT is not required of students who have been out of high school for seven years or more. Exceptions to the preceding regulations are made for applicants who have not graduated from high school who may then substitute GED scores.

If a student has a minimum score of 14 on the ACT, no less than a 2.0 GPA and has an acceptable index score, the student may be admitted into a two-year Associate of Science (AS) Degree program called Aggie Prep by the Admissions Appeal Committee. Students may appeal with a personal statement and decisions may be made based on educational gaps, improved transcripts or personal situations. In the Aggie Prep AS degree program, the student can either earn an AS degree or be automatically matriculated into a four-year program upon meeting the requirements for the desired major. Students in the Aggie Prep AS degree program are required
to meet regularly with an advisor, take a math placement test prior to their first semester and take a math and English course during the first year at USU.

Transfer students are admitted to USU if they have at least 24 semester credits earned at another institution (or at another USU regional campus/site). Applicants must meet the minimum GPA and requirements for their desired major. Applicants who do not meet the requirements of their major may be offered an “Exploratory” major if they have at least a 2.3 GPA and fewer than 60 transfer credits. If the academic work does not meet this standard, applications are considered on an individual basis. Students with less than 24 post high school credits require high school transcripts and an ACT or SAT in addition to official college transcripts.

Returning students are considered based on previous USU work as well as any transfer work before or after they attended USU. Applicants must meet the minimum GPA requirement for their desired major. Applicants who do not meet the minimum GPA requirement may be offered an undeclared major if they have at least a 2.3 GPA and fewer than 60 transfer credits. If the academic work does not meet this standard, applications are considered on an individual basis.

Students who leave USU with a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 are not in “good standing” academically. For readmission, students must fill out an Academic Inquiry Form and meet with the Academic Action Committee to appeal their readmission to USU. The Academic Action Committee is comprised of representation from admissions, academic advising, student affairs and financial aid.

Requirements for admission to the university and its programs are reviewed annually by the Executive Enrollment Management Committee and recommendations are forwarded to the Executive Committee for approval. The Admissions Committee works closely with the vice president for student affairs to ensure all requirements remain consistent with the institutional mission and core themes.

2.A.17 The institution maintains and publishes policies that clearly state its relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of students and the institution for those activities, including student publications and other student media, if offered.

Article IV of the Student Code outlines the institution’s relationship to student organizations and governing principles. Article IV outlines the policies and procedures for collection and expenditure of student fees, organization and registration of student clubs and organizations. Other policies are found in the Utah State University Student Association (USUSA) Constitution and the USUSA Clubs and Organizations Handbook. In addition, the Taggart Student Center Policy Board serves as an advisory committee on all matters of Taggart Student Center Policy, and the Student Fee Board is responsible for providing students with direct input into decisions regarding the disposition of student fees. A Campus Recreation Policy Board, convened when appropriate, is an advisory and policy making body that oversees the recreation and activity
facilities on campus. The Campus Recreation Department is almost entirely funded by student fees and ensures that student fees are used wisely.

Student media falls under the supervision of the media coordinator through the Student Involvement and Leadership Center and consists of a semiweekly print and electronic newspaper and the Aggie Radio Station. The university provides a Student Media Board, comprised of staff and students, to advise and define policies toward established student media. This board provides for a defined relationship between student media and the university at large.

**Human Resources**

2.A.18 *The institution maintains and publishes its human resources policies and procedures and regularly reviews them to ensure they are consistent, fair and equitably applied to its employees and students.*

All USU Policies are published on the website, reviewed by the Office of Human Resources (HR) annually and amended following Policy 200. The university believes in fair and equitable treatment of all USU employees. Employees will not be subject to intimidation, retaliation or any other negative treatment. Grievance procedures are in place to assist employees who have tried other means of resolving problems.

2.A.19 *Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion and termination.*

All new benefited university employees participate in an orientation where they receive information regarding USU employment policies and procedures. In addition, new employee information and the New Employee Packet are located on the HR website.

2.A.20 *The institution ensures the security and appropriate confidentiality of human resources records.*

Employee hardcopy files are maintained by HR and are considered confidential. Managers and supervisors other than the designated human resources representatives may only have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis following Policy 331. All hardcopy files are behind locked doors and located in windowless rooms. All digital HR records are maintained and served by the Ellucian-Banner system.

**Institutional Integrity**

2.A.21 *The institution represents itself clearly, accurately and consistently through its announcements, statements and publications. It communicates its academic intentions,*
programs and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs and services.

The Office of Public Relations and Marketing is charged with communicating the purpose and function of USU as a land-grant institution including the online presence. They oversee the production of news releases, strategic communications planning, branding and other communication materials to ensure that USU is represented clearly, accurately and consistently. The academic intentions, programs and services of the university are primarily communicated through the University Catalog and through the university website. The Office of Public Relations and Marketing works with the offices of the president, provost, student affairs and the other units of the university to assure integrity in all representations of USU’s mission, programs and services.

Accurate reporting of institutional data is the responsibility of the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA). This office provides state and federal reporting and numerous displays of evidence that USU’s academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion including data on enrollment, degrees awarded, time to degree and common data set reports. In addition, AAA provides an updated graphical representation of USU’s performance toward mission fulfillment including core themes, objectives and indicators with scored performance benchmarking on all key indicators.

2.A.22 The institution advocates, subscribes to and exemplifies high ethical standards in managing and operating the institution, including its dealings with the public, the Commission and external organizations, and in the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff and other constituencies. It ensures complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair and timely manner.

University policies demonstrate a clear commitment to the highest ethical standards in managing and operating the institution. These policies guide the ethical behaviors of the university faculty, staff, students and administrators. In addition, ethics training is provided to employees through human resources and the Division of Research Integrity and Compliance.

Employees of USU are provided the opportunity to file complaints or grievances against the institution and its units whenever necessary. The institution takes seriously its responsibility to provide due process to employees. Formal grievance procedures for USU employees are outlined in Policy 325. Complaints and grievances specific to faculty are governed by Policy 407. The Student Code covers the rights and responsibilities of USU students, and Article VII specifically outlines policies and procedures for complaints and grievances. Student affairs provides a broad range of support for students including support for fair and equitable treatment through resources such as the access and diversity center.

The Office of Research Integrity and Compliance is a unit within Research and Graduate Studies (RGS) that focuses on federal compliance issues including conflicts of interest, scientific
misconduct and other issues related to the responsible conduct of research. The Internal Audit Service (IAS) has the responsibility for reviewing complaints and allegations of a fiscal or related compliance nature. Details on both are available through the Administrative Code of Conduct.

2.A.23 The institution adheres to a clearly defined policy that prohibits conflict of interest on the part of members of the governing board, administration, faculty and staff. Even when supported by or affiliated with social, political, corporate or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy. If it requires its constituencies to conform to specific codes of conduct or seeks to instill specific beliefs or world views, it gives clear prior notice of such codes and/or policies in its publications.

Conflicts of interest can have a chilling effect on the public’s perception of an institution. USU has established policies for both individual and institutional conflicts of interest. The framework for understanding potential conflicts is outlined in the Administrative Code of Conduct. Policy 307 specifically addresses conflict of interest at USU. This conflict of interest policy applies to all employees of the university. Students are covered by the student code of conduct.

The Utah Board of Regents is governed by a similar policy regarding conflict of interest.

2.A.24 The institution maintains clearly defined policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property.

Copyright@USU provides a comprehensive resource for all faculty, staff and students. In addition, there are specific policies for intellectual property and open access to scholarly articles.

2.A.25 The institution accurately represents its current accreditation status and avoids speculation on future accreditation actions or status. It uses the terms “Accreditation” and “Candidacy” (and related terms) only when such status is conferred by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

USU believes transparency is integral to the accreditation process and provides its accreditation status online and in the University Catalog. The USU mission, core themes, objectives and indicators, including benchmarked performance toward mission fulfillment, are made available to all stakeholders and the public on the accreditation website. Copies of relevant NWCCU accreditation materials are also publicly available on the accreditation website.

2.A.26 If the institution enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on its behalf, the scope of work for those products or services — with clearly defined roles and responsibilities — is stipulated in a written and approved agreement that contains provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. In such cases, the institution ensures the scope of the agreement is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution,
adheres to institutional policies and procedures and complies with the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation.

Purchasing services has primary responsibility for oversight of contractual agreements with external entities for products and services, with the exception of sponsored research. The purchasing services website covers rules and regulations with Utah Purchasing code 63G-6A as the core component. Generally, rules for contractual agreement with external entities are defined in R33 of this code, where Board of Regents Rule 571 gives USU the ability to write rules or set limits which are clearly articulated in the rules and regulations. Utah code refers to USU as an "applicable rule making authority" or an "educational procurement unit," and the section definitions in 63G-6A-104 cover how USU is defined by the state. In most cases, external entities must follow set terms and conditions defined in USU’s General Contract for Goods and Services. Purchasing services expects the general terms and conditions contract to be used, and this is deployed at the end of a sourcing event. On occasion, companies are unwilling to accept the standard contract and, when they represent the only source of the good or service, USU may then accept their contract. In such cases, purchasing services works to ensure that the university’s interests are protected and that the final contract is in conformance with the purchasing standards and procedures outlined above.

Under the direction of the president and Trustees of the university, the vice president for research (VPR) has primary responsibility for the review and approval of contractual agreements with external entities for sponsored research conducted at USU. The Sponsored Programs Division (SPD) was established by the VPR and charged with responsibility to enhance and facilitate research and other sponsored activities by providing the university community with professional and effective administrative expertise in the management of sponsored projects, while preserving the rights and interests of the university, the researcher, the sponsor and the community. Among other tasks, SPD specifically reviews, officially approves and submits proposals/applications for contractual agreements with external entities for sponsored research; negotiates awards, material transfer and non-disclosure agreements; facilitates sub award collaborations; and manages awards including all non-financial administration, compliance issues, reporting oversight and administrative project close out. Collectively, these actions ensure the scope of work for any contractual agreement with an external entity for sponsored research conducted at USU is stipulated in a written and approved agreement with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and contains provisions that maintain the integrity of the institution by adhering to institutional policies and procedures which are consistent with the mission and core themes of the institution.

Guidance to USU’s investigators and administrators as they develop and execute programs of research within the university is provided through several institutional policies and procedures including:

- 583: Research
- 307: Conflicts of Interest
- 584: Human Participants in Research
Compliance with these policies and procedures in the scope of work for any contractual agreement with an external entity for sponsored research conducted at USU is monitored and ensured by the university’s SPD.

**Academic Freedom**

*2.A.27* The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures and harassment.

The university supports core academic principles including the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create and publish freely. USU’s commitment to academic freedom is embodied in Policy 403.2.3. Through its policies and practices, the university has demonstrated its commitment to maintaining an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist. At USU, it is widely understood that faculty members have broad latitude to determine the content and pedagogical methods for their individual courses. Moreover, there is an established tradition that faculty can write and speak out on controversial issues without fear of reprisal. The Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee of the Faculty Senate is charged with reviewing complaints or concerns pertaining to academic freedom.

*2.A.28* Within the context of its mission, core themes and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to examine thought, reason and perspectives of truth. Moreover, they allow others the freedom to do the same.

The university is operated for the common good, which depends upon the free search for truth and its free expression. USU supports an environment of independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. Policy 403.2 states that “persons having a formal association with the university shall not be involved in acts which violate the academic freedom or constitutional rights of others, or the standards and regulations of the university or the State Board of Regents.”

Along with the core themes learning, discovery and engagement, USU supports and affirms the
freedom of faculty, staff, students and administrators to engage in the intellectual exchange of ideas. USU solicits feedback from faculty regarding their department and leadership of that department using the IDEA Feedback System for Chairs. Faculty are surveyed every 2-3 years and feedback is provided through the department heads and deans, working with the provost’s office as part of the annual review of departmental leadership, plans and priorities.

The Faculty Senate adopted Policy 403.3.1 to accommodate students when course content conflicts with their expressed religious, social or cultural views. This policy protects the academic freedom of the faculty while respecting the core beliefs of the student.

2.A.29 Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs and opinions are identified as such.

Copyright policy is strictly enforced in all teaching. In addition, Policy 403.3.2 outlines faculty standards of conduct with regard to the use and presentation of scholarship. Faculty members are prohibited from:

- Plagiarism, or permitting the appearance that they are the author of work done by others.
- Falsification of data either by deliberate fabrication or selective reporting with the intent to deceive.
- Misappropriation of other’s ideas.
- Misuse of privileged or otherwise confidential information.
- Exploitation for personal or pecuniary gain when supervising the professional work of others.

The concept of academic freedom is accompanied by an equally demanding concept of professional responsibility (Policy 403.3). University faculty members are citizens, members of learned professions and officers of an educational institution. When speaking or writing as citizens, faculty members are free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their distinctive position in the community imposes unique obligations. As individuals of learning and as educational officers, they should understand that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their individual assertions. Hence, they should strive to be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others and make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

Finance

2.A.30 The institution has clearly defined policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources — including financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management and transfers and borrowings between funds.
Policy R220 of the Utah State Board of Regents, defines the role of the president and the relationship between the president and the Regents as well as the relationship between the president and the Trustees. The institution closely follows state law, Board of Regents’ policy and institutional policy in financial management matters. Investments, issuance of debt, human resources, internal controls and delegation of authority are examples where the university has carefully crafted policies and procedures.

The vice president for business and finance is the university's chief financial officer and is designated by the Trustees to serve as the public treasurer for USU. All university business functions are organized under the vice president for business and finance. Each functional area is directed by a designated officer who is well-qualified through experience in these respective areas of responsibility.

All funds coming to USU become institutional funds and are accounted for under a system of fund accounting that requires accountability by source and purpose. The use of institutional funds is subject to institutional policies and procedures including proper planning, budgeting, accounting and auditing.
STANDARD 2.B.1 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Criteria, qualifications and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities and authority of the position.

The university employs a sufficient number of highly qualified, competent personnel to maintain its support and operations functions while promoting equal opportunity and diversity. Policies 385-399 govern the criteria, qualifications and procedures for selection of personnel including:

- 385: Appointments of Opportunity
- 386: Background Checks
- 387: Classified Staff Employment
- 388: Retention, Disposition, Access and Confidentiality of Applicant Information
- 389: Employee Reassignment
- 390: Employment-at-Will
- 391: Employment of Convicted Felons
- 392: Employment of Relatives
- 394: Faculty and Professional Staff Employment
- 395: Introductory Period of Employment
2.B.2 Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.

Every university exempt and non-exempt benefited employee participates annually in a formal performance appraisal with his/her supervisor. The objectives of the appraisal process are to:

- Establish and/or clarify job objectives.
- Establish standards against which performance will be measured.
- Identify employee developmental needs and strategies to address those needs.
- Enhance communication between employee and supervisor.

In addition to formal performance appraisals conducted annually for each staff employee at USU, semiannual or quarterly reviews are recommended to foster better communication between supervisors and employees. Policy 329 governs the specific policies, procedures and responsibilities in the annual performance appraisal. All policies are fully enforced and documented.

USU administrators are appointed by the president in conjunction with a national search process to ensure that the most highly qualified and capable talent for each position is secured. The university does its best to offer competitive compensation to attract and retain quality administrators who will provide outstanding leadership to the benefit of the educational, research, extension and service programs of the greater university community. One of the primary overall responsibilities of the president is to report on various university functions and operations to the Regents and Trustees. Notable among these is evaluation of administrators. According to Policy 104.3.6, the president will review "with the Trustees an evaluation of the qualifications and abilities of the provost, the vice presidents, deans, directors, department heads and other principal administrative officers. This review shall be made not less than once each year and it shall always precede reappointment of the individuals evaluated." The president is also responsible for keeping the Regents and Trustees informed per Policy 104.3.5 regarding the performance of administrative officers.

2.B.3 The institution provides faculty, staff, administrators and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties and responsibilities.

As part of the annual performance appraisal process for university employees, most faculty, staff and administrative members complete an “Employee Development Goals and Training Plan” section of their review in consultation with their supervisor. This annual plan includes sections for goals, training sources and anticipated completion dates. Plans are reviewed and updated annually. In addition to the annual plan that supports professional growth and
development, personnel policies provide additional opportunities for development. The exception to this procedure is in the facilities department where management by objective formatted performance evaluations are utilized for custodians and non-exempt trades personnel. Training opportunities are still provided to all non-exempt personnel in facilities.

Policy 369.2.3 supports the development of professional and classified staff to request a special leave with pay for developmental purposes.

Policy 365 covers sabbatical leave and professional leave of absence with compensation for tenured faculty members.

Empowering Teach Excellence (ETE) is a program designed to bring all instructors together across the USU system to showcase and share best practices in teaching. ETE focuses on enhancing the teaching practice and pedagogical mastery of USU faculty with the goal of improving student learning, retention and academic rigor. This program operates explicitly as a support center for full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, graduate students and other members of the USU community with a teaching role. Through this work, ETE provides direct support to the university’s core theme of learning.

The Tenure Academy is sponsored by the provost’s office to assist tenure-track faculty in the pursuit of becoming a tenured university faculty member. The academy exists to support tenure-track faculty by offering them the knowledge, skills and mentoring essential to successfully navigate the tenure process.

2.B.4 Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.

Faculty quality and the match of that quality to the requirements for successful mission fulfillment begin with the criteria, qualifications and procedures used in the faculty selection and hiring process. The general policies and procedures used to match highly qualified, competent personnel to the needs of the university are outlined in Standard 2.B.1 and apply equally to the selection and hiring of faculty.

In addition to USU’s general hiring policies and procedures, faculty appointments are subject to an additional set of policies to ensure that there are a sufficient number of highly qualified faculty to achieve core theme objectives, establish and oversee academic policies and assure the integrity and continuity of all academic programs. Policy 404 outlines in detail the faculty appointment process to hire qualified personnel for faculty and administrative positions. Policy 404.3 covers the appointment procedures for tenured, tenure-eligible and term-appointment faculty including the process for determining the need for, and general parameters of, faculty appointments congruent with the university’s mission and core themes.
The university’s 1,026 full-time and 55 part-time faculty provide for a student-faculty ratio of 21.4:1, which is within the range of sampled peer institutions. More than 80% of all full-time instructional faculty, in all ranks (including instructors and lecturers), have earned terminal degrees in their field, while 92% of full-time tenured and tenure-track instructional faculty have earned terminal degrees in their field.

The university expects to receive "the full-time professional services of each faculty member as described in the role statement to the extent prescribed by his or her appointment." (Policy 404.1.2). On occasion, special needs within the university may demand services above and beyond that covered by a faculty member’s role statement. In such circumstances, the university may choose to employ "faculty members for temporary assignments on supplemental appointments with additional salary covering professional services beyond a standard load. Commitment for such extra service must have the specific approval of the appropriate department head, supervisor, director (where applicable), dean, or vice president, and the specific approval of the provost and the president." (Policy 404.1.2 (7)).

2.B.5 Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution’s expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research and/or artistic creation.

Department heads and deans ensure that annual faculty workload assignments are consistent with the delivery of degree programs in their units and the talents and competencies of the faculty. Expectations for professional performance by each faculty member are articulated in a written role statement. The role statement is crafted by the department head and approved by the dean and provost at the time that a search is conducted for a faculty member. The role statement spells out in clear terms the manner in which a new faculty member fits into the curriculum and research or scholarly enterprises of the academic unit. Role statements include percentages for the evaluative weight assigned to each area of professional service (e.g., research, creative activity, teaching and service). Role statement percentages are not direct measures of time or effort, rather they reflect overall weight in each area.

Role statements serve two primary functions. First, each faculty member can gauge his or her expenditure of time and energy relative to the various roles the faculty member is asked to perform in the university. Second, role statements provide the medium by which the assigned duties of the faculty member are described and by which administrators and evaluation committees can judge and counsel a faculty member with regard to allocation of effort (Policy 405.6, 405.12.3, 405.12.4, and 405.12.5). Each year, the faculty member’s role assignment provides for the detailed implementation of the professional services of the faculty member as described in the role statement. Faculty must review, sign and date their role statements annually. Revisions to role statements are possible but are not done on a routine annual basis as might be the case with individual workload assignments. Revisions to a faculty member’s role statement would reflect a significant shift in professional roles of the faculty. For example, if a faculty member whose primary area is teaching was awarded a major research grant, the primary area defined in the role statement could be changed to research. Such change requires mutual agreement by the faculty member, department head or supervisor; approval by the
dean (or vice president for Extension) and, where applicable, the chancellor or regional campus executive director.

2.B.6 All faculty are evaluated in a regular, systematic, substantive and collegial manner at least once within every five-year period of service. The evaluation process specifies the timeline and criteria by which faculty are evaluated; utilizes multiple indices of effectiveness, each of which is directly related to the faculty member’s roles and responsibilities, including evidence of teaching effectiveness for faculty with teaching responsibilities; contains a provision to address concerns that may emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations; and provides for administrative access to all primary evaluation data. Where areas for improvement are identified, the institution works with the faculty member to develop and implement a plan to address identified areas of concern.

All faculty are evaluated on a regular basis using procedures articulated in Policy 405. The procedures include a systematic process involving review and recommendations by faculty colleagues on advisory committees and academic leadership at the level of the department head, dean, university president and Trustees. Faculty evaluation can be categorized into three general processes: untenured probationary tenure-track faculty, tenured faculty (i.e., promotion review or post-tenure review) and promotion review for non-tenured term-appointment faculty.

A. Probationary Tenure-Track Faculty. According to procedures outlined in Policy 405, probationary faculty are reviewed for tenure and promotion typically in the sixth year of service (barring credit for service at another institution). In general, the process operates in the following manner:

1. For each new tenure-eligible faculty member who is appointed, the department head, in consultation with the faculty member and with the approval of the dean, appoints a Tenure Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC must be appointed during the faculty member’s first semester of service. The committee consists of at least five members, one of whom is from outside the academic unit. The department head or supervisor will designate the chair of the committee. (Policy 405.6.2 (1)).

2. For each year of the pre-tenure period, the TAC conducts an annual review of the progress of the candidate. Specifically, the TAC provides feedback to the candidate on progress toward tenure, reports to the department head on the candidate’s progress toward tenure, identifies areas for improvement in the candidate’s performance as necessary and makes a recommendation to the department head regarding the annual renewal of the candidate’s appointment. The candidate is responsible for keeping his or her professional file current and complete. This file is the primary source of information for the TAC or Promotion Advisory Committee (PAC). The file should include thorough documentation related to the responsibilities outlined in the role statement. Other materials that provide information or data of consequence to the formal review of the candidate should be added to the candidate’s file as supplementary material before the
TAC’s annual meeting.

3. Annually, the department head or supervisor, after receiving the TAC report, meets with the candidate to review fulfillment of the role statement and evaluate progress toward tenure. Subsequently, the department head or supervisor submits in writing to the academic dean, or vice president for extension, chancellor or regional campus executive director, an evaluation of the candidate indicating where satisfactory progress is being made and where improvement is needed. The department head or supervisor may recommend the nonrenewal of the appointment of the faculty member.

4. While not required by policy, it has become best practice for deans at Utah State University to meet annually with each tenure-track faculty member during the probationary period. The deans do so after reviewing the report from the TAC and that of the department head. The dean then provides additional feedback to the candidate regarding progress toward tenure. The third-year review process has added significance because it is an annual review process which requires a review by the dean and a written recommendation of renewal or nonrenewal to the provost.

5. In the year the candidate seeks tenure and promotion, the candidate’s dossier is reviewed at several levels starting with the TAC, the department head, the dean, the central tenure and promotion committee, the university president and, finally, the Board of Trustees. With the exception of the Trustees, each level passes the dossier on to the subsequent level together with a recommendation regarding tenure and promotion.

The central tenure and promotion committee is convened by the provost who is responsible for the composition of that body. Policy requires that the committee includes the vice president of research (who is also the dean of the school of graduate studies) and the vice president of extension and dean of the college of agriculture and applied sciences. Although the remainder of the committee membership is at the discretion of the provost, it has been practice for more than a decade for the provost to appoint a faculty representative from each academic college to the central tenure and promotion committee. Appointed faculty members hold the rank of full professor and have considerable experience in the review of faculty for tenure and promotion.

B. Review of Tenured Faculty. Tenured faculty are reviewed in two principal ways. Firstly, those at the rank of associate professor may be considered for promotion to the rank of professor. Secondly, aside from promotion consideration, policy requires that every tenured faculty member be rigorously reviewed every five years. This type of review is commonly referred to at most institutions as post-tenure review. The intent of post-tenure review is to support the principles of academic freedom and tenure through the provision of effective evaluation, useful feedback, appropriate intervention and timely and affirmative assistance to ensure that every faculty member continues to experience professional development and accomplishment during the various phases of his or her career. Useful feedback should include tangible recognition to those faculty who have demonstrated high or improved
performance. It is also the intent of this policy to acknowledge that there will be different expectations in different disciplines and changing expectations at different stages of faculty careers.

1. For promotion from associate professor to professor, the candidate is assigned a Promotion Advisory Committee (PAC) formed by the department head and approved by the dean. The PAC works in a virtually identical fashion to that as the TAC described above for pre-tenure faculty in that the PAC reviews a dossier prepared by the candidate to determine if the candidate fulfills the criteria for promotion to professor by successfully meeting obligations articulated in the role statement. A recommendation by the PAC is then forwarded to the department head who, likewise, reviews the dossier and makes a recommendation to the dean. The dean then makes an independent evaluation of the dossier and a recommendation that is passed on to the provost’s central tenure and promotion committee, whose recommendation is subsequently forwarded to the university president. The president then makes a final recommendation to the Trustees, who make the final decision about promotion.

2. In the spirit of shared governance, the faculty (as defined in Policies 401.3 and 401.4) and department head of each department work together in consultation with the dean to establish procedures by which all faculty are reviewed annually. This evaluation encompasses a multi-year window of performance that covers a five-year span (to meet the requirements of post-tenure review for tenured faculty). This review will incorporate an analysis of the fulfillment of the role statement.

3. Beginning the year after a faculty member’s tenure or post-tenure decision, the annual review process (Policy 405.12.1) will also include a formal assessment on the post-tenure performance of tenured faculty. The review will be discipline and role specific as appropriate to evaluate post-tenure performance. The basic standard for post-tenure review is whether the faculty member under review discharges conscientiously and with professional competence the duties appropriately associated with his or her position as specified in the role statement. It is the intent of this policy to acknowledge that there will be different expectations in different disciplines and changing expectations at different stages of faculty careers. To fulfill this requirement, and beginning no earlier than five years after a faculty member is promoted or awarded tenure, the department head or supervisor will be required to indicate as part of the annual review letter whether or not the faculty member is meeting the formal standard for post-tenure review. A tenured faculty member may optionally request the formation of a Peer Review Committee (PRC) to provide feedback on post-tenure performance. The PRC will meet and review materials related to the five-year performance of the faculty member. The PRC role is only to provide post-tenure performance feedback in writing to the faculty member requesting the review. The PRC will consist of at least three tenured faculty members who hold rank equal to or greater than the faculty member being reviewed and will be formed by mutual agreement of the department head or supervisor and the faculty member being reviewed. The PRC must include at least one member from outside the academic unit of the faculty.
member being reviewed. If there are fewer than two faculty members in the academic unit with equal to or higher rank than the candidate, the committee members may be selected from faculty of related academic units.

C. Promotion of Non-Tenured (Term-Appointment) Faculty. Term-appointment faculty are not eligible for tenure but are eligible for promotion to higher ranks. The process for promotion is virtually identical to that of tenured faculty in that when the term-appointment faculty member wishes to be considered for promotion, he or she can initiate the process. The process begins with a Promotion Advisory Committee (PAC) assembled by the department head. The PAC reviews the qualifications and performance of the non-tenured faculty member and makes a recommendation to the department head. A systematic process of dossier review and recommendation follows the order of PAC, department head, dean, central tenure and promotion committee and university president, with the Board of Trustees making the final decision.
2.C.1 The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; that culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes; and that lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

The Utah State Board of Regents Master Plan designates Utah State University as the state’s land-grant university. As such, USU is responsible for programs in agriculture, business, education, engineering, natural resources and sciences while supporting the traditional core of liberal learning in the humanities, arts and social sciences. Overarching criteria for academic programs are established in the Regents’ R401 policy, which defines academic awards and authority for program approval.

The university’s academic structure is organized into colleges of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, Arts, Business, Education and Human Services, Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, Natural Resources and Science. University policy dictates that faculty in the departments of these colleges are responsible for the design, delivery and assessment of programs and curricula. Proposals for new academic programs are reviewed at multiple levels in the university after leaving the sponsoring department to ensure rigor and appropriateness of content and program learning outcomes. Programs are reviewed by a college curriculum committee and then forwarded to the Curriculum Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee (EPC) for central review. The Curriculum Subcommittee also considers and acts on
submitted proposals for changes to program courses. Proposals for program and course changes are next reviewed by the EPC which reports policy recommendations and major actions to the Faculty Senate for approval. Programs are also subject to peer review per R401-6.

The land-grant mission means that USU’s role is to provide enhanced accessibility to programs for students throughout Utah. Courses and complete degree programs are offered throughout the state at Utah State University’s multiple regional campuses and by USU’s state-wide educational network managed by the Office of Academic and Instructional Services (AIS). Although USU has multiple campuses, it operates academically as a single campus. All faculty appointments and tenure reside in home departments on the Logan campus; and oversight of regional campus and online programs and courses is subject to the same review, approval and assessment policies and process as programs on the Logan Campus. This is designed to ensure common content and rigor within majors regardless of course delivery method.

USU expects all programs of study to have outcomes that are assessable in accord with the principles of the disciplines, to articulate how those outcomes are achieved and measured, to provide pathways for students into and through the majors and to have every graduate able to articulate what his or her degree expects graduates to know, understand and achieve. This information is published in the University Catalog and through links to program documentation through the AAA website. Some of USU’s efforts in this assessment have garnered national recognition both in terms of grant support and honors through the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) and the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA). USU continues to work with the Lumina Foundation and the Association of American Colleges and Universities to improve the measurable achievement of student learning outcomes.

In addition to the alignment of course-level learning objectives with general education and university-wide IDEA System objectives, academic departments and faculty continue to have primary responsibility for determining that student learning and achievement are consistent with program content and outcomes in their recognized fields of study.

2.C.2 The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.

Learning outcomes exist at multiple levels within the university: course-level, program and degree level and university-level outcomes. Dissemination and publication of expected learning outcomes, therefore, also happens at multiple levels within the institution. All learning outcomes are carefully structured, reviewed, vetted and assessed within the academic units with structured oversight provided by committees and councils in line with Regents’ Policy R401, as outlined in Standard 2.C.1.

Course-level learning outcomes are disseminated through the written syllabi distributed in each class and, for most courses, through Canvas, USU’s learning management system (LMS). Expected program and degree requirements and student learning outcomes are published
online through the University Catalog and on departmental websites. In response to the Recommendation from the Year Three report as described in the Introduction, USU has intensified its work to identify, assess and publish program-level student outcomes for all major program components of its degrees. A centralized “learning outcomes and assessment switchboard” has been created on the AAA website to facilitate ease of access to this information. This page has direct links to departmental sub-pages on learning outcomes, assessment plans, outcomes data and data-informed decision making for each program of study at USU. Departments are currently working on embedding links to these program-level learning outcomes and assessments in their departmental listings for the 2018-2019 University Catalog. Current coverage in the 2017-2018 University Catalog is inconsistent, but all departments have student learning outcomes available on the departmental websites for each program of study and degree-level.

2.C.3 Credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted learning outcomes, norms or equivalencies in higher education.

Whenever a degree program is proposed by a department at Utah State University, it undergoes a rigorous review at multiple levels within the university. Once departmental faculty and administration have discussed a new degree program’s goals and requirements, the department submits an R401 proposal to its college curriculum committee where the proposal must first pass muster with regard to the degree’s structure, relevance and support. Once approved at the level of the college, R401 degree program proposals are then forwarded to central university committees: first, the Curriculum Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee (EPC) and, second, the EPC itself. Both of these committees are standing committees of the Faculty Senate, and the EPC is chaired by the provost or his or her designee. Members of the Curriculum Subcommittee and EPC scrutinize each proposal in preparation for a discussion about the proposal, which takes place at monthly meetings. Discussions about proposals focus on the curriculum and requirements of the degree, student demand and resource support. If a program proposal passes the Curriculum Subcommittee review, it is then forwarded to the EPC where an opportunity for a second discussion by faculty about the proposal takes place. It is not unusual for program proposals to be returned to departments for revisions stemming from Curriculum Subcommittee and EPC reviews. When a proposal passes both curriculum and EPC review, it is forwarded to the Faculty Senate in the monthly EPC report for the Faculty Senate’s consent agenda. Once approved by the Faculty Senate, the university president then forwards the proposal to the Trustees for final approval.

At USU, consistent with NWCCU standards, one credit is awarded for each three hours of student work per week during a 15-week semester. For traditional courses, this is interpreted as one 50-minute class period plus two hours of study per week per credit. One 50-minute period per week during a semester equals 12.5 contact hours per credit. This standard is also used to determine credits for courses that do not meet for 50-minute periods.

Program length is determined by departments and colleges using USU requirements. Major
requirement sheets for undergraduate students and graduate students are published in the University Catalog.

2.C.4 Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.

USU is a traditional institution of higher education with degree program requirements similar to those at comparable Carnegie higher research activity and land-grant universities in the United States. Faculty designed the institution’s undergraduate and graduate degree programs and are responsible for the continual process of program evaluation and, when necessary, program revision to reflect the most current status of each field and discipline. In this way, USU students benefit from rigorous degree program oversight whose purpose is to ensure that what is taught is done so in the most efficient manner possible relative to the present state of knowledge in the field, degree program requirements and career preparation. General admission and graduation requirements for degree programs are clearly defined and widely published in the University Catalog. Students are actively advised on these requirements during their tenure at USU. The requirements are the following:

- Undergraduate requirements
- Graduate requirements
- Undergraduate major requirements
- Graduate major requirements

The majority of course work at the master’s level must be beyond the undergraduate level while course work at the doctoral level may include master-level course work but must include a majority of doctoral-level courses. There are strict limitations on undergraduate courses that can be used for graduate study. Standards of graduate study are set and regulated by the USU Graduate Council, a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate. The council advises the dean of graduate studies on exceptions or adjustments to policy. The relationship of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), Graduate Council and the Faculty Senate are specified in Policy 105. Each individual graduate student is supervised by a graduate committee composed of three faculty members at the master’s level and five at the doctoral level. The Graduate Council has established guidelines for committee membership.

2.C.5 Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.

The faculty has primary responsibility for design, approval, implementation and review of the curriculum (Policy 401.8.1) through a well-defined process. Generally, changes in the
curriculum begin at the department level where faculty provide curriculum oversight. Commencing with the department review and approval process, changes are carried forth to the appropriate college curriculum committee. Assuming approval at this level, the changes move forward to university curriculum committees. For any course that is to receive University Studies designation, the approval form is sent to the General Education Subcommittee, which has broad-based representation.

Approved changes are sent to the Educational Policies Committee (EPC), which is the primary curriculum body of the university. The EPC is composed of three subcommittees: academic standards, curriculum and general education. The curriculum committee receives and reviews all course and program proposals for undergraduate and graduate programs and reports its recommendations to the EPC. The required forms for any proposal delineate what the change includes: new course; revised credit, title and number; addition or removal of general education designation; suspension of a course from the catalog or Honors designation. Other committees that may be stops along the path of approval to the EPC include the Council on Teacher Education for those classes that will be included in any teacher licensure or certification program and, in the case of graduate level courses, the Graduate Council. In each of these committees, courses or programs are reviewed thoroughly and may be approved or sent back to the sponsoring department or college for revision. All curricular actions passed out of the EPC go to the Faculty Senate. Once passed by the senate, program changes proceed to the USU Board of Trustees for final approval.

Faculty are actively engaged in the selection of new faculty, working with the department head or supervisor. Policy 404.3 calls for the faculty of departments and other academic units, in conjunction with the department head or supervisor, to determine the need for and general parameters of faculty appointments congruent with mission and role. The faculty members selected for the search committee typically prepare the job description, advertise the position, screen applicants, interview and investigate candidates, solicit recommendations from faculty and submit a ranked order list of acceptable candidates to the department head or supervisor who then makes a recommendation to the dean.

Faculty are actively engaged in fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly defined student learning outcomes at the course and program levels. In addition to the assessment of course-level outcomes directed by each faculty instructor, program-level learning outcomes assessment is led by faculty and all faculty participate in the IDEA System process. This system, implemented in fall 2011, requires faculty to select and manage learning outcomes from a modified Bloom’s Taxonomy and provides an opportunity for student self-assessment of their learning. The university links course and program-level outcomes and assessments with the results of these student self-assessments.

2.C.6 Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.
Faculty in academic departments and the libraries ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process. Faculty and librarians work collaboratively to write outcomes, develop curriculum, provide active learning opportunities inside and outside the library and assess course-integrated instruction that meets the information-related learning outcomes defined by the university and each academic department.

The libraries have a long history of a vigorous and integrated instruction program. Continuous review and assessment have significantly expanded and enhanced these instruction efforts. Library instruction, whether in person or online, has developed strategically across the university. Subject librarians play an active role in teaching students how to understand the complexities of using and producing information by providing authentic and active opportunities to engage in meaningful research.

The library instruction program has been strategic about how it integrates with courses, focusing on opportunities that have the most impact. One core piece of the program is a close collaboration with the Writing Program which provides in-depth library instruction at the general education level. Subject librarians also work with faculty in their liaison areas to teach information literacy within the disciplines. Librarians seek collaborations in numerous ways and serve on relevant university committees such as the General Education Committee, the Educational Policies Committee and the Graduate Council. Librarians target courses for library instruction based on curriculum mapping efforts as well as contacting faculty who identify information literacy outcomes in their IDEA course surveys or who use library guides automatically embedded in Canvas courses.

2.C.7 Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; b) awarded only at the undergraduate level to enrolled students; c) limited to a maximum of 25% of the credits needed for a degree; d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution’s regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty. Credit granted for prior experiential learning is so identified on students’ transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution’s review process.

USU does not currently grant credit for prior experiential learning. However, matriculated students may challenge a course for credit by taking a special examination. Departments determine if a course is appropriate for challenge. Students who pass a departmental examination will receive a CR grade posted to their transcript for that course.

2.C.8 The final judgment in accepting transfer credit is the responsibility of the receiving institution. Transfer credit is accepted according to procedures that provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality, relevance to the students’ programs and integrity.
of the receiving institution’s degrees. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that the credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic quality and level to credit it offers. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements between the institutions.

Articulation decisions regarding the application of transfer credit to both the university core and major requirements are handled by the individual academic departments. Results are compiled and maintained by an articulation team in the Office of the Registrar. Institutions from which students commonly transfer have been identified and articulation agreements are in place and reviewed annually. Policies and procedures are communicated to students and faculty through the University Catalog, the Advisor Handbook and online.

Graduate transfer credit is limited to 12 semester hours. Exceptions to this policy may be requested by departments with justification based upon sound academic reasons.

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS**

2.C.9 *The General Education component of undergraduate programs (if offered) demonstrates an integrated course of study that helps students develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship and personal fulfillment. Baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences. Applied undergraduate degree and certificate programs of thirty (30) semester credits or forty-five (45) quarter credits in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes.*

USU requires a general education experience for all students in undergraduate programs. The general education program requires students to complete a minimum of 30 credits in lower division courses. As mandated by Utah Board of Regents’ Policy R470, these courses include six hours of English composition and a minimum of three hours of mathematics or statistics. Students are required to take breadth courses in each of five areas: humanities, physical sciences, life sciences, social sciences and arts. They are required to take one “exploratory” course of their choosing from the approved list of general education courses. In addition, students must take an "American Institutions" course to comply with state law. Each breadth area includes specific courses designated with a USU prefix (e.g., USU 1300) and designed according to a set of articulated intellectual and pedagogical goals.

General education does not end with the sophomore year. All graduates of USU must take two depth courses outside of their area of specialization. Hence, humanists must take a depth
science and a depth social science course, while scientists must take a depth humanities/arts course and a depth social science course. These courses, which must be at the 3000 level or above, are selected to reinforce both the learning acquired in the breadth courses and the appropriate skills in communication and quantitative reasoning. Students must also take two communications intensive courses and one quantitative intensive course before they graduate, regardless of their major.

General education at USU is overseen by the 27 members of the General Education Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee (EPC). Made up of three members of the EPC, representatives of colleges, the chairs of the general education area committees and the student body president, the committee also has several non-voting members who attend ex-officio. This subcommittee is charged with course approval, assessment and policy concerning general education. All courses designated as USU Courses are overseen by this subcommittee.

The General Education Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee acts as the academic department for the core general education breadth courses. The general education subcommittee reviews and approves individual course syllabi to ensure quality and rigor of general education courses. There are established rubrics of criteria for proposed general education classes in every breadth and depth area that are used for assessment in this process. These establish the criteria for what any general education course will offer students and asks instructors to explain how levels of proficiency in the course will be measured.

All courses are submitted for review and approval to a secure web site. From this centralized location, course approval requests are viewed, changed, corrected and approved. Information can only be accessed by program managers and by select staff, department heads and authorized college administrators. All courses require at least two levels of approval:

1. Department Head: Verifies instructor qualifications and course syllabus alignment with department, college and university standards and that learning objectives align with programmatic and disciplinary expectations. The department head may also assign instructors, monitor faculty load and manage degree program schedules. If the course instructor is the department head, the college dean approves at this level.

2. College Administrator: Approves all courses for the college including distance education courses.

2.C.10 The institution demonstrates that the General Education components of its baccalaureate degree programs (if offered) and transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution’s mission and learning outcomes for those programs.

All components of the bachelor’s and associate’s degrees have identifiable outcomes assessable according to the standards of the disciplines. Utah law (R470) requires common course numbering and articulation in general education. Under Regents’ Policy R470, the essential
learning outcomes to be met by general education courses are defined. The **Essential Learning Outcomes** identified by the Regents for general education are skills and competencies necessary to prepare graduates for post-graduate success. These outcomes are measured by competencies identified in a specific course or learning experience. The Essential Learning Outcomes are:

- Acquire intellectual and practical skills.
- Gain knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural worlds.
- Develop personal and social responsibility.
- Demonstrate integrative learning.

**2.C.11** The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.

Full-time faculty members, with degrees and expertise in identified programs, oversee all certificate and applied degree programs. Faculty members select related instruction and general education courses based on the intended goals of each program. The selected courses are clearly identified on advising sheets that are distributed to students in each program.

The related instruction and general education courses are typically developed and taught by faculty members in other departments whose faculty members specialize in those disciplines. For example, ENGL 1010, a common writing course required in applied degrees, is developed and taught by faculty in the English department. Those departments specify course outcomes and objectives and assess those outcomes in a manner consistent with all other students who take these courses.

**GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

**2.C.12** Graduate programs are consistent with the institution’s mission; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. They differ from undergraduate programs by requiring greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.

**Graduate programs and institutional mission.** The Utah Board of Regents (Policy R312.4) is responsible for configuring a system of colleges and universities to meet the educational needs of Utah citizens and maintaining the integrity of that system by defining institutional categories that recognize the distinct missions and roles of each institution within the Utah System of...
Higher Education (USHE). Utah State University is one of two public doctorate-granting universities in the state of Utah and is expected to “discover, create and transmit knowledge through education and training programs at the undergraduate, graduate and professional levels through research and development and through service and extension programs associated with a major teaching and research university.” Utah State University fulfills this mission by hosting campuses throughout the state in addition to the Logan campus that provide graduate programs at one or more of the campuses or completely online.

The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) is the central administrative body charged with promoting, supporting and reviewing graduate education at USU to ensure consistency and excellence in all graduate programs. The SGS is led by the vice president for research and dean of the School of Graduate Studies who reports to the provost and is a member of the Executive Committee. The SGS dean works closely with other members of USU’s central administration, Graduate Council, colleges and the academic departments to provide the best possible intellectual and physical environment for graduate student education.

Graduate program requirements. Standards of graduate study are set and regulated by the USU Graduate Council. USU graduate programs possess a level of academic rigor that is appropriate to the level of graduate or professional degree offered. All programs include advanced classroom study typically coupled with research or creative endeavors and/or various professional experiences designed to enhance a student’s intellectual or creative capacities. Specific information on individual USU graduate programs, including a program overview, degree requirements and career options associated with the degree, can be found online.

Graduate programs at regional campuses. Utah is a largely rural state. In keeping with the mission as Utah’s land-grant university, USU hosts campuses throughout the state in addition to the Logan campus. USU currently offers 23 master’s degrees that can be obtained at one or more of the regional campuses or completely online and a doctoral degree in education. For the doctoral program, students may pursue either a PhD or EdD. These degrees are the only distance-delivered doctoral degrees in the state.

Graduate program review. To ensure USU’s graduate programs are strong, appropriately described and aligned with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions, the institution promotes regular and comprehensive graduate program review and assessment. The Office of Research and Graduate Studies publishes an annual report detailing progress on strategic initiatives for graduate programs.

2.C.13 Graduate admission and retention policies ensure that student qualifications and expectations are compatible with the institution’s mission and the program’s requirements. Transfer of credit is evaluated according to clearly defined policies by faculty with a major commitment to graduate education or by a representative body of faculty responsible for the degree program at the receiving institution.

The Graduate Council establishes regulations and standards for graduate study including
admissions requirements. Admission into graduate study is a two-level process that involves
the prospective student’s academic home department and the School of Graduate Studies
(SGS). The SGS reviews applications to confirm compliance with university minimum admission
requirements and creates an electronic portfolio for each student seeking admission. These
portfolios are accessible for review to departments with additional program entrance
requirements.
To meet their educational goals, students need to remain enrolled and graduate within a time
that is appropriate to their graduate program. The University Catalog specifies that a master’s
degree must be completed within six years and a doctorate must be completed within eight
years. The University Catalog also provides graduate students with information regarding
procedures for securing a leave of absence from their studies due to illness, required military
service and other extenuating circumstances. A request for leave of absence must be approved
by the dean of the SGS upon written recommendation of the department head. An approved
leave of absence may be the basis for extending the time limit to complete a degree.

Procedures for evaluation and approval of graduate transfer credit are outlined in the
University Catalog. If USU residency requirements are met, up to 12 semester credits earned at
another accredited institution may be transferred into a graduate program at USU with
approval from the graduate supervisory committee and the dean of the School of Graduate
Studies.

2.C.14 Graduate credit may be granted for internships, field experiences and clinical practices
that are an integral part of the graduate degree program. Credit toward graduate degrees may
not be granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to matriculation into the graduate
degree program. Unless the institution structures the graduate learning experience, monitors
that learning and assesses learning achievements, graduate credit is not granted for learning
experiences external to the students’ formal graduate programs.

USU does not grant credit for prior experiential learning. However, the university does
recognize the value of internships, field experience or clinical practice as an integral part of
many USU graduate programs. USU course descriptions identify graduate courses that provide
credit for internships, field experiences or clinical activities that are part of a student’s degree
program. Only those courses appearing on a student’s program of study and approved by his or
her supervisory committee may be used toward a graduate degree.

2.C.15 Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research, professional practice,
scholarship or artistic creation are characterized by a high level of expertise, originality and
critical analysis. Programs intended to prepare students for artistic creation are directed toward
developing personal expressions of original concepts, interpretations, imagination, thoughts or
feelings. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research or scholarship are
directed toward advancing the frontiers of knowledge by constructing and/or revising theories
and creating or applying knowledge. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for
professional practice are directed toward developing high levels of knowledge and performance


skills directly related to effective practice within the profession.

Objectives and requirements of USU graduate degree programs include a level of expertise, originality and critical analysis that is appropriate to the level of graduate and professional degrees offered and are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions. The expected output of a graduate degree by programmatic level is shown in the table below.

Table 2.1: Summary of Graduate Degree Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Research/Professional Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts(^1)</td>
<td>Thesis, paper or other culminating scholarly or creative experience; many departments also have foreign language requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Fine Arts</td>
<td>Comprehensive paper or creative work of art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Education</td>
<td>Integrative project or coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science - Plan A</td>
<td>Thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science - Plan B</td>
<td>Comprehensive paper or creative work of art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Master’s or Master of Science - Plan C</td>
<td>Culminating scholarly, creative or integrative experience that may include a comprehensive paper, internship or project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Master’s Professional Degrees</td>
<td>Culminating project report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy/Education</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)There are Master of Arts options for many Plan A, B, or C MS degrees. The expected output will reflect those degrees.

As indicated in the table above, programs such as the Master of Arts, Master of Fine Arts or professional master’s degrees in the arts that are intended to prepare students for artistic creation require development of original concepts, interpretations, imagination, thoughts or feelings. Preparation of a thesis, paper, performance or other culminating scholarly or creative experience represents the crowning learning experience for a graduate student. USU also has several professional master’s programs that are designed to prepare students for professional practice by developing high levels of knowledge and performance skills directly related to effective practice within a particular profession.

Graduate programs that are intended to prepare students for research or scholarship include Plan A and B master’s degrees, and the Doctor of Philosophy or Education. Preparation of a thesis, Plan B paper, or dissertation is the culminating learning experience for a graduate student. Each graduate student is supervised by a Graduate Advisory Committee (three faculty members at the master’s level, five at the doctoral level). The Graduate Council has established guidelines for Graduate Advisory Committee membership. With supervision from the Graduate Advisory Committee, the student must advance the frontiers of knowledge by constructing and/or
revising theories and creating or applying knowledge.

A dissertation represents a culmination of original research in a specified discipline based on the student’s own research or a treatment and presentation of known subject matter from a new perspective. Though less extensive than a dissertation, the thesis required for a Plan A master’s degree is also a contribution to the field of knowledge based on the student’s own research or a treatment and presentation of known subject matter from a new perspective. A master’s Plan B paper is usually a review of literature with conclusions drawn after conceptualizing an area of inquiry, planning a systematic search and analyzing and critiquing the acquired information. Though they may be less intensive and not demand the originality of a Plan A thesis, Plan B papers and reports are expected to reflect equivalent scholarship standards and the summary and conclusions developed should enhance knowledge in the discipline.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND NON-CREDIT PROGRAMS

2.C.16 Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution’s mission and goals.

Regional Campuses and Academic Instructional Services (RC/AIS)

USU’s regional campuses provide quality courses and degree programs throughout Utah and in other countries through distance education. These courses are delivered via face-to-face, interactive broadcast and online instruction. Regional campuses are administered by the President’s Office on the Logan campus with executive directors at campuses throughout Utah. Programs and faculty locations are strategically selected based on the university’s mission, core themes and objectives, community needs and academic focus. Faculty located at campuses are administered by a local academic supervisor (i.e., executive director) as well as their department head located on the Logan campus.

USU’s mission to provide educational access statewide is largely satisfied by its system of regional campuses. Distance-delivered programs include courses leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees from many disciplines. Regional campus programs are designed, approved, administered and evaluated by sponsoring academic departments. All course evaluations go to department heads, and Academic Instructional Services (AIS) monitors technology delivery quality.

Academic departments determine the criteria for evaluating student performance. Departments have the responsibility of determining that student learning and achievement are comparable in breadth, depth and quality to the results of traditional instructional practices on campus.

In addition to programs offered through regional campuses, the university offers credit and
non-credit continuing education and off-campus programs through the following programs:

**Online Education**

Online education follows the university schedule but is designed with the flexibility to allow non-traditional students to continue their full-time employment while learning. Most of the online courses follow the regular semester term. A list of online programs is found on the website.

**Interactive Video Conferencing (IVC)**

Interactive Video Conferencing (IVC) delivers synchronous courses to rural and urban Utah sites. Programming is scheduled by AIS through the Utah Education and Telehealth Network (UETN). IVC enables USU departments to serve remote sites that would otherwise not be accessible. Distance education programs parallel the instruction found on the Logan campus, and academic department heads monitor instructional quality and other aspects of delivery.

**Concurrent Enrollment**

Concurrent enrollment is a cooperative program between Utah’s public and higher education systems to help high school students who plan to attend a post-secondary institution. Students earn both high school and college credits. Each campus adheres to policies of USU and the Regents in administering concurrent enrollment in their service areas. Coordination for statewide concurrent enrollment occurs in Logan.

Concurrent enrollment courses may be used at USU and at other institutions in and outside the state of Utah. Courses are limited to 1000 and 2000 levels. Textbooks, testing, attendance, grading and assignments are parallel to the courses taught at USU. Courses are taught by full- and part-time USU faculty and/or high school faculty. Faculty and courses are approved in advance by the academic departments and are evaluated by students using the IDEA System.

**Study Abroad**

USU provides study abroad opportunities for students through faculty-led, exchange and direct study abroad programs. Study abroad offers an impactful and unique academic experience for students through learning, discovery and engagement abroad. Study abroad is considered a high-impact practice of higher education, and research shows that study abroad strengthens retention and graduation rates.

In addition to the student benefits, USU faculty leading study abroad programs build deeper relationships with students, re-energize their enthusiasm for their field, pursue new research opportunities and earn compensation for their work.

All faculty-led programs and exchange agreements are reviewed by the respective
department/college and the vice provost and director for global engagement. The president signs all exchange agreements after legal review.

**Conference Services**

Conference Services assists the colleges, departments and faculty in planning, staffing and directing conferences, workshops and youth activities at USU. These activities fall inside and outside of the day school format in terms of timing, length, location or audience and are always offered under the direction of faculty, departments or conference services management and marketing teams. Included are conferences and workshops that offer youth and adult learning and a professional business institute. In planning for these non-credit and continuing education programs, care is taken to ensure that all programs are compatible with the university’s mission, core themes and objectives.

**USU Extension**

USU Extension extends the resources of the university to the people of the state through formalized outreach and engagement (Policy 103.6). Extension faculty members develop programming to meet the specific needs of the people in the counties, and often initiate and implement applied research and discovery that addresses the problems faced by people in the county, state and region. USU Extension publishes Impact Reports which document faculty activity and programming throughout the state. These reports detail various subjects and programs available to the citizens of Utah. Examples of selected report topics include water, sustainability, healthy relationships, food sense and STEM programs. USU’s state-of-the-art research and programming efforts are recognized for their effectiveness and success in meeting the needs of citizens across the state. In addition, these programs align with the core themes through education, research and outreach for the communities across the state. USU Extension is at the heart of the university’s core theme, engagement, and is crucial to mission fulfillment.

2.C.17 The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution’s continuing education and special learning activities.

Regional campus courses are reviewed and approved by the same process as traditional courses on the Logan campus. Courses are submitted for review and approval through a secure website. From this centralized location, course approval requests are viewed, changed, corrected and approved.
All courses require at least two levels of approval:

1. The appropriate USU department head verifies instructor qualifications and course syllabus alignment with department, college and university standards and may also assign instructors, monitor faculty load and manage degree program schedules. If the course instructor is the department head, then the college dean will approve at this level.

2. Each semester, all regional campus courses must be approved before they are opened for registration. USU courses numbered below 1000 have zero credit hours that can be applied to a degree. Such courses are not transferable, not calculated in a student’s grade point average and do not count toward earned hours. One semester hour of credit is earned for each 15 hours of instruction in accordance with the university’s credit hour policy.

Academic departments determine the criteria for evaluating student performance as described in Standard 3.A.3. Departments have responsibility for determining that student learning and achievement are comparable in breadth, depth and quality to the results of traditional instructional practices on the Logan campus. Also, all courses taught at the regional campuses undergo the same evaluations using the IDEA Center Student Ratings of Instruction system (IDEA System) and peer reviews. Students evaluate each course at the end of the semester. The data collected is used by the departments and colleges to improve the learning experience for students.

2.C.18 The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.

Although USU does not grant Continuing Education Units (CEUs), the university may coordinate with professional licensing organizations, school districts and the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) to provide workshops or courses to meet the various licensing or endorsement requirements needed by those groups. When developing relationships with professional associations, many academic departments provide workshops, symposia, field tours or faculty participation in professional organization events to lend expertise for the needs of specific professional certifications, either on campus or at other locations. Thus, the CEUs are given by the entity doing the certification (e.g., International Society of Arboriculture, Society of American Foresters, American Psychological Association, etc.). In these cases, no university credit is given.

USU has a long history of collaborating with school districts across the state and the USOE to provide in-service professionals the academic coursework to apply for USOE endorsements and certificates. These programs or courses are coordinated by the appropriate USU academic
department, generally the School of Teacher Education and Leadership, and meet normal department standards for that level of course credit. The regular USU course approval process is used in all such credits.

2.C.19 The institution maintains records that describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.

Conference Services, as well as specific academic departments, maintains comprehensive records that provide all details about noncredit course/workshop content, length, level and quantity of instruction.
STANDARD 2.D: STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES

2.D.1 Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, the institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.

With a commitment to the mission and core themes, Utah State University offers a variety of programs and offices that provide services and support to students individually and in collaboration across the campus community.

The Academic Success Center (ASC) is staffed by learning specialists who have developed programs and services to help USU students achieve academic success. The office offers workshops on time management, test anxiety, procrastination and critical thinking. The ASC manages a drop-in math and statistics tutoring center and provides Tutor Advertiser where students can find a private tutor in any subject.

Career Services supports the career exploration and employment goals of students and alumni as they explore academic majors and careers, obtain student employment (from work study to internships), prepare for graduate school and testing and succeed in their first career position.

Students who are first-generation college students, come from a low income background or have a documented disability can apply for Student Support Services, which provides extra moral and academic support during their tenure at USU. Student Support Services teaches
special sections of some math and psychology classes and offers early registration and grant opportunities for students.

Exploratory Advising, formerly University Advising, is for students who have not yet declared a major. Academic advisors help students choose classes each semester, decide how many credits they should take and find the major that best suits their goals for the future.

The Veterans Resource Office (VRO) was created to assist USU student veterans in their transition between the military and civilian environment. The VRO serves as the central switch board for the veterans who need information or assistance, whether it is regarding VA benefits, USU related topics or civilian matters. The VRO is also a place where veterans can network with each other.

The Student Health and Wellness Center offers basic health services, physical therapy, wellness education and workshops, nutrition programs and confidential advocacy and counseling for sexual assault through the Sexual Assault and Anti-Violence Information Program (SAAVI).

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides confidential mental health services to students enrolled in six or more credits on the Logan campus. Services include consultation, workshops, groups, individual and couples counseling as well as crisis/emergency interventions.

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides persons with disabilities equal access to university programs, services and activities by fostering an environment that supports the understanding and acceptance of persons with disabilities throughout the university community and the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

Global Engagement serves as the primary link between students and the governmental agencies around the world. The office provides admission assistance, advising on immigration matters as well as academic, personal and social adjustment issues of international students, scholars and their families.

The Honors Program gives undergraduates the opportunity to pursue enhanced course work in their University Studies requirements as well as their area of major study. A limited number of new freshman are invited to join the Honors Program each year and continuing students may join if they maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0.

2.D.2 The institution makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. Crime statistics, campus security policies and other disclosures required under federal and state regulations are made available in accordance with those regulations.

The safety and security of USU students is coordinated by the Department of Public Safety, comprised of three department divisions: Police, Fire Marshal and Emergency Management. The USU Police Department (USUPD) is staffed 24-hours every day with a trained dispatcher.
The department provides 24-hour patrol with its twelve full-time and eight part-time state certified police officers. USU police officers provide safety patrols, respond to all reports of crime or suspicious activity and conduct follow-up investigations on all leads. The full-time officers in the USUPD have full peace officer status under state statute including the authority to make arrests.

The Logan City Fire Department and USUPD respond to reports of fire and medical emergencies on campus. All officers receive ongoing training under regulatory guidelines established by the Utah Department of Public Safety. This training includes such areas as crime prevention, domestic violence, active shooter, criminal investigation, first-aid, firearms, defensive tactics, crowd control, traffic accident investigation and constitutional and statutory law.

USU has recently adopted the Safety, Response and Reporting Policy, which provides “the framework in creating a safe and secure environment for students, faculty, staff and campus visitors. [It] outlines the university’s response to reports of crime and defines reporting guidelines, while complying with federal laws regarding safety on campus.”

Crime statistics, other required disclosures and additional information are included in USU’s annual Campus Security and Fire Safety Report.

2.D.3 Consistent with its mission, core themes and characteristics, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful and accurate information and advising about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

Policies and procedures for admission for undergraduate, graduate and other categories of students are published in the University Catalog and on the admissions website. Students who transfer to USU from another institution can view the course-by-course articulation guide to determine how their credits will transfer to USU. Students who transfer to USU and have an associate’s degree or have completed the general education requirements from a regionally accredited institution may be deemed as having satisfied the general education portion of the University Studies requirements.

Student Orientation and Transition Services assists students and their parents in the transition to college through Student Orientation, Advising and Registration (SOAR); Connections; Aggie Passport; A-Team Peer Mentors and Parent and Family Programs. It also assists students who defer their admission or take a leave of absence from the university by providing information and keeping in close contact with students and their parents while they are away.

Orientation for incoming students is currently offered as a three-part process. First, SOAR is mandatory for incoming freshmen and optional for transfer students. SOAR assists with the enrollment process and provides a comprehensive orientation to the university. SOAR includes on-campus and online orientation program options for incoming students. Special sessions are
also held for non-traditional students. Parent orientation is offered concurrently with SOAR sessions.

Second, **Connections** is an optional first-year experience course offered the week before school begins. It is a two-credit academic course designed to ease the transition to USU and get students prepared for the college experience. The course is designed to give a more in-depth orientation, helping students answer questions such as:

- Why am I here?
- How do I best engage myself in the process of becoming an educated person?
- How do I become a fully engaged member of the university community?

The course includes study skills and time management strategies, tips on working with professors and maintaining classroom civility and information about connecting to the university through clubs and organizations. The course is also offered during the semester in a 7-week format for non-traditional students. In addition, special sections are in place for athletes, honor students and veterans.

Third, **Peer Mentoring** provides incoming freshmen with a peer mentor who keeps in weekly contact during the first year. Peer mentors send weekly e-mails containing dates and deadlines, a list of campus and community events and helpful tips.

In 2017, the new student orientation process was transformed to include five **online modules** for incoming undergraduates to complete at various stages in the enrollment process. These online orientation modules complement the existing on-campus orientation, Connections class and the peer mentor program.

The School of Graduate Studies provides an **orientation** for all graduate students. Graduate students are also invited to attend orientation sessions administered by their individual academic departments.

**2.D.4 In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, the institution makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that students enrolled in the program have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.**

In accordance with Regent’s Policy R401 regarding program discontinuation, the state obligates all institutions to provide means for students to complete a discontinued or suspended program. Furthermore, USU must submit proposals for program discontinuation or suspension for review and approval by the Utah Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The text of 5.3.2 reads as follows:

5.3.2. Discontinuation or Suspension of Programs. An institution discontinues a program when it removes the program from the institution’s and the Regents’ list of approved programs, but only after current students have an opportunity to complete. An
institution suspends a program when it temporarily prohibits students from enrolling in a program. The program remains on the Regents’ list of approved programs and may, at the institution’s discretion, remain in the online and/or printed catalog until fully discontinued.

5.3.2.1. Student Completion in Discontinued or Suspended Programs. Students currently admitted to the program must be provided a path to complete the program in a reasonable period of time compatible with accreditation standards. This may require: (1) enrolling students at other institutions of higher education; or (2) offering for a maximum of two years after discontinuing the program or until there are no other admitted students who are entitled to complete the program, whichever comes first.

5.3.2.2. System Coordination. Institutions should consider the statewide impact of discontinuing the program and identify opportunities for establishing the program at another USHE institution. Institutions should consider discontinuing unnecessarily duplicative programs within the USHE, particularly programs that may be high cost and/or low producing.

2.D.5 The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner reasonably available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes:

- Institutional mission and core themes;
- Entrance requirements and procedures;
- Grading policy;
- Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings;
- Names, titles, degrees held and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty;
- Rules, regulations for conduct, rights and responsibilities;
- Tuition, fees and other program costs;
- Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment;
- Opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and
- Academic calendar.

USU publishes an online catalog that is readily available to students, faculty, staff, prospective students and the general public. During new student orientation, all entering freshmen are taught how to use the University Catalog and are shown where to look for specific topics such as degree requirements, registering and withdrawing from classes, course descriptions and other available student resources. The provided information includes:

- Institutional Mission and Core Themes
- Entrance Requirements
- Grading Policy
d. Academic Programs
e. Administrators and Faculty
f. Rules, regulations for conduct, regulations and responsibilities
g. Tuition and fees
h. Refund Policies
i. Financial Aid Regulations
j. Academic Calendar

2.D.6 Publications describing educational programs include accurate information on: a) National and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered; b) Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession.

The university makes every effort to ensure that all publications and electronic presentations describing educational programs include accurate information on all requirements needed for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession including legal eligibility requirements.

For example, the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services provides direct links to information relating to licensure for teacher educators including:
- Educator Licensing Application FAQs
- Writing Exam
- Praxis
- Background Checks
- Graduate Route to Licensure

Career Services also provides descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the specific occupations or professions. Career Services uses several career assessments to ensure students learn about themselves and career options based on realities of the marketplace. Students and their parents can research key resources for employment and advancement in any given occupation relating to education and skills required, job outlook and salaries. Additionally, jobs are posted in Career AGGIE and include unique requirements for employment within each posting.

The University Catalog includes details of relevant legal requirements for specific majors. For example, Professional Pilot notes the required FAA Medical Certificate. Further, all additional fees required for successful completion of the program are fully disclosed in detail.

2.D.7 The institution adopts and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provision for reliable and retrievable backup of those records, regardless of their form. The institution publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records.
USU’s disaster recovery plan, through Information Technology (IT), addresses requirements for backup, replication, recovery and archiving of critical university data including student records. USU has developed a multi-tier approach to address these issues. USU is responsive to security concerns, and follows specific data management policies to address security issues.

Utah State University publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records. The Registrar’s Office notifies students each year about the policies and reminds students where the written policies can be located and reviewed. USU faculty and staff are trained and familiar with FERPA before they are granted access to student information.

USU and its colleges, departments and divisions take measures to protect restricted and sensitive data that are stored, processed or transmitted using institutional resources. When sensitive data is stored or transmitted as part of the business needs of USU, employees are responsible for maintaining integrity, confidentiality and availability of the data by following university guidelines.

2.D.8 The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.

The Financial Aid Office helps students finance their education through federal, state and institutional aid programs including grants, work-study and student loans. The Financial Aid Office administers federal programs in accordance with federal regulations and requirements. It helps students complete federal aid applications, verifies reported information, assesses need, makes federal awards, coordinates with various on-campus entities for scholarships and works directly with career services for work-study positions. Financial aid monitors required academic progress according to federal regulations and state requirements. Information regarding categories of financial assistance, deadlines, requirements and all general information regarding financial aid is provided on the financial aid website. Information related to scholarships can be found on the admissions website or the Financial Aid Office.

The Financial Aid Office uses the Banner student information system to record all transactions for auditing and reconciliation of accounts. All financial aid programs are audited annually in accordance with federal and state requirements.

The USU Scholarship Office is dedicated to assisting students throughout their college careers by identifying resources to assist with educational expenses and coordination of funding from various resources.

2.D.9 Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and the institution’s loan default rate.
Every student receiving a student loan must complete an online counseling program before receiving the first disbursement of their loan. In addition, students complete exit counseling requirements when they complete their degree or cease attending. These services are available through the U.S. Department of Education website.

The Financial Aid Office regularly reconciles student loan accounts and monitors student borrowing. Students receiving Direct Loans receive regular disbursement notices from the Federal Loan Servicer and the Financial Aid Office. As calculated by the U.S. Department of Education, the university’s latest three-year cohort default rate, FY2014, for Direct Loans is 5.3%, compared to the national rate of 11.5%. The university participates in a default prevention program through the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA), which targets delinquent and at-risk-of-default students and provides a variety of resources and student access tools including through social media.

2.D.10 The institution designs, maintains and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program requirements and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published and made available to students.

Academic advisement at USU is decentralized and students are assigned to advisors by major. Some academic departments employ professional advisors, while others rely on faculty for advising. The Exploratory Advising Office provides advising services for exploratory/undeclared students, exploratory business students, students in the Aggie Prep Program and students participating in the Exploratory Advising Bridge Program.

Academic departments within each college provide advising for pre-professional and professional major students. Many departments utilize a mixture of both full-time professional advisors and faculty advisors, while some departments use only one type of advising. These advisors deliver information regarding major requirements, minors and internships. Many departments also employ peer advisors and student advising aides.

Students have an opportunity to meet with an academic advisor during or after new student orientation. Students are instructed to find and contact an advisor for their program of interest. They are also encouraged to meet with their academic advisor each semester prior to registration. As part of the online appointment scheduler and graduation application used for advising, students are asked to participate in a survey to assess the academic advising experience at USU. Feedback from students is used to improve the advising program and advising experience for students.

USU Advisors provides an infrastructure that supports USU advising and advisors. Additionally, this office facilitates professional development and communication for USU advising, establishes communication lines for academic advisors to share common advising practices and communicates the value of advising to students, faculty and administration. An advising
syllabus is available for all students and faculty that defines the requirements and responsibilities for the advising process.

Advisors are encouraged to maintain membership in the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) which recommends a national advising professional program as part of effective advising. This organization provides opportunities for professional development through presentations, conferences and journal articles.

2.D.11 Co-curricular activities are consistent with the institution’s mission, core themes, programs and services and are governed appropriately.

In line with the USU mission and core themes, the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) is committed to providing programs and activities for all students. In addition to the Logan campus, student affairs works closely with the regional campus students to support them in establishing their individual student government while inviting them to participate in leadership development and activities appropriate to the fee structure. The following are services where DSA provides leadership in areas of student life and co-curricular activities:

The Campus Recreation department maintains gyms, workout facilities, playing fields and pools in addition to organizing club sports, intramural sports, races and exercise classes for students.

The Outdoor Recreation Program rents gear to students and organizes field trips and other activities to get students outside.

The Student Involvement and Leadership Office helps students get involved and make the most of their time at USU through student government (USUSA), Greek life, school spirit, service opportunities, student media and clubs and organizations.

The Access and Diversity Center promotes a vibrant student community at USU through programs, clubs, and events specially designed for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, asexual, and allied (LGBTQA), multicultural and non-traditional students.

The Center for Civic Engagement and Service-Learning (CCESL) serves as the campus hub for community engagement, providing diverse student opportunities and institutional vision and direction. CCESL aims to provide every USU student with opportunities to find their passion, apply their education and make a positive and meaningful contribution to the greater community through service and civic engagement. CCESL works together with local, regional, national and international partners to tackle critical issues identified by the community. CCESL has six distinct programs currently within the department. These programs and the services they provide are as follows:

- Aggie Blue Bikes (ABB)
- Education Outreach
- Community Engaged Learning
If the institution operates auxiliary services (such as student housing, food service, and bookstore), they support the institution’s mission, contribute to the intellectual climate of the campus community and enhance the quality of the learning environment. Students, faculty, staff and administrators have opportunities for input regarding these services.

The following auxiliary services support the institution’s mission and core themes and contribute to the intellectual climate of the campus community by providing important support services for students.

The three primary objectives of the Taggart Student Center (TSC) are education, leadership and service. As the community center of the university for students, staff, faculty, administration, alumni and guests, the TSC provides services, conveniences and amenities for members of the university family in their daily life on campus.

The USU Campus Store provides a comprehensive supply of resources for the campus community. The campus store offers textbook rentals, used textbooks, new textbooks, eBooks and buyback. In addition, the campus store offers a diverse selection of books, collegiate clothing and supplies for the university community. The campus store participates in the Student Watch Surveys by OnCampus Research each semester, and also participates in the Graduating Senior Survey that is disseminated to all applicants for graduation.

Dining Services provides for the residential, catering and general food services needs of students, faculty and staff in ten retail locations across campus. The mission of Dining Services is to develop and incorporate policies and procedures of sustainability that balance social responsibility, customer preferences and financial concerns. Opportunities for input are provided to all stakeholders through a direct link to the director.

Housing and Residence Life is committed to excellence in student development through comfortable and supportive communities. Theme housing provides a unique option for students who prefer to meet new people with shared interests. Options for theme housing include Aggie involvement, EcoHouse, Engineering House, Global Village, Honors, Outdoor Adventures and ROTC. Each semester, residents evaluate the experience of living on campus as well as their resident assistant. Follow-up is performed with students who provide a low score to determine areas needing improvement.

Intercollegiate athletic and other co-curricular programs (if offered) and related financial operations are consistent with the institution’s mission and conducted with appropriate institutional oversight. Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for other students.
USU has a long and distinguished tradition of participation in intercollegiate athletics. Utah State University Athletics is a Division I member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and a member of the Mountain West Conference (MWC). The USU athletics program joined the MWC July 1, 2013, and has been in the upper tier in academic all-conference selections and graduation success rates each year in the MWC. Both of these organizations require compliance with all stipulated rules and regulations to participate in intercollegiate athletics. The mission of Utah State University Athletics is in alignment with the mission of USU and is governed by the university administration. As required by the Board of Regents, the athletics director and faculty athletics representative report directly to the university president. The president, in turn, reports via an athletics subcommittee to the Board of Trustees. The university also has an Athletics Council which is organized consistent with NCAA regulations and serves in an advisory capacity to the president. In addition, input and suggestions are provided to the Athletics Office administrators and the Athletics Council by the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). The SAAC provides a voice for student athletes as it is composed of representatives from each sport team who serve as the governing body of Utah State University student athletes. This group also communicates regularly with athletics administrators regarding rules, regulations and policies that affect the lives of student athletes.

The Athletics Compliance Office holds the primary responsibility for implementing, overseeing and executing the programs, policies and education to ensure USU is in fulfillment with all NCAA, MWC and institutional rules and regulations. The primary responsibilities of the Athletics Compliance Office include educating coaches/staff, student athletes and other stakeholders on applicable NCAA rules; providing rule interpretations and guidance on how to approach different situations in compliance; formulating policies and procedures that help ensure compliance with rules prior to actions taking place; documenting staff actions to show compliance; monitoring and auditing staff compliance with rules; and investigating and reporting violations of NCAA rules. Athletics policies and procedures can be found in the Compliance Manual. Accountability for compliance is listed as a job responsibility for athletic coaches and staff who must sign the NCAA Institutional Certification of Compliance annually indicating their commitment to the rules and their obligation to report any knowledge of violations.

USU is committed to following the NCAA, MWC and institutional policies and procedures regarding admissions, financial aid, academic standards and degree requirements. All students, including those who may be recruited, are admitted in accordance with university established admissions policies and procedures. Student athletes attending the university for the first time are admitted based on an index score, which is a combination of high school grades and ACT or SAT scores. Entering student athletes must have an acceptable index score to be admitted. All athletics staff members together with other university staff (e.g., faculty athletics representative, financial aid administrators, admissions director, registrar, internal auditor and academic advisors) are involved in this commitment.

Financial aid is awarded in all sponsored sports at the maximum levels allowed by NCAA regulations. The awarding of financial aid is closely monitored to meet NCAA membership
requirements. As funding is available, there is equal opportunity for male and female student athletes to apply for fifth-year and summer school aid to assist them toward graduation goals. In addition, all support services are equally available to all student athletes. 

Student Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) provides a description of all available services and additional important links to provide help to the student athlete. SAAS also publishes a student athlete handbook each year to provide student athletes with the guidelines, rules and regulations necessary to be successful at USU. The SAAS Academic Center offers a large study center and computer center for the use of student athletes. The computer center houses 21 Dell PCs and 3 Macintosh computers in a relaxed computing environment. The spacious study center overlooks the football field and campus. There is ample room for student athletes to spread out study materials and boot up laptops in the completely wireless study center or plug in to any one of the several data jacks located throughout the study center. Three classrooms and five smaller tutor rooms are available for individual or group session tutoring and instruction as well.

USU 1010: Athletic Connections, the student athlete version of the Connections course, is a required course for all incoming scholarship student athletes and junior college transfers. This course is designed to enhance the transition of new student athletes to USU, Division I athletics, campus and the local community. Student athletes are exposed to a wide range of topics related to life skills development. The format of the course is also designed to create a supportive network of peers for student athletes with individuals outside their team including other freshman and transfer student athletes and Student Athlete Mentors (SAMs). Topics covered in the course include: goal setting, time management, learning styles/academic behaviors, sport psychology, bystander leadership and intervention, alcohol education, NCAA eligibility, nutrition, communications profiling and career services information.

Student Athlete Mentors (SAMs) are veteran student athletes who have proven themselves as exemplary role models. They are nominated by their coaches and go through an interview process to prepare for their duties as a SAM. Their primary function is to impart knowledge to new student athletes to improve their overall experience at USU. SAMs also facilitate small group sessions in the USU 1010 course for student athletes and serve as the small group’s mentor throughout the semester and school year.

2.D.14 The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in the distance education course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

Academic and Instructional Services (AIS) Material and Testing Services manages identity verification, ensuring student privacy while maintaining the highest standard of academic integrity. All systems including Banner and Canvas require students to authenticate using their A# and password.
AIS validates student identity in interactive video conference (IVC) and online courses through use of secure logins and face-to-face proctoring for exams. Every enrolled student is given a secure login and password to access their USU account at the time of admission. Admissions verifies the identity using a student’s social security number and other pieces of information such as the student’s email address on file, date of birth or address. The student is then assigned a unique student ID (A#) and password which is used to access record information and course materials. Students are notified of this process at the time of admission and are required to change their passwords frequently.

Proctored exams are administered through a USU-proprietary web application which lists proctors that have been certified. Students select a local proctor from this list of pre-approved proctors. If a proctor is not listed in their area, they can invite a proctor to become certified. Once invited, they are certified after going through a multi-step vetting process before allowing them to be selected by the student. Students are notified of the proctor policies both within their courses and on the USU Online website. Certified proctors are required to verify that student identification (e.g. driver’s license) matches the student’s online profile in the LMS. Proctors are given access to student exam information and passwords through a secure website. All access is monitored, logged and tracked by AIS staff. Online courses also can use Proctorio, an online virtual proctoring system that allows students to take exams from remote locations using a web cam and browser tools to monitor the student’s exam. Proctorio requires students to use the Google Chrome browser with the Proctorio extension installed. If a student is unable to find a local certified proctor, AIS will work with the student to find suitable alternatives which may include the use of ProctorU, a virtual proctoring system. ProctorU verifies that the student’s identification matches the student’s online profile.
STANDARD 2.E: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

2.E.1 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth and breadth to support the institution’s mission, core themes, programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

The Merrill-Cazier Library is dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge. The library is the intellectual center of Utah State University and supports learning, discovery and engagement by providing access to quality resources and facilitating the use of information in teaching, inquiry and research. As part of a land-grant institution, the USU Libraries have a responsibility for openness, accessibility and service to the people of the state of Utah. Emphasizing online access is one way that the libraries support growing enrollments on USU regional campuses and in online programs. Patrons access electronic collections through many channels via the University Libraries’ website or course management system. As both a physical and virtual destination, the library creates collaborative, engaging environments for learning and scholarship. In addition to the Merrill-Cazier Library, services are provided at the USU Eastern Price and USU Eastern Blanding campus libraries, the Anne Carroll Moore Library of the Edith Bowen Laboratory School (children’s books), the Young Education Technology Center
The libraries belong to several consortia including the Utah Academic Library Consortium (UALC) comprised of 14 academic libraries throughout Utah, the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA), a group of 36 major research libraries, the Mountain West Digital Library and Archives West. The libraries are also a charter partner in the HathiTrust Digital Library, an international cooperative of over 100 major research libraries dedicated to building a comprehensive digital library that is co-owned and managed by the partner institutions. Membership in the HathiTrust gives USU patrons download access to over 7 million e-books. Finally, the libraries are also members of Lyrasis, a national library network that offers consortia savings.

The USU libraries provide access to almost two million print books and journals, 7,600,000 e-books (including over 7,000,000 in the HathiTrust Digital Library), 480,000 government publications and over 60,000 electronic journals as well as many other document formats. The Library Media Collection houses audio and visual material including educational and feature films, music audio and slides, all available to be checked out by anyone with USU identification. The USU Special Collections and Archives contain rare book and manuscript collections, western and Mormon historical documents, the university archive of USU and the Fife Folklore Archives, one of the largest repositories of American folklore in the United States. Many rare items have been digitized and are available online in the Libraries' Digital History Collections and Online Exhibits.

The USU libraries also create, organize, preserve and maintain open access to digital resources that reflect USU's curriculum, research, unique resources and achievements. The Digital Initiatives Department, in collaboration with other educational and cultural heritage institutions, digitizes materials owned by USU libraries — such as archival materials from Special Collections and Archives consisting of historical photographs, journals, historical newspapers, letters, rare books and recorded interviews — and hosts them on the web through Digital Collections. In addition, USU scholarly and creative output is captured, preserved and promoted in the institutional repository, DigitalCommons@USU. This repository provides open access to scholarly works, theses and dissertations, research, reports, publications, creative works, conferences and events produced by Utah State University faculty, staff, students and others. The repository also serves as a publishing platform, hosting seven open access journals and several unique monographs in addition to more than one hundred USU Press books. The USU Press (a member of the University Press of Colorado consortium) functions as a department of the libraries and plays a central role in USU’s open access strategy by issuing new books as open access (via DigitalCommons and the HathiTrust Digital Library).

2.E.2 Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that include feedback from affected users and appropriate library and information resources faculty, staff and administrators.
The libraries use many sources of data and types of formal feedback from users including faculty, students, staff and administrators on a regular basis for planning purposes. The USU libraries continue to study user needs and seek to accommodate student and faculty preferences in innovative ways. The libraries have responded to a growing demand for streaming video by moving from a small collection to over 12,000 individual films as part of a purchase-on-demand program. Through a continued partnership with ReadCube, access to electronic journals is expanded similarly as users are granted access to expensive Nature journals on an article-by-article purchasing basis rather than through a traditional up-front subscription cost. In this way, researchers get the content they need from dozens of prominent journals for the annual cost of just a single subscription. Finally, similar programs are in place to purchase e-books on an as-needed basis in a way that is seamless to users. Along with these new purchasing models, librarians at USU continue to assess ongoing costs and potential purchases. Collections staff at the libraries work closely with subject librarians to analyze usage patterns and cost data to provide access to those resources that most cost-effectively meet the needs of academic programs.

In 2016, Utah State University was one of 11 schools chosen to participate in a partnership with OpenStax to encourage use of open educational resources (OER) on campus. Through this partnership, the library is receiving individualized consulting and support from OpenStax to implement widespread use of OER. This allows faculty members to evaluate their current textbook requirements for a class, review the options available through OpenStax and replace or supplement their commercial textbook requirements with an open educational resource. Students then have immediate and unlimited access to the book starting the first day of class. The topic of OER was selected as one of the main topics for the library’s presentation to the academic departments’ annual retreats in 2016. Subject librarians presented at twenty-five department retreats. Because of these retreats, the library received over forty requests from faculty across all disciplines to locate high quality OER for their courses.

The libraries maintain ties with university faculty through subject librarians who have specific subject expertise in the department(s) to which they are assigned. Subject librarians serve as liaisons to faculty and students in the departments, selecting materials to purchase for the library and offering personalized research consultation and library instruction. These librarians are responsible for guiding all collection development for their assigned subjects. Their responsibilities include selecting new books, keeping track of current journal subscriptions and seeking out other information resources that might be valuable to the academic department. They also collaborate with faculty to create discipline-specific instruction to help students develop research and information literacy skills.

In addition, subject librarians regularly participate in their academic department’s annual retreat by giving updates on library activities, receiving feedback from the faculty on library issues and presenting on specific topics pertinent to faculty teaching and research. These topical programs give the library opportunities to demonstrate expertise in various areas.
2.E.3 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution provides appropriate instruction and support for students, faculty, staff, administrators and others (as appropriate) to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating and using library and information resources that support its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

Course-Integrated Information Literacy

USU does not currently provide for-credit information literacy courses, nor is there an institutional learning outcome for information literacy. Rather, the library integrates with courses that emphasize research skills, and librarians support research assignments in both general education and program level courses using a combination of face-to-face interactions and online learning materials. The library collaborates closely with the second-year writing composition classes, English 2010. Every section of English 2010 has a librarian assigned to teach, design assignments and lesson plans and assist students, specifically with their research assignments in this course. Subject librarians for each major are proactive in mapping how and where students receive research opportunities to target courses in strategic ways. The instruction program is continually experimenting and improving its approach to incorporate learning activities in the classroom and outside the library. All instruction assessment reports and data are available from the Instruction Program website.

Librarians work with faculty to create customized instruction services and more generalized research guides to assist students with accessing and using library resources and conducting research. The course guides highlight library sources for class projects and disciplines, search strategies and other research tips. Data on usage are available in the annual Instruction Report. Seeking to make the most relevant LibGuide available at each student’s point of need, the libraries automated the process of integrating a course, subject guide or general research guide into every course in Canvas. Feedback from the focus groups led to the development of new templates for both research and course guides.

In-depth Integration of Unique Materials into Courses

The unique collections in the library provide opportunities for research using primary source materials. Special Collections hosts semester long courses in which students work with librarians and teaching faculty to curate gallery exhibitions related to a variety of topics. Curation comprises research, interpretation, graphic design and promotion and results in a significant capstone event for students involved in this work. These collaborative physical exhibits broaden the perspectives of creators and audience by expanding the traditional definitions of research products.

Library Support for Digital Pedagogy

Experiences with collaborative physical exhibits inspired an effort to reach out to faculty with another active learning opportunity — student-created digital exhibits using the open source
Omeka platform. The library already uses Omeka to create exhibits highlighting portions of digital collections, but this tool has great potential for students to develop digital literacy skills such as writing for the web, creating metadata and producing content for a global audience. Faculty from a wide range of disciplines, including history, art and engineering have partnered with the library on these efforts, creating unique and meaningful research experiences for students.

**Partnerships to Promote Student Research**

The USU libraries have a close relationship with the Research and Graduate Studies Office that includes co-hosting the annual Research Week on campus. During Research Week, undergraduate and graduate students participate in Student Research Symposium poster and panel sessions in the library atrium and conference rooms. Librarians participate in the assessment of student work as well as promoting the institutional repository as a long-term home for the digital iteration of their output. This collaboration helps students begin to develop their own digital presence.

**Partnerships to Promote Online Learning**

Like many institutions, USU offers diverse delivery methods for course content. Librarians work to ensure students receive equal access to research assistance and resources, regardless of location. Working with the Center for Innovative Design and Instruction (CIDI), the library designs and delivers a range of digital learning objects that teach information literacy concepts and skills.

**Librarian-led Collaborative Assignment Design Faculty Workshops**

In addition to collaborating with faculty to provide library instruction sessions, the library facilitates interdisciplinary faculty workshops that provide an opportunity for faculty from the library and academic disciplines to improve the learning opportunities provided to students in their research assignments. These small-group workshops place librarians at the assignment design table and position the library as a forum for faculty collaboration and a partner in teaching excellence.

**Reference Services**

The libraries provide point-of-need instruction through reference services at each of the libraries in Logan, Price and Blanding. These services encompass a range of methods by which librarians assist patrons in accessing library content to fulfill their informational needs. Reference librarians actively teach patrons about specific information sources and help them to understand effective research processes. In FY16, the libraries responded to more than 5,400 reference transactions. In Logan, the majority of reference service occurs at the Information Desk located at the entrance of the Merrill-Cazier Library, which also opens into an Information Commons of 150 workstations with 35 group study rooms. Librarians engage in reference
transactions in person at the desk as well as by phone, via email and by using instant messaging for online chat exchanges. Subject librarians offer one-on-one research consultations, which represent an intersection between reference service and library instruction through a Book a Librarian service. These sessions often include individualized teaching about the research process and general and specialized information sources. Research consultation appointments often result from class sessions when students contact the librarian who met with their class, or they may learn in class about the availability of subject librarians whom they later consult for personal assistance. The Library Peer Mentor program provides opportunities for exceptional students to assist librarians. Library peer mentors join librarians at the reference desk, help with library instruction classes and assist with collection management and other projects.

Regional Campus and Online Instruction Support

The libraries strive to provide equal and seamless access to library resources and instruction to students, regardless of physical location. The library coordinator for regional campuses and e-learning is the primary library liaison to regional campuses. In July 2016, the libraries hired an online learning librarian to develop instructional materials utilizing emerging technologies that enhance the learning experience of students and faculty within the regional campuses and online programs. This new position closely collaborates with the library coordinator for regional campuses and e-learning to promote and assess library services and instruction specifically for regional campuses. One of the most important parts of the online learning librarian’s position is to collaborate with subject librarians to help develop lesson plans, online tutorials and research guides to further ensure collaboration with faculty and students across the disciplines. These two librarians travel regularly to meet with faculty and students at the regional campuses to support their research needs.

2.E.4 The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered.

Library Advisory Council

The Library Advisory Council, a university committee that reports to the Faculty Senate, performs the formal and codified evaluation of overall library quality, adequacy, utilization and security of library and information resources and services including those provided through cooperative arrangements wherever offered and however delivered. The council meets quarterly and has provided a valuable forum for library-related issues presented from the faculty and student perspective as well as from the libraries’ perspective. The council has played a strong role in presentations to the university administration to increase resources for online journals, the development of USU Policy 535, “Open Access to Scholarly Articles” and the selection of library topics presented at the annual departmental retreats.
Student Library Advisory Board

In fall 2015, the Student Library Advisory Board (SLAB) was created to encourage student feedback on future library plans and directions including services, resources, the physical building and online presence and accessibility; bring students into the decision-making process in the library and foster an open dialog with students. Student members represent a diversity of perspectives both in class status and majors.

Reference Services Data

The Reference and Instruction Department gathers an extensive set of data to evaluate quality and efficacy of reference services. Data are gathered for each reference transaction regarding the type of transaction (research, quick information), patron type (undergraduate, graduate, faculty), amount of time the question required, the location of the user (Logan, regional campus, online) and the format (in person, email, online chat). Librarians use this information to evaluate staffing levels, service needs and service quality. Librarians are also conducting research projects specifically on disciplinary research consultations and how to best support research questions asked via chat.

Collection Use

The libraries collect extensive data annually on the use of library collections through circulation data of physical library materials and from the number of sessions and full-text downloads of electronic resources. Circulation and electronic usage data are used for allocating funds in support of different disciplines, database and e-journal renewal decisions and deselection of little used print material. As e-books have become more pervasive, the libraries are working to create user-focused areas for study and collaboration by moving more print books to the automated storage and retrieval system. By breaking down the data into its various subcomponents, librarians can identify format preferences by subject areas — such as disciplines for which print monographs are the preferred medium or disciplines for which electronic journals are the preferred medium. By reviewing these data over time, the library tracks changes within disciplines and makes modifications as necessary. Through the Library Assessment Committee, librarians are coordinating the sharing and storage of data about library collections to be used and adapted in decision-making situations where they had previously not been available.

Gate counts are used to track when users enter the buildings, and these numbers guide decisions concerning staffing levels throughout the day. In 2016, a Library Spaces Committee was formed to make certain the library is a place that invites learning and innovation. This committee was charged to review, assess and improve issues of navigation including signage and accessibility needs; explore ways to increase and improve opportunities for collaboration and learning in the library that meet the evolving needs of students and other users; provide spaces for cross-disciplinary creativity and innovation and actively solicit and address members' needs.
Regional Campus Survey

The library coordinator of regional campuses and e-learning and the online learning librarian are collaborating with other GWLA institutions in planning a multi-institution needs assessment of library needs of regional campus and online instructors. USU distributed the survey in February 2017 and 62 instructors participated for a response rate of 18%. The data will be analyzed from all of the schools in the coming months.
STANDARD 2.F: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

2.F.1 The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities.

Utah State University has established and maintains diverse sources of funding to support mission fulfillment and the core themes. State appropriations, tuition and student fees primarily fund the instructional operation of the university. The research enterprise of the institution is supported by state and federal appropriations as well as grants and contracts from federal, state and local government and private sources. USU Extension is funded primarily from federal and state appropriations, with additional funding coming from government grants and contracts. Regional campuses and distance education are funded from state appropriations, tuition and student fees with other funding coming from government grants. Gifts and earnings from the endowment and cash management investments support elements of all three core themes. The university’s auxiliaries are self-supporting and provide adequate income to service debt, maintain facilities and provide needed services to students.

USU issues an annual audited financial report for each fiscal year which is filed with the Office
of the Commissioner of Higher Education in accordance with Regents’ Policy R561. The Regents also require each president and institutional Board of Trustees to establish and maintain a system of internal accounting and operating controls for their institution.

Each year institutions submit a prioritized list of projects for funding through the state capital improvement program. Institutions must demonstrate the need for such requests including information related to student enrollments, operational inefficiencies and operating budget constraints (Regents’ Policy R710). The Regents receive an annual report summarizing all institutional and system-bonded indebtedness relative to nationally recognized standards for financial strength that is associated with institutional or system revenue bonds (Regents’ Policy R590).

Regents’ Policy R510 provides guidelines for the determination of tuition rates and student fees which are both subject to Regents’ approval. The Regents consider any projected tuition increase each fall as part of the budget recommendation to the governor and the legislature for appropriations for the next fiscal year.

A report of auxiliary enterprise operations, covering the completed actual year and the current budget year, is provided annually by each institution as part of the regular Board of Regents budget process (Regents’ Policy R550). Throughout the year, USU’s Office of Budget and Planning provides a series of standardized reports to the Commissioner of Higher Education. The reports deal with financial information including, but not limited to, enrollment, budgets, tuition and fees, tuition waivers, expenditures and endowment performance.

The university begins the process of establishing budget priorities in the spring to be submitted to the Regents in the fall. As chief executive officer of the university, the president works closely with the provost, the vice president for business and finance, deans and other vice presidents to prioritize the future financial needs of USU.

The vice president for business and finance, as the designated public treasurer, submits monthly and quarterly reports to the Trustees and Regents. Reports submitted to the Regents include a transmittal letter stating that the chief executive officer has reviewed the reports in accordance with Regents’ Policy R541. USU submits an annual summary report of money management activities to the Commissioner of Higher Education. The report includes an auditor’s opinion regarding the fairness of presentation of the report in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and compliance with the State Money Management Act and other related laws (Regents’ Policy R541).

The university monitors major revenue and expense trends. Major budget categories such as investment income, utility costs, financial aid and intercollegiate athletics expenditures are projected over a five to six year timetable. Unexpected contingencies are also considered. Strategic modeling is done to examine various options and their long-term impacts on the university financial condition. Tuition increases, enrollment changes and legislative funding increases are conservatively factored into the model. This approach allows the university to
immediately view possible outcomes of strategic decisions.
Building projects are separated by category and cost, prioritized and then submitted for funding requests to the legislature through the Board of Regents and the State Building Board. Projects that qualify as capital improvement projects (remodeling or repair projects costing less than $3,500,000; site and utility improvements costing less than $3,500,000 or a new facility with a total construction cost less than $500,000) are submitted annually to the division of facilities construction and management for funding through the state capital improvement program.

Capital development and new facilities projects are submitted to the Board of Regents and the State Building Board for funding requests to be appropriated by the State Legislature. The university demonstrates that such requests meet the standards of approved academic and facilities master plans. Such justification considers information relating to student enrollments, space utilization, structural obsolescence, operational influences and operating budget constraints.

**Risk Assessment**

As a doctoral university with higher research activity, Utah State University is required to follow OMB Super Circular (2 CFR 200 — Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards). The Super Circular requires USU to follow an internal control framework. Of the two options, USU chose to follow the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) control framework as risk assessment is a part of this control framework.

Annually, the Board of Regents’ Audit Subcommittee and the Board of Trustees’ Audit Committee require the chief audit officer to report on USU’s risk assessment process. The process was developed with input from the Board of Trustees in 2013.

The process started with vice presidents (VPs) who oversee the administrative areas of the university. Each VP identified key people at the unit level to identify risks in their individual units/administrative areas. These key people were asked to identify the overall objective of the unit they oversee or direct, the top three things that got in the way of meeting those objectives (risks) and the steps taken to ensure these things do not get in the way of meeting their objective controls.

The primary risks identified were financial, but other risks were assessed as well: i.e., safety issues, personnel matters, funding, security. A VP then worked with his/her leadership team to take all the risks identified and consolidate/classify them into no more than 15 separate categories of similar risks.

The leadership group assessed each risk, scored them and used these scores to rank the risk categories highest to lowest. Final reports were issued to each VP.
Risk assessments have been completed in the following areas:

- Business and Finance
  - Auxiliaries
  - Controller’s Office
  - Information Technology
  - Human Resources
  - Facilities
  - Real Property
  - Budget and Planning
  - Scholarships
  - Information Security Office
- Student Affairs
  - Academic Services
  - Enrollment Services
  - Health, Wellness and Recreation
  - Student Involvement
- Research and Graduate Studies
- USU Eastern
- Commercialization and Regional Development
- Advancement
- Athletics
- Legal Counsel
- Public Relations and Marketing
- Federal and State Relations
- Library Services
- Extension
- Academic areas — provost and deans of each college and regional campuses

The final level of risk assessment includes the administration assessing and voting on the top three to four risks from each area listed above. This risk assessment will result in a list of overall university risks ranked from highest to lowest, which will be valuable data to inform administrative planning and decision-making.

2.F.2 Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management and responsible projections of grants, donations and other non-tuition revenue sources.

Under the president’s leadership, the university has practiced a conservative budget model. Growth in tuition revenue, due either to anticipated rate increases or projected enrollment, is not built into the budget. Expenditures are only added to the budget once a permanent source of revenue is identified. During the budget crisis, this practice was fundamental to the success of building a realistic budget as decisions were made based only on real, anticipated revenues. USU has an Executive Enrollment Management Committee that is instrumental in formulating
strategic enrollment initiatives as it considers new recruiting initiatives, scholarship budgets, academic profiles and various other matters. This committee is comprised of the provost, the president’s chief of staff, the vice president for business and finance, the vice president for student affairs, the university’s budget officer, the director of admissions and the dean of the graduate school. The committee has been integral in ensuring that the president is fully informed of all recruitment initiatives and their anticipated costs as well as estimates of their impact on net tuition.

In general, department heads and their business staff are expected to operate within budget. Revenues and expenses are based on past experience rather than assumptions.

2.F.3 The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies.

USU develops and implements budgets on an annual, fiscal-year cycle, which begins July 1 and ends June 30. All units, regardless of funding sources or activity, budget on this cycle. At the beginning of the fiscal year, the university publishes the annual budget and distributes it to each administrative unit.

The president leads the development of the budget. The process begins with each vice president or dean working with their respective constituents to identify needs for their area including everything from operating funds to major program additions. Each vice president or dean is then invited to a budget hearing where they present their case to the president and her budget team (vice president for business and finance and the provost). They state the priorities for their area, discuss strategic plans and provide a general overview of their area and direction it is heading.

The president and her budget team then spend several months vetting these requests. They consider available resources, strategic priorities of the university and student needs as they determine which priorities are funded. The president then shares these decisions with the appropriate constituencies.

At the Board of Trustees meeting, a "Certificate of Treasurer" report is presented by the vice president for business and finance. This report details the current financial status of the university. This report reflects budget adjustments and changes to date. It also provides a snapshot look at the year-to-date budget for the university.

Prior to the fiscal year end, a summary of the adjusted budget reflecting all adjustments and changes is formally presented to and approved by the Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents.
2.F.4 The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls.

The USU accounting system is widely used by many national colleges and universities. The system, Banner, is designed and maintained by Ellucian to specifically meet the accounting requirements of universities and provides for a fully integrated system including finance, human resources and student information. The accounting system provides for the dual needs of USU because it is fully functional for both fund accounting and for recording, categorizing, summarizing and reporting financial transactions in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. The independent auditor’s reports indicate that the university’s financial statements are in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

The university’s internal control system is the process that management uses to provide reasonable assurance that the university’s core themes and objectives are achieved. It is a dynamic process that changes as personnel and circumstances change. The system includes organizational design, written policies and procedures, operating practices and physical barriers to protect assets and all personnel. The system is designed to discourage occurrences of errors or irregularities and to identify, within a reasonable time frame, errors or irregularities that may occur. The internal control system encompasses a variety of internal controls such as background checks of prospective employees for sensitive positions to locking doors when the offices are closed for the evening. Although the internal control system is developed and monitored by the university’s management, Internal Audit Services assists in reviewing the internal control system and making suggestions for improvement.

Utah State University’s internal auditing program is established and governed by university regulations. According to regulation “Internal Audit Services derives its authority directly from the Board of Trustees and the president. Internal Audit Services is authorized to conduct such reviews of university organizational units or functional activities as necessary to accomplish its objectives. Internal Audit Services is authorized access to all records, personnel and physical properties relevant to the performance of audits and reviews.”

Internal Audit Services issues a report for each area audited. In these reports, auditors list criteria and observations and make recommendations to strengthen internal controls and improve operating efficiency.

2.F.5 Capital budgets reflect the institution’s mission and core theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment. Long-range capital plans support the institution’s mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes.
The university enters into debt only when the benefiting unit or enterprise can demonstrate adequate revenue or funding sources to provide for the debt service. This approach protects funding committed to educational purposes from the risk of being redirected to the payment of debt not directly related to educational purposes.

USU provides detailed disclosure of its debt in the annual audited financial statements. In addition, each of the university’s revenue bonds requires the annual filing of a continuing disclosure statement. These include analysis of operations and debt service coverage for the prior five years and projections for the next five years.

Existing debt is reviewed annually and reported in USU’s audited financial report. Independent auditors review debt every year which includes a review of compliance with debt covenants and assurance that debt principal and interest payments have been made according to contract. Annual bond disclosure reports are required for all bond issues. The preparation and submission of the disclosures are conducted by a third party financial advisor (currently Zions Bank Municipal Banking) in accordance with Regents Policy R590, with information provided by the university. The reports present historical revenue information.

Internal debt reviews are conducted by the university monthly so that management can monitor current debt service ratios and have time to respond to any downward trends. One of the reviews is a monthly report prepared by the controller’s office that calculates debt service ratios based on year-to-date revenues for bonded auxiliaries. Another is a monthly meeting held between the associate vice president for business and finance and the executive director for auxiliary managers. The monthly report from the controller’s office is discussed, and any variances between budgeted and actual revenues are evaluated. Also, the Regents have several policies that control, justify and limit the use of debt for capital outlay purposes. Proposals for significant new capital financing projects are assessed based on how the project relates to the university mission; the justification for the project; whether the project has a defined, supportable plan of costs approved by management and a proposal for servicing the debt that includes projected revenue streams or the creation of budgetary savings.

All capital projects funded in whole or in part from adjustments in student fees, incurring of contractual debt or the disposal or exchange of land or other capital assets must be reviewed and approved by the Trustees. The proposals are then forwarded to the Regents for review and approval. As part of this process, the university is required to submit a campus facilities Master Plan to the Regents biennially. This plan is used in the Regent’s review process for new projects.

2.F.6 The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations.

Auxiliary enterprises are governed by Regents’ Policies R550 and R555, and in some cases, relevant bond covenants. The university operates all auxiliary enterprises as self-supporting entities whereby each enterprise pays all related direct costs and is allocated a portion of
centrally funded indirect costs.

References to overall auxiliary operations are included in the institution’s annual financial report. In addition, financial results for the auxiliary enterprises are reported annually to the Trustees and the Regents.

Auxiliary enterprises exist for the primary purpose of providing services to students, faculty, staff, or guests of the institution and serve primarily individuals. They are generally expected to operate on a self-supporting basis. This includes all direct and indirect operating expenses, assignable indirect costs, debt service and capital expenditures.

Auxiliary enterprises operate as an essential element in support of the education, research and public service programs of the institution. They operate at a level of quality sufficient to support the objectives of the primary programs. Direct charges for services are sufficient to enable the auxiliary enterprises to operate on an essentially self-supporting basis whenever possible. In the event auxiliary unit(s) are not able to reach a total self-support level for designated auxiliary activities, the institution may provide subsidies from institutional discretionary funds or, if necessary, from other education and general funds, subject to the accounting requirements set forth by Regents Policy R550.

2.F.7 For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.

By law, state colleges and universities are audited under the direction of the State Auditor’s Office. Since 2007, the State Auditor’s Office has conducted the annual financial audit and the federally required Single Audit. All funds of the university are included in the annual financial audit. The State Auditor’s Office conducts the Single Audit per Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirement for Federal Awards. This audit is then rolled under the statewide OMB Circular A-133 audit for publication and distribution. Recent financial statements and State audit reports are located on the controller’s office website. The 2016 audit report was published on December 1, 2016, 153 days after the completion of the fiscal year.

The annual audited financial report is filed with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. This is in accordance with Regents’ Policy R561. The Board of Trustees Audit Committee receives a report on the annual audit. The Audit Committee is a standing committee of the Trustees with specific responsibilities as defined in the bylaws of the Trustees.

2.F.8 All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship with a
fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization.

USU’s development program is headed by the vice president for university advancement who reports directly to the president. Development activity is distributed across the university with area officers assigned to colleges and other units where fundraising efforts have an impact. Area staff are accountable to their deans or directors for successful execution of those programs, and ultimately, to the vice president for advancement. The central development staff is responsible for coordination and oversight of all fundraising and alumni relations activity at the university. The vice president for university advancement ensures that all fundraising and alumni relations activities adhere to university and government policies and regulations as well as guidelines adopted by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and other professional organizations that serve the development and alumni relations community. Ethical behavior is an expectation in all fundraising activities.

The Utah State Uniform Management of Institutional Funds Act, Section 13-29 of the Utah Code, establishes the Board of Trustees as the governing board responsible for the investment and administration of endowment and life income funds held by the university. This is also the case for the USU Foundation. The university Board of Trustees and the foundation Board of Trustees have established investment committees to provide investment direction and establish spending rules for the endowment funds.

Accounting for the endowment funds is the responsibility of the controller. The vice president for business and finance reports the investment activity to the Trustees. These reports include the assertion by the vice president for business and finance that the university is in compliance with the Utah State Uniform Management of Institutional Funds Act, the laws and rules of Utah State University and those of the state of Utah.

The USU Foundation is the arm of the institution that solicits and accepts contributions on behalf of Utah State University. The foundation is governed by a separate board consisting of alumni and friends of the university. The university president and the chair of the USU Board of Trustees are ex officio members of the foundation board. The USU Foundation operates under separate bylaws from those of the university.
STANDARD 2.G: PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

2.G.1 Consistent with its mission, core themes and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution’s mission, programs and services.

Facilities Resources

In support of the USU mission, programs and services, USU Facilities (Organization Chart) provides safe and secure physical facilities in sufficient quantity and quality for healthful learning, research and work functions for faculty, students and staff through the following actions:

- Ensures delivery of effective preventive maintenance and cleaning to all USU facilities, new and old.
- Maintains proactive relationships with departmental and building representatives. (Building Representative Program 2016 meeting agenda)
- Provides inclusive prioritization for the prudent expenditure of annual capital improvement appropriations received by the State of Utah.
• Provides comprehensive professional support to the USU administration for prioritizing major capital development project requests to include evaluation of master planning impacts, cost estimating, pre-planning, programming and project marketing assistance.
• Manages campus modification and new construction requests. Develops, maintains and reinforces design and construction standards for new facilities and remodeling projects.
• Manages every aspect of reliable utility production and distribution on campus as well as utility master planning for future capacity growth.
• Provides for proactive energy management programs and oversight of campus sustainability initiatives.
• Maintains 435 acres of high-visibility campus landscaping, sidewalk, drive and road maintenance and snow removal (campus map).
• Provides consultation and mission related facilities resources statewide, wherever USU is located, to ensure that all regional facilities meet or exceed USU facility standards.
• Provides facilities maintenance as needed as well as professional design and planning support required by auxiliary enterprises to include Residence Life, Dining Services, the Aggie Recreation Center, the Taggart Student Center and Conference Services.

Operations and Maintenance

Utah State University maintains a culture of delivering exemplary care to campus buildings and infrastructure. To ensure quality control of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) services delivered to campus, Facilities Customer Services and Facilities Maintenance and Operations manages two customer-advocacy programs that maintain close relationships with building and departmental representatives.

A formal building representative program consists of departmental representatives that act as the official liaison between their department interests and services delivered by facilities. Representatives attend annual business meetings where they are introduced to key facilities personnel; provided with current information on the state maintenance, repair, remodeling and new construction of campus facilities; up-to-date information on facilities policy and procedural changes and receive updates on O&M funding trends at the university and state level. Among other duties, facility representatives are asked to disseminate time sensitive information to their building occupants when requested by facilities administration and customer service.

Facilities O&M also conducts annual onsite meetings in each major campus facility to discuss status of all O&M functions, local remodeling activities, building operational problem resolution and energy conservation. The facilities department gathers input on the effectiveness of services it provides, opinions about the functionality of space, building cleanliness and the overall quality of the building environment through these annual meetings. Notes taken during the meetings are provided to appropriate facilities’ divisions for resolution as are follow-up meeting notes.

In addition to USU internal quality control processes, the state of Utah conducts annual O&M
audits throughout the State. An excerpt from the 2016 audit report that was presented to the State Building Board in September 2016, regarding USU states:

- **Audits in FY16 included visits to 92 buildings totaling 2,262,661 square feet.**
- **FY16 average score was 93.46%.**
- **Four-year average score is 91.52%.**
- **Utah State University has grown to be another one of the largest single agencies in the state of Utah. With the acquisitions of the College of Eastern Utah in both Price and Blanding, as well as its numerous Distance Education facilities, USU now operates roughly 415 buildings totaling 7,382,525 square feet of building space.**

Facilities operations and maintenance personnel are very involved in the project development of new facilities and major renovations from inception through final commissioning. Senior trades level personnel who are familiar with the quality of building system operations participate with and advise design teams during the development of projects as well as assist with trouble shooting system problems prior to and during building turnover. Another function of O&M is to design and manage the implementation of minor construction projects on campus. Minor projects include smaller renovations and alterations to campus facilities including remodeling and deferred maintenance work that is requested by campus departments. **Minor projects** may be executed with in-house trades, contractors or a combination of each.

**Capital Improvement (Deferred Maintenance)**

Facility Condition Assessments (FCA) are periodically completed by authority of the State Building Board for all State buildings. This information is combined with internal USU knowledge to inform the prioritized list of capital improvement priorities for campus. An internal annual review of the list is an inclusive process involving a broad cross-section of facilities including maintenance, professional and administrative personnel. Personnel involved in this process advocate for campus deferred maintenance projects using an open forum to explain the critical nature of a proposed project. The process, led by the executive director for Facilities Planning, Design and Construction (FPD&C), results in a rolling priority list that is roughly equal to three years of expected capital improvement (CI) appropriations by the State as documented here:

- **Current FY19 CI request to State**
- **Approved CI request for FY18**
- **Approved CI request for FY17**

The objective of the state of Utah is to annually appropriate 1.1% of each institution’s current replacement value (CRV) for buildings for funding dedicated capital improvement projects (CI). This currently results in an appropriation to USU of about $12 million each year for deferred maintenance projects. The amount of funds appropriated by the State will fluctuate depending on economic factors and competing State priorities. However, the state is mandated to provide a minimum of 0.4% of CRV for **statewide capital improvement funding** prior to making any
other capital commitments.

The state requires that all institutions prioritize their CI proposals such that 80% or more of the appropriation is allocated toward qualifying infrastructure projects and that no more than 20% is allocated toward programmatic upgrades such as remodeling. As the majority of USU’s building and utility systems are being well maintained through adequate state funding for O&M and CI, the department of Facilities are also able to leverage funding for classroom upgrades and other functional improvements within education and general facilities. Internal funds of $200,000 are also budgeted each year to specifically address deferred and reactive maintenance needs in the Operations and Maintenance division.

With an ongoing state program that regularly provides funds for institutional deferred maintenance and with the continued robust funding support of the university, USU believes that it has one of the lowest deferred maintenance liabilities found in public higher education today. Attention given to critical infrastructure and building systems along with the ability to refresh aging campus buildings facilitates USU mission fulfillment.

*Capital Development (New Construction and Major Renovation)*

Over the past five years, USU has undergone a substantial growth to include construction of new academic and student-focused facilities. Recent or ongoing construction of new flagship academic buildings for the colleges of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, Business, Sciences and Education are supplemented by a new student recreation center, student housing complex, football stadium, playing fields and athletic practice venues. USU constructs all new facilities to a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standard. The USU building inventory also includes two LEED platinum facilities: one at the Kaysville Botanical Center and the other at the Swaner preserve in Park City.

Proposed new facilities and major renovations are evaluated annually by the University Physical Resources Planning Committee (UPRPC). UPRPC reviews presentations and other materials from facility preplanning and campus district planning initiatives managed by facilities planning for each major capital development proposal. An executive summary of the UPRPC evaluation is presented to the president. The USU president in concert with the Executive Committee and upon approval of the USU Board of Trustees determine USU priorities for annual capital development requests provided to the State.

USU may only submit two State-funded capital requests for any statewide locations in the annual capital appropriation cycle. State funded requests must be presented for statewide prioritization to the State Board of Regents and State Building Board. The Infrastructure and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee (IGG) of the Utah Legislature reviews statewide capital requests along with Regents and building board rankings. The IGG makes final capital appropriation recommendations for consideration of full legislative approval that are required to be ultimately signed into law by the governor. While USU has received capital appropriations for new facilities in each of the fiscal years 2011 through 2017, there is no
guarantee that any agency or institution will receive a capital appropriation in any given year. Sample capital project reports are included here:

- Capital Project Reports to USU President: January, FY17 and FY18
- Comprehensive Capital Project Reports (internal to Facilities)

USU may submit non-state funded requests for State agency approval at any time during the fiscal year to the Regents and Building Board. Non-state funded requests that require institutional bonding also require legislative approval and passage into State statute.

Facilities Planning, Design and Construction

Facilities Planning, Design and Construction (FPD&C) provides planning, design and construction oversight for all minor and major campus construction projects. FPD&C consists of four architects, five engineers, a landscape architect, an interior designer and other support personnel. FPD&C develops and maintains construction standards used on all project designs. Project design is also subject to external State code review by the Utah Division of Facilities Construction and Management (DFCM). Final architectural design approval is made by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) to ensure that proposed facilities comport with the most current campus master plan and that design motifs, scale and materials used complement campus as well as adjacent buildings.

FPD&C has been continuously engaged in approximately $300 million in capital projects in all stages of development since 2011. FPD&C has a $4 million project delegation authority from the state. Each month, USU is required to present its delegation report of USU project activities to the State Building Board. While the state DFCM also provides design and construction oversight of campus capital projects in excess of $4 million, FPD&C provides project management on all USU projects. State related projects at the USU Innovation Campus are managed by FPD&C exclusively regardless of cost, while developer initiated projects are given project development assistance and design oversight by FPD&C. All Innovation Campus (IC) project proposals are evaluated by a Governing Board to be in compliance with conditions, covenants and restrictions (CCRs) established for IC development. All IC development is closely monitored by the IC Advisory Council and FPD&C.

Allowable State project delivery methods are varied to include construction management general contracting (CMGC), design bid-build, design-build and conventional low bid award. The State also provides a delivery order contracting system which, together with a USU list of preferred contractors, allows for some projects to be expedited. With a diverse array of delivery methods, FPD&C is able to tailor project design and construction methods to best meet project type, timeframe and budget required by USU stakeholders.

Utility Services

USU owns and operates a 4.5 MW Cogeneration plant that delivers electricity, chilled water and steam to the majority of the main campus. USU produces about 55% of its total electrical
energy requirement and about 35% of its total peak demand. The USU Central Energy Plant (CEP) currently meets firm capacity requirements in chilled water and steam. The CEP also employs a two million gallon chilled water tank that stores up to the single daily production capacity of the plant’s single largest chiller. The storage tank results in approximately $150,000 in avoided power demand costs each year.

The campus is served by two university owned electrical substations, each having double redundant capabilities. USU maintains an underground power distribution system with redundant feeds to most campus buildings. The campus HVAC shop reports to the campus energy manager in the utilities division such that energy efficiency and occupant comfort are brought together to eliminate competing priorities.

Having newer utility production and distribution systems and tunnels, USU’s robust utility system efficiently and reliably satisfies the academic and research mission of the institution.

**Landscape Maintenance and Operations (LOAM)**

USU is a Tree Campus USA recipient from the National Arbor Day Foundation with 15 state champion trees including the state champion Norway maple and Austrian pine. USU has adopted water-wise planting practices and utilizes WeatherTRAK irrigation controllers on 50% of the campus. USU plans to extend WeatherTRAK to the remaining campus over the next two years. Secondary (non-potable) water from local canal systems is used to irrigate 92% of campus. The grounds of the Logan campus receive numerous compliments for their beauty, cleanliness and diversity of trees, all of which add substantially to a healthful learning and working environment.

USU provides for a high-priority sidewalk snow route that facilitates easier travel from disabled parking spaces to each dedicated disability building entrance. With storm-pretreatment and ongoing additions of equipment the goal is to maintain the route as bare concrete without excessive use of granular salt materials.

**Regional Campuses**

USU Facilities also provides direct operations and maintenance support for buildings and infrastructure for other USU regional campuses and installations statewide. All facilities technical and professional personnel are available to the regional facility manager for assistance with specific O&M issues at any USU location.

O&M and operational trouble-shooting at regional USU installations are addressed through local contractors or USU personnel depending on scope and urgency. USU facilities provides a more direct role in O&M of the regional campus in Brigham City due to its close proximity. While the regional campus manager has an office in Logan, the position travels typically once each month throughout the State to visit each regional installation. The manager’s objective is to ensure that regional campuses and USU Extension meet State and USU standards for
maintenance quality, physical appearance and healthy environment.

**Auxiliary Enterprises**

USU Facilities does not provide routine maintenance of buildings used by auxiliary services such as residence halls, dining facilities, the Taggart Student Center, the Aggie Recreation Center or campus Conference Services. However, at the request of an auxiliary services unit, specialized or more complex O&M services are provided on a charge-out basis.

Those responsible for care of auxiliary services buildings listed below are available as needed to discuss how their execution of O&M meets Standard 2.G.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus Housing</td>
<td>Mr. Steve Jenson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:steve.jenson@usu.edu">steve.jenson@usu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Dining Facilities</td>
<td>Mr. Alan Andersen</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alan.andersen@usu.edu">alan.andersen@usu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taggart Student Center</td>
<td>Mr. Eric Olsen</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eric.olsen@usu.edu">eric.olsen@usu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggie Recreation Center</td>
<td>Mr. Chase Ellis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chase.ellis@usu.edu">chase.ellis@usu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Services</td>
<td>Ms. Leila Neilson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leila.neilson@usu.edu">leila.neilson@usu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2.G.2 The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials.**

The USU Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS) provides expertise and advice for compliance with federal, state and local safety and health regulations as well as current professional practices and guidelines. The goal of EHS is to prevent injury, illnesses and environmental damage through the recognition, evaluation and control of potential hazards arising from university activities. This is accomplished through services that ensure a safe and healthy environment for all students, faculty, staff and visitors at USU and the surrounding community. EHS services include assisting the university in compliance with regulations and training university personnel and students in appropriate safety measures. General areas of focus include biological, radiological, occupational and chemical health and safety.

Research and laboratory safety programs recognize that some of the substances needed for researchers to conduct their studies are hazardous and require special handling. Hazardous chemicals, biological material and radiological material are routinely and safely handled in the laboratories at USU. EHS has developed chemical hygiene, biological safety and radiation safety programs to assist principal investigators with establishing protocols that address safety and regulatory concerns related to the use of hazardous materials. All laboratory personnel are required to attend training courses related to their area of work with hazardous materials. Records of all training conducted are maintained by EHS. Training records are routinely reviewed by regulatory agencies as they relate to the work conducted at USU.

The University Safety Committee is comprised of faculty and staff from various university departments. This committee has responsibility to review and approve institutional procedures that relate to radiation, biohazards, chemical safety, recombinant DNA, risk control and
occupational safety at the university and make recommendations for new policy as needed. The committee also oversees activities of USU’s Radiation Safety Committee, Chemical Hygiene Committee, Institutional Biosafety Committee, Biohazard Committee and Risk Control Committee.

**Industrial hygiene** programs anticipate, recognize, evaluate and control workplace conditions that may cause workers’ injury or illness. Industrial hygienists use environmental monitoring and analytical methods to detect the extent of worker exposure and employ engineering, work practice controls and other methods to control potential health hazards. The EHS division supports these functions by helping keep the campus facilities safe, secure and comfortable.

Environmental safety recognizes that the university campus is nearly a city in itself and is committed to doing its fair share to keep the environment clean and safe. The EHS division works to create a pattern of environmental conscience that is helpful for the university and the entire community by monitoring and regulating air and water quality, recycling and hazardous waste.

The **programs and services** offered by the EHS division are not limited to work conducted at the Logan campus. The services detailed above are provided as needed to employees at all USU regional campus locations.

Recycling is a campus-wide program that strives to maximize the reuse of resources while minimizing environmental impact whenever it can be prudently accomplished. Recycling programs include flammable liquids used as fuel, fluorescent light tubes, mercury, glass, aluminum, paper, batteries and precious metals. Recycling bins are located on each floor of every building on campus. The university operates a 10,000 square foot Recycling Center that annually recycles approximately 26 percent of the total waste stream.

**2.G.3 The institution develops, implements and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes and long-range educational and financial plans.**

**Campus Master Plan**

Over the past five years, USU has focused on campus district planning as well as various focused campus plans. As the overall master plan looks well into the future growth and development of Utah State University at a more abstract level and protracted period of time, district plans add substantial specificity for the short term as well as greater detail in the medium term. District planning has been utilized to address the large number of currently planned or proposed projects on the main Logan campus. As district or focused plans are completed, they are submitted for review by the University Physical Resources Planning Committee (UPRPC). UPRPC membership consists of a broad spectrum of university constituents and is co-chaired by the provost and executive vice president and the associate vice president for facilities. UPRPC may approve or reject proposed planning in part or in whole.
District Planning Initiatives

Fine Arts District. The Fine Arts District is comprised of several large buildings located on the south central portion of the Logan campus. A major commitment was made by the university to invest approximately $12 million in capital improvement funding for deferred maintenance, ADA accommodations and appearance upgrades to the fine arts and museum facilities. The final phase of multiple upgrade projects, which also received approximately $12.5 million in donor funding, is slated for completion in early 2018. Planning and pre-programming preceded the multi-phased construction projects that began in 2011.

North Core District. Includes a new $37.3 million Center for Clinical Excellence, $25.6 million Valley View residence hall replacement and $2.8 million utility infrastructure extensions, all presently under construction. Circulation, parking, playing fields, food services and future residence hall initiatives were also included in the planning.

Quad District Plan. Addressed planning for a new $30 million facility housing the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHaSS) including circulation, parking, impacts to the historical USU Quad and renderings for fund raising purposes.

North District Campus Plan. Focused on impacts of three recently completed projects in the athletics district to include a $37.9 million addition to Maverik Stadium, $6 million ICON Strength and Conditioning Facility and the $5 million Wayne Estes Practice Center. District plan focuses on circulation, parking and related infrastructure for a new athletic football practice facility, indoor tennis arena and a major renovation or replacement of the Spectrum indoor arena. As planning in this congested area strains existing campus support facilities, an addition to this plan includes relocation of green houses and chipping and composting operations to a southeast area of campus known as the Wuthrich property. The Wuthrich property district plan, which included numerous stakeholders, has been expanded to include the adjacent USU Water Lab.

Innovation Campus District. The USU Innovation Campus (IC) is a 43-acre piece of USU property that is located just north of the USU Logan campus. The IC was set aside for applied research applications that meet conditions, covenants and restrictions (CCRs) established by the state of Utah for academic research parks. A revised district plan for the IC was initiated in 2017 to account for changes to the original 2005 master plan, to incorporate adjustments in overall scope of IC development and to add greater planning specificity to the eastern portion of the IC. The plan was completed in December 2017.

East Gateway District Plan. The East Gateway district was originally proposed for mixed academic and commercial use in the initial Saski master plan. The need for a new administrative services facility to replace the east campus office building, the current HR building and Utah Public Radio as well as the need for several new academic facilities in the district. The district planning project also evaluates the use of campus parking structures versus surface parking and
provides analysis of limited commercial leases that would complement a campus environment. The East Gateway plan and the concurrent pre-programming of a new proposed design center academic facility in the district are slated for completion in February 2018.

Focused Planning Initiatives

**USU Bicycle Master Plan.** Provides for safety and clarity for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized modes of campus travel.

**Campus Green Space Planning.** In 2013, Utah State University completed a comprehensive master planning effort to address the current and future needs for recreation and open space on campus. The plan was developed in coordination with the existing master plan. As the university continues to grow, there is an increasing need to ensure that recreation and open space needs are defined, quantified and prioritized. The goal of the Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is to provide the university clear direction in land use and infrastructure development toward the highest and best recreational and open space uses. The plan inventories current recreation and open space, identifies enhancements to existing space and investigates appropriate targets for future recreation and open space. The master plan emphasizes sustainability goals and sustainable design practices throughout. The plan identifies short and long-term needs in all categories.

**Quad Tree Replacement Master Plan.** USU found that a 2010 tree replacement plan for aging Norway maples in the historic Quad would aggressively remove mature maples, many that did not appear to be in decline. The 2010 plan would have also resulted in a monoculture by using one primary replacement tree. A new 2015 plan, replacing the 2010 plan, focuses on a just-in-time tree replacement as well as biodiversity of trees.

**Comprehensive Transportation Study.** Rapid campus expansion precipitated the need for a comprehensive transportation study of campus and the surrounding city of Logan. The 2015 plan addresses parking, transportation demand reduction initiatives, bicycle and pedestrian convenience and safety and traffic control enhancement for campus and the city of Logan. The university planning committee and Logan City Council have each adopted the initial five-year proposals found in the completed transportation master plan.

**Utility Master Plan.** USU is currently updating its utility capacity analysis for steam, chilled water and electrical production as found in the 2010 utility master plan. The campus water master plan for culinary and secondary water production and distribution systems is also being updated.

**400 North Logan City Plan.** This was a Logan City planning initiative that focused on the 400 North corridor from Main Street to the 1200 East campus entry. USU planning officials participated as a focus group in the City’s plan and coordinated City proposals into the USU transportation master plan.
Future Planning Initiatives

Campus Housing Master Plan. In 2018, USU will pursue a housing plan to replace the existing 2003 housing plan. The new plan will utilize findings from the existing master plan and completed district plans as appropriate and will re-evaluate the goals set forth in 2003. It will utilize current data and include a market study to evaluate the demand and type of housing desired to support the university as well as complement the community. The plan will also include USU Dining Services facilities and will identify other amenities needed to support housing communities on campus such as parking, retail, recreation and open space. Housing will be placed strategically to replace aging buildings, but maintain walkability to the academic core. The plan will be phased in to illustrate the progression of build-out over time.

Regional Campus and USU Extension Master Plans. USU has seven regional locations around the state of Utah as well as responsibility for the Utah State University System in Price and Blanding, Utah. Planning for the USU Botanical Center in Kaysville as well as USU installations in Moab, Brigham City, Tooele, Price and Blanding are no more than five years old.

Summary

As most campus district plans will have been updated or completed and approved by UPRPC in 2018, USU will update the campus master plan to include all relevant changes and to append each district or focused plan to the overall campus master plan.

2.G.4 Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution’s mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services.

The Office of Budget and Planning gives primary support to the leadership of the university in identifying, obtaining and allocating education and general resources. The university’s strategic decision-making process helps align unit plans and objectives with resource requests and allocations.

Funding for much of the educational equipment, such as technology-mediated classrooms and technology infrastructure, comes from central sources. Funding for laboratory and administrative equipment is generally the responsibility of respective units. Other funding for facilities and equipment may come from additional sources such as contracts and grants.

Teaching and Learning Technologies (TLT) explores, develops, and supports innovations in the classroom and eLearning environments by building and maintaining USU’s teaching and learning ecosystem. Technology infrastructure for instruction and access is centrally funded and on a regular upgrade schedule. This includes technology in the classrooms, general use computer labs, multi-media content creation, storage and access and wired and wireless network access. Wireless access is a priority for instructional space with a goal of 100% wireless access across the campus.
In keeping with its institutional commitment to promote faculty research, USU has created and maintains a supportive infrastructure to ensure that research activities are conducted in appropriate, safe and effective ways. Equipment is a key part of this infrastructure, and the vice president for research helps support equipment needs for the faculty. In general, research equipment needs are met with funds from extramural awards and startup packages for new faculty, but departments, colleges and the university sometimes contribute to the acquisition of new equipment. Also, USU has a number of core or shared facilities that provide highly specialized instrumentation, services and technical support for the university’s research community including the Laboratory Animal Research Center, the Center for Integrated Biosystems, Utah Water Research Laboratory, the Microscopy Core Facility and USU Analytical Laboratories. Effective core facilities are founded on high-end instrumentation and expertise, so the decision to invest in new cores carries considerable strategic weight and expense.

Inventories are maintained in accordance with the Equipment Management Procedures Manual. Equipment Management Services manages the Property Control System for the care, custody, control and financial reporting of equipment owned and/or controlled by Utah State University. The Property Control System is maintained according to federal and state regulations and university policies. The Equipment Management Services maintains the university’s inventory of buildings and equipment.

Equipment Management Services is notified when equipment is purchased and appropriate information is added to the equipment database. Annual audits are conducted of all capitalized equipment to determine the condition, location and existence of the equipment. Equipment that is determined to be excess is sent to Surplus Sales and Equipment Management Services is notified to remove the property from its database.

2.G.5 Consistent with its mission, core themes and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.

The Office of Information Technology provides comprehensive technology services to meet the needs of students, faculty and staff at USU. Additionally, USU has created a dedicated Academic and Instructional Services (AIS) division to advance and support quality, accessibility and innovation in teaching, learning, research and public engagement often through the development and implementation of effective technology tools including classroom and learning technology. Selected systems and infrastructure from administrative, academic, infrastructure, support services, disaster recovery and security units are identified below.

Administrative Systems

Ellucian-Banner is the system that meets the primary administrative functions for the university. Student services, finance, financial aid, human resources and the course information system are
the functions served by Banner. Banner has been fully updated to the latest version (Banner 9/XE). There is online access to services on and off the USU network, and data integrations are in place for external systems as needed. Banner is the primary system from which data is processed to other administrative functions. Another important system for administrative function is the ServiceNow Digital Workflow, which eliminates paper-based approval processes, and increases automation, efficiency, and effectiveness of daily administrative functions at USU through digitization.

**Academic/Research Systems**

Advances in technology continue to drive change in the classroom impacting teaching and learning. USU has been actively involved in examining and utilizing new technologies to improve student engagement and enhance the overall student experience. There are several systems utilized to meet the teaching, learning and research needs of the institution. Essential to teaching with technology is the learning management system (LMS). USU uses Canvas for online instruction as well as on-campus course management. The interactive video classroom/conferencing (IVS) system used is Cisco, and Adobe Connect and WebEx are utilized for web-based video conferencing. The lecture capture software Panopto is also available to faculty. In addition, USU recently partnered with Civitas Learning to analyze historical and present data to help students be more successful. AIS is leading this initiative and several offices in student affairs are utilizing the data to improve student success and retention.

USU Research and Graduate Studies partners with the University of Utah’s Center for High Performance Computing (CHPC) for research computing infrastructure. Access to high performance computing (HPC) resources for research go through the CHPC to provide a more comprehensive set of resources to meet the computational needs of faculty and students.

**Infrastructure Services**

The core access systems required to sustain university services include the state of the art “Learning and Research Ready” network that provides a Gigabit bandwidth to the desktop, 10Gbps to 40Gb redundant backbones for traffic aggregation, 52Gb aggregate bandwidth to the outside world including Internet2 and Front Range Gigapop educational/research networks, geographically redundant network paths between all Logan campus buildings and all inbound/outbound data services including redundant network loops to all regional campuses and comprehensive wireless coverage built for both coverage and capacity.

Logan SER is the primary on-site data center with fully redundant power and cooling. It is highly efficient, utilizing green data center practices to reduce costs and carbon footprint. The University of Utah West Temple is the primary off-site data center to leverage shared services within the Utah System of Higher Education. It provides state of the art earthquake power and cooling systems. The Innovation Campus and Library Datacenter are secondary local data centers utilized for data replication. A tertiary data center located in Price, Utah, is in a separate seismic zone. This center has redundancy of some systems such as Microsoft Active Directory as
well as specific systems to support local services. Finally, public Cloud offerings with Amazon Web Services, Google and Oracle are used for disaster recovery and expanded for use with the business community.

USU provides a single site sign-on to securely manage all student, faculty and staff authentication, account information and actions. A central authentication system allows students, faculty and staff to use a single institutional identifier/id (username and password) that can be leveraged across and integrated into nearly any system on campus. USU securely extends the use of institutional accounts (usernames/passwords) outside of USU by providing federated authentication services (http://www.incommon.org and http://shibboleth.net) that allow faculty, students and staff to access resources outside of USU using USU usernames and passwords. It also enables the reverse, allowing the possibility of sharing USU services with members of outside institutions to facilitate shared services securely and easily. This also includes shared network access through EDUROAM. In addition, all devices attached to the USU network are associated with a specific individual or owner via the central ID (username/password). This ensures that USU can react quickly to contact any device owner, if necessary. It has also enabled USU to successfully track and recover stolen property. As an extra precautionary measure, a multi-factor authentication is required of all employees for core systems with personal or sensitive data.

One-Stop Support

The IT service desk is the front door to support for all technology issues at the institution. Support and training are available online (synchronous and asynchronous), in person, over e-mail or via “live chat.” These options leverage state of the art remote support tools that allow the service desk to call together any functional team or teams at USU to solve a problem.

In addition, software systems and support services are made available in person, via the internet and over the telephone. Critical systems, such as the LMS, have 24/7 phone access for teaching faculty and support staff. Also, an online IT Service Catalog is available to provide service and document significant customer-facing services and systems.

2.G.6 The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.

USU devotes significant resources, including dedicated support units, to the training and effective use of technology systems spanning the institution. Academic Instructional Services (AIS) assists the university in advancing and supporting excellence in teaching, learning, research and public engagement. AIS works with all campuses to advance USU’s capacity and reputation to build, deliver and support academic excellence with a focus on quality, accessibility and innovation. AIS is divided into six service offices. The three listed below are focused on support of the learning environment:
- The Center for Innovative Design and Instruction (CIDI) helps faculty create and maintain high quality learning environments. The center provides access to practical tools, relevant data, prompt and effective support, consultation and hands-on training. CIDI also helps with Canvas course development, instructional design and media production. The Empowering Teaching Excellence (ETE) program is a component of CIDI that serves to elevate and promote the culture of teaching excellence through events and programs that are open to all USU instructors.

- The Teaching and Learning Technologies (TLT) office explores, tests and implements new teaching and learning technologies for faculty and students across the university. TLT recently opened the Teaching Innovation Lab, a laboratory space that provides for usability testing of teaching and learning technologies for faculty and students before they are deployed in the mainstream environment.

- The Classroom and Media Production (CMP) office is responsible for faculty and student technology support. The CMP hires, trains and schedules classroom facilitators who assist faculty and students in interactive video broadcasting (IVC) classes, provides training and support (on-call) to faculty for all classroom technologies and provides access to audio and video studios as well as software training to assist faculty in developing media content for their courses.

Banner INB system training is required for new employees and users in finance, financial aid, HR and student affairs. Access to the Banner INB system is established only for those who complete the required training.

IT participates in the USU Connections course to educate students on technology resources and use of the on-campus computer labs. Students are introduced to Canvas, Portal, Banner and Access as well as additional pieces of software used at USU. There are also several other courses at USU with technology components to educate and train students.

USU provides security training for all employees who have access to certain critical data types. Hosted Adobe Captivate is used to present and track the training.

2.G.7 Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs and services.

The chief information officer (CIO), who reports directly to the vice president for business and finance, is a member of the Executive Committee providing a direct line of communication between information technology and other departments on campus. There are various institutional committees that provide governance mechanisms and serve to disseminate information to and from IT and the campus community.
The primary IT governance group is the IT Executive Advisory Committee that is composed of selected vice presidents and deans. This group provides input regarding current and future IT infrastructure needs. In addition, they review IT funding and budget change requests.

Several other IT advisory groups meet regularly encompassing a broad range of representation across the entire university community. These groups include the Classroom Technology Advisory Committee, Banner Coordinating Committee, functional IT Technical Teams, the Network Administrators Forum and the Associated Students of USU Student IT Advisory group. These groups discuss shared IT concerns, evaluate recommended technology, propose classroom technology standards and foster communication and collaboration across the university.

The service desk personnel record and act on constituent feedback provided during routine support operations. The service desk also conducts formal surveys with all units contracting for support to solicit feedback. Significant projects at USU have a formal project team with IT staff and non-IT representation. This is where the bulk of input from constituencies on specific projects occurs. Other committees at the university are solicited as-needed for input or approval in technology matters.

2.G.8 The institution develops, implements and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs and services.

A cyclical technology capital replacement plan is maintained as a part of USU’s comprehensive FTE based funding model. To ensure no systems are missed all capital technology systems and infrastructure at USU are depreciated with funds set aside for replacement within approved warranty, life and support cycles immediately upon acquisition. This ensures that funding is maintained to replace all core technology infrastructure in a predictable, stable cycle. Technologies are reevaluated during each cycle.
STANDARD 3

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The institution engages in ongoing, participatory planning that provides direction for the institution and leads to the achievement of the intended outcomes of its programs and services, accomplishment of core themes and fulfillment of its mission. The resulting plans reflect the interdependent nature of the institution’s operations, functions and resources. The institution demonstrates that the plans are implemented and are evident in the relevant activities of its programs and services, the adequacy of its resource allocation and the effective application of institutional capacity. In addition, the institution demonstrates that its planning and implementation processes are sufficiently flexible so that the institution is able to address unexpected circumstances that have the potential to impact the institution’s ability to accomplish its core theme objectives and to fulfill its mission.
STANDARD 3.A: INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

3.A.1 The institution engages in ongoing, purposeful, systematic, integrated and comprehensive planning that leads to fulfillment of its mission. Its plans are implemented and made available to appropriate constituencies.

Institutional planning at Utah State University is ongoing, integrated and comprehensive. It is overseen by the offices of the president and provost who coordinate through the Executive Committee and collaborate with faculty and the leadership of the units and programs around campus through clearly established policies and practice that support shared governance. This enables academic planning to integrate with broader university-wide planning, evaluation and improvement efforts. Effective planning requires data-informed analysis of potential changes in students, faculty, staff, revenues, physical plant and academic programs. Academic priorities and their characteristics inform all planning processes at the institutional, college and departmental level. There are three factors USU recognizes when setting priorities:

- The obligation of the university to seek for all programs the level of support needed to achieve acceptable quality and to accommodate projected enrollments.
- The obligation of the university to facilitate the attainment of national and international leadership of programs that are at or near this level of quality and those that are distinctive to the university.
- The need to fulfill existing legal and administrative mandates and to meet the needs of the university’s primary constituents.

All planning is guided by the university’s mission statement and core themes and objectives which were developed by university faculty, administration and Trustees and are coordinated through the University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC) and the Executive Committee with oversight by the USU Board of Trustees. Leadership is provided by the president working
closely with the provost and other senior administrators. Learning, discovery and engagement provide the impetus for institutional planning with ideas discussed within departments, colleges and units and integration of initiatives across functional areas. Comprehensive planning at Utah State University takes place in the context of USU’s role as a member of the eight institution Utah System of Higher Education (USHE), governed by the Utah State Board of Regents (Regents). Utah Code 53B-1-101 charges USHE and the Regents “To provide high quality, efficient, and economical public system of higher education through centralized direction and master planning.” Utah Code 53B-6-101 calls for the Regents to “establish and maintain an up-to-date master plan which shall include: (a) providing for statewide planning of public higher education in terms of a mission, aims, purposes, and objectives of the system as a whole; (b) establishing and defining the mission, role, and programs of each institution within the system; (c)...(h).

Engaging in master planning for higher education in Utah, the Regents enlist all USHE institutions in 10-year planning processes with revisions made to those plans every five years. The most current plan under implementation is Utah’s 2025 plan, recently approved by the Regents. The three goals of Utah’s 2025 plan are:

- Affordable Participation: increase access and student success and increase enrollments.
- Timely Completion: increase persistence and graduation and increase degree productivity.
- Innovative Discovery: innovation as a core value and student involvement in high-impact practices.

These goals are essentially the same as in the HigherEdUtah2020 plan that is currently in implementation except the third goal which was revised in the 2025 plan. In the 2020 plan, currently in implementation, the three goals are:

- Participation: more students will need to enroll in a postsecondary institution.
- Completion: higher education initiatives to retain and graduate more students.
  - 15-to-Finish initiative.
  - Setting plateau tuition at 12-15 credit hours to provide a financial incentive.
  - Encourage students to enroll in appropriate for-credit math during the first year.
  - Create accessible graduation maps for each major.
  - Explore feasibility of implementing reverse transfer/stackable credentials.
- Economic Innovation: higher education’s contribution to Utah’s economy and prosperity.

As a public institution, one systematic planning challenge for USU is to maintain alignment of its core themes with the goals established through the planning process of USHE. With revisions to the USHE plan every five years, USU’s comprehensive planning process must make certain that core themes are relevant and enduring — true to USU’s 100+ year-old land-grant mission — while continuing to address the needs of the state of Utah as articulated in the state’s long-term plans. The table below illustrates the current alignment of core themes and selected core
theme objective measures to the three goals of Utah’s 2025 plan.

Table 3.1: Core Themes and Utah’s 2025 Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Theme</th>
<th>Core Theme Objectives</th>
<th>Utah’s 2025 Plan Goals</th>
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| **Learning** | Faculty teach well, students learn and achieve success | **Timely Completion**  
USHE Student Success |
| | Student retention and completion rates are strong and improving | **Timely Completion**: Increase percent of students who persist and graduate from higher education |
| | USU provides inclusive access; course offerings and student enrollments support the land-grant mission to provide education throughout Utah | **Affordable Participation**: Increase the number of Utahns who decide to access, are prepared for and succeed in higher education |
| **Discovery** | Faculty are engaged with productive and critically recognized programs of research and creative endeavors | **Innovative Discovery**: USHE is a “knowledge enterprise,” engaged in the creation and dissemination of knowledge. |
| | Students participate in strong research and creative programs and achieve success | **Affordable Participation**  
Timely Completion  
Innovative Discovery |
| **Engagement** | University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to grow human capital, encourage lifelong learning and improve quality of life | **Affordable Participation**  
Timely Completion |
| | University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to identify, secure and create economic development | **Innovative Discovery** |

In alignment with the 10-year planning process, the Regents make formal policy recommendations to institutions, such as the July 2013 Completion Resolution that was developed in cooperation with institutions to help meet the goals in the state’s plan of increasing the percentage of students who persist and graduate from higher education. Although they are not delivered as mandates, the Regents’ strategic plans, policy recommendations and initiatives significantly shape comprehensive planning efforts at Utah State University. By the close of the 2016-2017 academic year, for example, all five of the completion strategies recommended in the Completion Resolution had been successfully implemented at USU through the university’s planning process (please see Standard Four of this report for more details). USU reports annually to the Regents its achievement proportionate to system-wide goals and planning expectations as well as providing comparison information with peer performance in various metrics.

USU engages in institutional planning in alignment with the 2025 plan goals of affordable
participation, timely completion and innovative discovery. USU’s planning integrates these system-wide goals to align with USU’s core themes of learning, discovery and engagement with associated objectives. USU’s mission as a land-grant and space-grant institution and a Carnegie higher research institution is viewed by the Regents as an opportunity for growth in alignment with the core theme of discovery. In the context of the system-wide plan, USU is expected to expand research in the areas of aerospace, agriculture, life sciences, energy and engineering and be a major player in technology transfer endeavors (2020 Plan, p. 129).

Figure 3.1: Planning Cycle

3.A.2 The institution’s comprehensive planning process is broad-based and offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies.

Utah State University’s overall planning is organized through the Executive Committee which is the working name of the university administrative council. The Executive Committee relies on formal policy, clearly defined levels of approval and authority and delegation to achieve
success. For example, planning and assessment of academic programs is centered in work by the faculty within the departments, as detailed in Standard 2.A.9 of this report. Proposals for new programs, or changes to existing programs, are brought through the formal faculty-led process outlined earlier (e.g., R401 proposal, EPC, Faculty Senate, Board of Trustees, etc.), which is broad-based and offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies. Planning begins within the units and moves into discussion and review at the Executive Committee as appropriate for coordination, funding and implementation. The Executive Committee provides overall policy approval and guidance as well as opportunities for integrated planning, cooperation and coordination. It is responsible for developing and reviewing USU’s plans and internal policies as well as coordinating the programs to be implemented by the colleges, departments and other organizational units of the university. Guiding documents for planning are the mission, core themes and objectives. Assessment oversight is provided by the UACC.

USU’s planning is cyclical and organized around interlinking planning documents and processes which incorporate assessment results. Because strategic planning at USU is centered around unit planning, it is based on widespread campus participation. One challenge of extensive, bottom-up participation in strategic planning is in maintaining coherent alignment of unit plans with the core theme objectives. The budget hearing process provides coordination. The Executive Committee is available to assess, consolidate and incorporate all plans and initiatives into the broader institutional planning process. The Executive Committee works directly with the president and the Trustees to ensure continuous annual mission fulfillment. Assessment of the achievement of university objectives takes place annually and feedback from the results of the core theme indicators is fed into the budget and planning review process. In addition, the annual budgeting process utilizes the core themes and objectives to organize and screen requests, aligning unit planning and expenditures with the university’s comprehensive plan.

Results of all core theme objective indicators are posted publicly and updated annually. The Director of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA), on behalf of the University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC), presents core theme objective indicator results to the Executive Committee for review and discussion. The Executive Committee shares its resulting feedback with the UACC before presenting the indicator results and documentation to the Trustees for review and discussion at their annual retreat in January. Questions and concerns from the Trustees at that retreat are, in turn, shared with the Executive Committee and then routed back through the UACC for deliberation in subsequent unit planning and budgeting.

In the context of shared governance, the participation of the faculty is paramount. The president of the Faculty Senate is a member of the Executive Committee to provide a direct link between faculty-driven and faculty-engaged processes and the university’s larger budgeting and planning efforts. Faculty engagement and participation are integral to the planning and assessment processes of the university. The Councils and Committees Handbook defines the structure and representation of faculty in planning and assessment processes.
Budget Planning Process

The university’s comprehensive planning takes place within the long-term horizon of USHE strategic goals and priorities. USU’s bottom-up, participatory plans are created annually (April-July), are prioritized through the budget hearing process and are grounded in USU’s core themes and objectives. Units review assessment data and budgets including analysis of all revenue streams, strategic initiatives and staffing levels (July-September) for incorporation into their plans. Assessment data is integrated into the process at the unit level. Core themes and related objectives are integrated into the scoring and decision-making process for budget allocation throughout the budget hearing process. The most recent year’s budget assessment spreadsheet including core theme scoring is available here.

Utah State University conducts a unit budget request and review process annually. The purpose of this process is to assess financial needs by the academic colleges and other major units (e.g., athletics, libraries) in relation to funding acquired through state legislative action. Aside from annual base budget funding from the state, the Utah legislature has been making available to the eight public colleges and universities in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) additional resources, termed “Performance-Based” funding. The legislature, in cooperation with the Board of Regents and USHE, scores each USHE institution relative to a set of performance metrics (e.g., completion, retention, etc.) and on that basis distributes a block of funding to each institution. Each institution is responsible for identifying critical mission-based needs on which to spend funding from the available performance-based pool. In recent years, the performance metrics used by the legislature and the higher education system, as well as the scale of related funding, have evolved and grown to reflect USHE’s strategic planning and a greater understanding of Utah-specific higher education issues.

USU’s process for identifying mission-based needs for funding begins with the president who establishes parameters for the units. In the most recent budget hearing process, the president asked that units outline their requests to specifically address USU’s three core themes of learning, discovery and engagement (see example from the College of Engineering). Beginning in spring and lasting into summer, each dean and vice president met collectively with the president, provost, vice president for business and finance (VPBF) and the president’s chief of staff to present and discuss their funding priorities. Typically, units requested ongoing funding for key personnel who would contribute to increased success of the unit by expanding services and operations in line with USU’s mission and core theme objectives. For example, requests from several colleges for FY19 included student advisors to improve student learning, retention and completion. Other requests were for faculty to meet specific demands and programmatic needs identified through departmental and college assessment, planning and improvement efforts. During the fall semester, the president, after follow-up discussions with deans and vice presidents and in consultation with the provost and VPBF, made final decisions about the distribution of funding in consideration of how the support would advance USU’s core themes of learning, discovery and engagement.

The budget hearing process provides annual, integrated coordination that directs unit planning
and budgeting with core themes, objectives and USU’s role in Utah’s 2020/2025 plans. The Executive Committee meeting framework and annual strategic planning retreats provide standardized coordination and oversight. Executive Committee meetings are scheduled weekly. The first Wednesday of each month is President’s Council, which comprises the president, provost and vice presidents. The second and fourth Wednesday of each month are dedicated to meetings of the full Executive Committee, and the third Wednesday of the month is a “strategic agenda” meeting, where specific topics are addressed in depth with only relevant stakeholders present. The president is the leader of the Executive Committee and, working with the provost and VPs, the committee serves as a bridge between the university’s strategic academic priorities and unit plans. As a part of the budget submission process, the committee uses USU’s core themes and objectives to sort requests, identifying key priorities and opportunities to integrate into the university’s planning and budget process.

The most recent example of Executive Committee coordination and review of unit planning and assessment has been the comprehensive risk assessment and review process outlined earlier in this report in Section 2.F.1. The Executive Committee has conducted a series of strategic agenda meetings with a rotating group of stakeholders to provide comprehensive oversight and planning that aligns with the recent comprehensive risk assessment efforts.

The university monitors major revenue and expense trends. Major budget categories such as investment income, utility costs, financial aid and intercollegiate athletics expenditures are projected over a five- to six-year timetable, incorporating allowance for unexpected contingencies. Tuition increases, enrollment changes and legislative funding increases are conservatively factored into this planning. This approach allows the university to prepare for probable financial outcomes of strategic decisions and prepare prudent financial plans.

Building projects, prioritized according to USU’s Campus Master Plan, are separated by category and cost and submitted for funding requests to the legislature through the Regents and the State Building Board. Proposals for significant new capital financing projects are assessed using the following criteria:

- How the project relates to the university mission and core themes.
- The justification for the project.
- Whether the project has a defined, supportable plan of costs and a plan for servicing the debt that includes projected revenue streams or the creation of budgetary savings.

The following table demonstrates the budget planning process at USU and how core themes shape resource allocation. This comprehensive process involves all constituencies across campus.
Table 3.2: Institutional Budget Planning Timeline/Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Stage in Budget Process</th>
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| May           | • Administrative hearings with VPs and deans  
• Guided recommendations from Utah 2020/2025 plans and USHE resolutions  
• Aligned with core themes and objectives |
| June          | • Administrative decisions on new budget request  
• Administration reviews college and division requests  
• Select highest priority items for USU budget request that are in alignment with core themes and objectives |
| August        | • Budget hearing with USHE Commissioner  
• President presents USU budget request to the State Commissioner of Higher Education |
| September     | • Budget hearing with Regents  
• Commissioner presents higher education system budget request  
• President presents USU budget request to the Regents |
| November      | • Final Regents' budget request decisions  
• Higher education requests presented to the governor |
| November/December | • Budget hearings with:  
  o Legislative Fiscal Analysts  
  o Governor's Office of Planning and Budget  
  o Local legislators  
  o Other key legislators  
• President presents total USU budget request to key stakeholders to gain support |
| January/February | • Budget hearing with the legislature |
| February/March | • Final legislative decisions made  
• Legislature approves the final appropriations bills |
| March         | • Administration allocates budget  
• Administration allocates the legislative appropriation to the colleges and divisions |
| March/May     | • Budget Office assembles new budget  
• Budget Office sends allocation information to colleges and divisions and processes their responses. |
| May/June      | • Final budget approval by Trustees  
• Additional budget information is presented to the Trustees for approval |

Research and Graduate Studies Planning

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies (RGS) has a comprehensive and inclusive planning and assessment process that fully integrates the work of nine divisions. Unit planning incorporates the participation of both the USU Research Council and Graduate Council as well as the full executive team. RGS strategic goals are to:

- Foster success of USU’s graduate students.
- Grow and strengthen USU’s research portfolio.
- Enhance USU’s undergraduate research program.

These goals are further elaborated through sets of integrated strategies, and results are tracked on an annual basis. RGS produces annual reports documenting the results of strategic planning and implementation. The 2017 annual report highlights the following goals and strategies: enhance research capacity and productivity; champion a culture of safety, compliance and integrity; support technology transfer efforts; enhance quality, quantity and inclusiveness of USU’s graduate students and programs; and enhance USU’s undergraduate research program. Given the relationship among learning, discovery and engagement, planning and assessment efforts in RGS strengthen outcomes in all three core theme areas.

**Executive Enrollment Management Planning**

Following the 2007 self-study and NWCCU review, the university formalized its recruitment and enrollment plans in the *Utah State Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2009-2013 (SEM)*. This plan provided enrollment management vision and goals, established the Executive Enrollment Management Committee (EEMC) as an oversight structure and detailed goal attainment and budgets. The primary goals of the SEM plan were to:

- Reverse the decline in enrollments at the Logan campus.
- Increase enrollment at regional campuses and distance education.
- Recruit out-of-state students to enroll at USU.
- Increase the diversity of the student body.
- Grow enrollment while retaining high enrollment standards.

Since the attainment of these primary goals in 2013, enrollment planning and management has continued under the leadership of the EEMC working in collaboration with the provost’s office, business and finance and student affairs. Several of the measures included in the original SEM have been incorporated into the core theme objective indicators including regional campus and distance education scope and growth and indicators reflecting student diversity and inclusiveness. The EEMC is currently working on a University Strategic Enrollment Plan that will be completed by summer 2018, with 5- and 10-year goals and strategies.

**Campus Planning — Facilities Planning, Design and Construction (FPD&C)**

A very important area of institutional planning at USU involves facilities planning. The EEMC has set an enrollment growth target of 2% per annum to contribute to the enrollment and capacity goals of the USHE 2020/2025 strategic plans. To provide sufficient resources, USU must make certain the campus is prepared for growth. The FPD&C carries the responsibility for all planning at Utah State University. This includes the coordination of the internal campus infrastructure, development of the campus master plan and the implementation and maintenance of character and aesthetics of the internal campus. The planning department also has the charge of maintaining healthy positive relationships between USU and the local community as well as
the state of Utah. The five-year plan for campus facilities documents the most recent projects at USU.

3.A.3 The institution’s comprehensive planning process is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate fulfillment of its mission.

The institutional planning process is guided by metrics aligned with the core themes. Each core theme has objectives and performance indicators that measure high-level, overall performance for that particular core theme. Additional data is incorporated in the discussion of indicator trends to enable participants to drill-down to an understanding of the underlying drivers of significant trends.

The bottom-up nature of planning and assessment efforts at USU presents a continual challenge to the UACC, Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. Significant investment of time and resources has been made in systems that enable the collection of detailed data. When the current set of core theme indicators was under development, discussion within the UACC evolved to focus on the potential to develop a compact set of macro indicators that the group believed would reflect current status of efforts, long-term direction and trending. In addition, these measures would best provoke introspection, discussion and realignment of resources to match successful mission fulfillment. At the highest level of planning and discussion are the core theme objective indicators. In their totality, the core theme objective measures are outcome and synthesis indicators that represent larger bodies of data that incorporate intensive processes of data collection and assessment.

Multiple levels of assessment data are incorporated into USU’s comprehensive planning process. Course assessment is done by faculty. Academic programs assess their outcomes at the student level. Each supporting unit is guided by an assessment plan, and data is collected to ensure that units engage in continuous improvement. For example, strategic planning and assessment in Research and Graduate Studies and the Division of Student Affairs provide data and programming to inform decision-making and continuous improvement. Where possible, national standards are used as the basis of unit assessment and implementation efforts. An example of successful unit planning, overseen and disseminated through the Executive Committee, is the comprehensive review of graduate programs undertaken by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies (RGS).

3.A.4 The institution’s comprehensive plan articulates priorities and guides decisions on resource allocation and application of institutional capacity.

As defined in Policy 103.3, there are three programmatic priorities that reflect the primary functions of the university as an academic community. Ancillary programs that are not academic in nature are considered lower priority except where they are clearly and demonstrably critical to the fulfillment of the university’s academic mission. These priorities clearly reflect USU’s integration of planning with USHE’s role, strategic plans and priorities.
The priority listing is not intended to be structured so institutional priorities that are innovative cannot be accommodated. The goals and priorities are meant to be considerations for planning. For example, there must be a critical mass of faculty and student scholars and a physical plant to support priority programs; there must be mechanisms for measuring, supporting and encouraging extraordinary faculty achievements; and there must be recognition and continuing analysis of the university’s legal and administrative mandates and the needs of the public elements served by it including students and prospective employers.

Programs with **first priority** are those that:
- Fulfill legal and legislative mandates.
- Have existing role assignments from the Regents.
- Make a substantial contribution to the general and liberal education of students.
- Meet the needs of a wide spectrum of students.
- Meet local and regional needs that cannot otherwise be provided by other institutions on an economical basis.
- Meet national needs of special significance to the university because of their particular capabilities.
- Meet international needs through programs and projects that require specialized support and are mutually beneficial to the university and the host country.

Programs with **second priority** are those that:
- Show strength but are not part of mandated or assigned roles, do not directly address local or regional needs and are not existing or near-potential centers of excellence.
- Support programs that contribute only minimally to general education and to a liberal education but have no special distinction within their national disciplines.
- Programs that are neither mandated nor assigned and are not unique to the university within the state.

Programs with **third priority** are those:
- Where other state institutions have primary role assignments.
- Where others in the region have superior programs and/or are more cost effective.
- Not in the first priority and that have an insufficient number of students resulting in excessive costs.
- Waning because technology, science or public needs are making them obsolete.

**3.A.5** The institution’s planning includes emergency preparedness and contingency planning for continuity and recovery of operations should catastrophic events significantly interrupt normal institutional operations.

The mission of the USU Emergency Management Department is to prepare the university community for emergencies and major disasters through planning, training, establishing policies and coordination of information and resources. The department directs the planning, mitigation, response and recovery activities for all USU locations when an incident occurs.
The purpose of the USU Emergency Operations Plan is to provide a rapid, coordinated and effective response to dangerous man-made or naturally occurring incidents or events for the purpose of protecting the public health and safety as well as the university environment. In addition, the plan serves to:

- Provide support and information to responders for the management of dangerous man-made or naturally occurring incidents or events.
- Reduce duplication of emergency response efforts between university departments and other agencies.
- Organize and coordinate all available manpower and prepare materials, supplies, equipment, facilities and services necessary for emergency disaster response to any natural disasters, technological accidents, nuclear/radiological incidents and other major incidents or hazards that might occur.

The USU Emergency Operations Plan sets forth a comprehensive emergency management program that seeks to mitigate the effects of hazards, prepare measures to preserve life and minimize damage, enhance response during emergencies and provide necessary assistance and establish a recovery system to return the university to a normal state of affairs.

This plan is intended to be able to support a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to domestic incident management across a spectrum of activities.

Disaster Recovery/Data Protection Systems

The university has integrated policy and practice to ensure the integrity of Information Technology (IT) systems and electronic data of all critical systems that includes backup, replication, recovery and archiving of student, faculty, staff and financial data. Emergency procedures and resources are widely publicized to students and staff, and regular trainings are conducted with all key stakeholders. USU has developed a multi-tier approach to address these issues as well as potential security issues related to disaster recovery and data protection. The first tier incorporates clustering that replicates Banner and enterprise database services across many servers located in the central university data center. USU can lose any server or piece of hardware in that cluster without losing data, relying on backups or shutting down service to the university.

The second tier entails backup and off-site backup storage. USU IT has completed the implementation of a $250,000 automated backup system to ensure that enterprise data is protected and restorable in case of a cluster or data center failure. IT backs up Banner, which includes all student, HR and finance data. In addition, other centrally hosted databases are backed up either daily for incremental database backup or weekly for full database backup. Both full and incremental disk backups for Banner and Blackboard Transact payment services are transferred to Amazon Web Services and retained off campus.
The third tier involves the Oracle cloud backup. Administrative and academic Banner data is replicated weekly off-site to Oracle’s secure cloud storage. This data is consumed and stress-tested at least twice a year in exercises to fully repopulate Banner systems from the backup to ensure that this final tier is operational and usable.
STANDARD 3.B: CORE THEME PLANNING

3.B.1 Planning for each core theme is consistent with the institution’s comprehensive plan and guides the selection of programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to accomplishment of the core theme’s objectives.

3.B.2 Planning for core theme programs and services guides the selection of contributing components of those programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of the respective programs and services.

3.B.3 Core theme planning is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate accomplishment of core theme objectives. Planning for programs and services is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are used to evaluate achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of those programs and services.

USU has three core themes supporting the mission statement: learning, discovery and engagement. Each theme is divided into objectives designed to substantiate institutional performance. The University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC) determined indicators that best measure USU’s core themes. Planning for core theme programs and services is
integrated into the university’s comprehensive planning process to ensure they are aligned to those goals and intended outcomes.

Core Theme: Learning

The core theme learning embodies both undergraduate and graduate education. The learning process encompasses functional activities including recruitment and retention of a diverse student population; provision of the educational and financial resources students need to succeed; creation of student-centered learning environments; investment in appropriate learning infrastructure and use of ongoing and effective assessment processes to measure learning outcomes and inform the changes and investments needed to improve those outcomes with a focus on degree qualifications, discipline mastery and professional development. Learning is assessed by the following objectives:

- Faculty teaches well, students learn and achieve success.
- Student retention and completion rates are strong and improving.
- Utah State University provides inclusive access to a diverse population; course offerings and student enrollments support the land-grant mission to provide education throughout Utah.

The primary core theme objective indicator for learning is the university’s Assessment Report Card, which aggregates department-led assessment efforts for all 240 programs across the 41 academic departments at the university. The Assessment Report Card is a recent addition to the university’s accountability efforts. It represents several years of work at the UACC, college and department levels to better foster a culture of assessment, particularly in those departments and programs not subject to external and specialized accreditation. It is based on a standardized rubric and, since 2016, has been issued annually in the fall. It sets a minimum expected threshold for program assessment efforts in four areas (objectives, assessment plan, outcomes data and data-informed decisions). Results are aggregated to provide a high-level proxy for comprehensive academic assessment efforts. In addition, students’ self-assessment of their learning is gathered from USU’s student ratings of instruction system, IDEA. Student self-assessment of learning based on a modified Bloom’s taxonomy is compared to self-assessed learning by students using IDEA at peer institutions (n=200+ institutions).

Retention and graduation rates are direct proxies for student persistence and success that reflect efforts within multiple functional units such as recruitment and admissions, advising, academic programs, department-level course scheduling and faculty teaching. Assessment of individual unit efforts is ongoing and evident, as outlined in Standard 4.B, and retention and graduation rates measure the impact of this collective work.

Inclusive enrollment of a diverse population is measured by five specific categories that are reflective of USU’s history and role as a land-grant institution including female, minority, non-Utah, first generation and low-income. Measures of the university’s mandate to provide state-
wide educational offerings and enrollments through distance education and regional campuses include the breadth of course offerings, distance and regional campus enrollments and student-to-course ratios for distance and regional students.

**Core Theme: Discovery**

The core theme *discovery* is the creation and development of knowledge through the achievement of productivity and excellence in research, scholarship and the creative and performing arts. USU provides nationally and internationally acclaimed programs of basic and applied research and engages in scholarly and creative endeavors to further the quest for knowledge and to help society meet its scientific, technological, environmental, economic and social challenges. The university’s contribution includes major research programs which broaden the horizons of knowledge and seek answers to problems of importance, and the creation in various media of works of art, architecture, dance, film, music, literature and theater. The measures articulated below focus primarily on productivity and excellence in research and creative works with links to both learning and engagement.

- Faculty are engaged with productive and critically recognized programs of research and creative endeavors.
- Students participate in strong research and creative programs and achieve success.

Many of the systems, personnel and resources that support these objectives and related indicators may not be apparent to casual observation. For example, several indicators rely upon collection of faculty-level data by the university’s Digital Measures (DM) system, a system that tracks every grant, award and publication associated with USU faculty. Prior to the implementation of this system in 2011, collection and aggregation of faculty-level detail was sporadic. Now, performance indicators track performance for each objective. For example, the annual count of significant faculty awards and honors, the ratio of peer-reviewed publications to total research FTEs and total research expenditures as reported to the National Science Foundation (NSF) are used to assess faculty research efforts. Student engagement is measured with the percentage of students who participate in research and creative programs outside of class each year as well as graduate student assistantships. Productivity is measured with peer-reviewed student publications (from DM) and enrollment in creative programs. Finally, graduate student FTEs and graduate degrees awarded are submitted to annual trend analysis.

**Core Theme: Engagement**

The core theme *engagement* represents the land-grant and space-grant outreach of the university. Although it touches all parts of the university, engagement is primarily organized around three spheres of work: (1) USU Extension, (2) the engagement activities of the eight colleges at all campuses and (3) economic development. The university makes available to the public the benefits of modern discovery, creative achievement and cultural and intellectual developments in alignment with its historic land-grant mission. The university’s outreach
programs provide to individuals, communities, institutions and industries throughout the state, services that help improve technology, the environment and quality of life.

The engagement core theme is assessed by the following objectives:

- University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to grow human capital, encourage lifelong learning and improve quality of life.
- University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to identify, secure and create economic development.

Core theme indicators track performance in each objective. For example, USU Extension activities are measured by direct and indirect contact data in addition to faculty delivered activities and events. Sustainability is a measure of improved quality of life. To accurately and impartially measure university-wide sustainability efforts, USU sought to achieve formal rating through STARS (Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Ratings) administered by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS provides a measure of institutional sustainability. Contributions to the infrastructure of economic development are measured by USU’s Office of Commercialization in terms of patents and innovation disclosures. USU’s financial impact as an employer and economic engine is measured by the total dollars spent in direct payroll and procurement in each fiscal year.
STANDARD 4
EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT

The institution regularly and systematically collects data to clearly defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data and formulates evidence-based evaluations of the achievement of core theme objectives. It demonstrates clearly defined procedures for evaluating the integration and significance of institutional planning, the allocation of resources and the application of capacity in its activities for achieving the intended outcomes of its programs and services and for achieving its core theme objectives. The institution disseminates assessment results to its constituencies and uses those results to effect improvement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 22 AND 23

REQUIREMENT 22. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
The institution identifies and publishes the expected learning outcomes for each of its degree and certificate programs. The institution engages in regular and ongoing assessment to validate student achievement of these learning outcomes.

USU publishes student learning outcomes for each degree and certificate program on the department websites and in the University Catalog. A dashboard that provides direct links to learning objectives, assessment plans, outcomes data and data-informed decisions for each program of study at USU is also available on the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA) website. Program and degree learning outcomes are assessed annually by faculty-led teams in all academic departments to demonstrate effectiveness of student learning. In addition, program reviews are completed every seven years per Board Policy R411. The primary purpose of academic program review and assessment is to comprehensively evaluate the educational effectiveness of academic program content, curricular delivery and learning.
REQUIREMENT 23. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
The institution systematically applies clearly defined evaluation and planning procedures, assesses the extent to which it achieves its mission and core themes, uses the results of assessment to effect institutional improvement and periodically publishes the results to its constituencies. Through these processes it regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact the institution and its ability to ensure its viability and sustainability.

Institutional effectiveness at USU is a systematic, ongoing process to improve student learning through regular assessment. Academic assessment is used to measure the effectiveness of student learning against course and program learning objectives, as one component of the core themes that measure mission fulfillment. Each core theme has measurable objectives and indicators including assessing the effectiveness of student learning at the institutional level. The results are published on the AAA website and are updated annually. Numerous tools are available to assist in detailed administrative analysis. Assessment results are used in data-informed decision-making to implement continuous improvement at Utah State University.
STANDARD 4.A: ASSESSMENT

4.A.2 The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its programs and services, where offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services.

4.A.4 The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives.

4.A.5 The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation and integration of planning, resources, capacity, practices and assessment with respect to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs or services, wherever offered and however delivered.

Utah State University is committed to internal and external assessment of its programs to assist in productive academic planning and the fulfillment of its mission and core themes. Assessment is intended to determine the extent to which university programs meet their stated program learning outcomes and further the mission of the institution. The assessment process is a
continuous process with faculty playing the primary role in academic assessment. Furthermore, assessment results directly inform planning and other decision-making activities.

Institutional assessment and research are primarily conducted through the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA). This office manages data and official reporting for the institution, assists programs with establishing learning outcomes and annual assessment and serves as the official accreditation office. The director of AAA is the chair of the University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC), and the office provides reports and resources to that group. AAA is the official source of federal IPEDS reporting for USU and is primarily responsible for institutional-level data collection, analysis, reporting and presentation. Specifically, it processes data related to retention, graduation, enrollment, course evaluations, faculty and staff census, surveys and faculty academic and research productivity. This office provides official data to state and federal agencies, responds to internal and external inquiries for data analytics and provides requested reports. AAA is also responsible for producing and presenting data analytics to evaluate accomplishment of the core themes and objectives.

Assessment of student learning is a vital process at Utah State University. It provides the opportunity for USU faculty and staff to demonstrate educational effectiveness to students, administrators, accrediting agencies and the community. It is a faculty-directed process producing objective information useful for decision-making at every level — department, program, school and college as well as the institutional level. Accordingly, assessment of student learning is an ongoing process subject to systematic review, self-assessment, planning and continuous improvement. The review process formalizes opportunities for program, college and university level reflective practice. Assessment of student learning is also an important mechanism for alignment with the core themes and mission fulfillment. The assessment of student learning at USU involves two distinct components: an annual assessment of student learning and cyclical program review (R411) completed every seven years.

**ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

All USU academic programs complete an annual assessment review of student learning. Assessment at USU is managed at the departmental level. Annually submitted assessment reports document results of departmental efforts to evaluate student attainment of learning objectives for all programs of study at the university. Every academic program is responsible for developing learning objectives, an assessment plan and a curriculum map that guides assessment of the student learning objectives for the program. The faculty determine the learning objectives that will be assessed based on the course schedule and evaluate relevant data to assess student learning. At the end of the academic year, faculty in the departments review the assessment results and use the data to inform curricular or programmatic changes where necessary to improve student learning. When the assessment process is completed and data-informed decisions are determined, the results are posted to departmental webpages. Additional data is provided by student self-assessment of their learning progress on instructor-selected learning objectives using the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) system. The IDEA SRI process is detailed later in this report.
Once the assessment reports are updated on the department webpages (by October each year), the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA) reviews all programs of study creating a list from the current University Catalog and utilizing a standardized rubric for scoring. The rubric is used to evaluate the published learning objectives, assessment plan, outcomes data and data-informed decisions. Every academic program is rated in each of the four categories of the rubric. AAA provides an assessment report card of the results for all programs and an average summary score at the department and college levels. The assessment report card is a tool to provide feedback on the effectiveness of program assessment work to faculty, department heads and administrators. The assessment report card is sent to the academic unit with both scores and comments to inform the assessment process for the subsequent academic year. The full assessment report card is shared with the UACC as one element of the comprehensive review process each year.

PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

Program review at USU is intended to assess the quality and effectiveness of academic programs, identify program strengths and opportunities for improvement, establish strategies for continuous improvement, ensure program student learning objectives are aligned with the mission and core themes of the institution and utilize the information gathered from annual assessment reports to shape planning and decision-making at the institutional level. The program review process provides an opportunity for academic programs to evaluate the quality and educational effectiveness of their degree programs. In addition, the process is intended to promote and facilitate ongoing assessment and improvement. These reviews also afford a formal opportunity to identify needs and influence the budget process.

Before a program of study is created, modified or discontinued, it must go through the R401 proposal submission process. Once approved, new academic programs must complete an initial program review after three years. To establish and sustain a culture of assessment, USU uses the cyclical institutional program review process established by the Board of Regents (Policy R411) to engage programs in continuous quality improvement. Per this policy, all degree programs must complete a review every seven years following the initial program review. Specialized and professional program accreditation and Regent’s R411 program review are managed and tracked by the Provost’s Office.

The Provost’s Office administers the program review process for the institution. This process is more rigorous than the annual assessment review as it involves a comprehensive evaluation of program quality including written evidence of trends (enrollment, etc.), program effectiveness, budget and curriculum evaluation. The process includes an in-depth self-study of the academic program; evaluation by an appointed Review Committee and external reviewers; a report from the Review Committee with recommendations and actions to be taken for program improvement, continuation or discontinuation and completion of the final R411 report. The Provost’s Office maintains the program review schedule for the institution, provides funding and supports the departments as needed. The AAA office provides data to support this process.
Program Self-Study. The self-study is a comprehensive report of the academic degree program since the previous program review. It is informed by the assessment of student learning as well as program data provided by AAA. The self-study includes: a department profile, description of the faculty and staff in the program, student data, program costs, program support and program assessment which is a compilation of the last seven years of annual assessment reports.

The Review Committee. The Review Committee consists of at least two out of state external reviewers with expertise in the discipline and one internal reviewer not affiliated with the program. The Review Committee evaluates the self-study; meets with faculty, staff, students, the dean and others as necessary during a campus visit; compares USU to other peer institutions with comparable degree programs and submits a report to the departments for review within six weeks of the campus visit. Following review by the dean and department faculty, the Review Committee submits a final report to the provost. The report generally includes comments on strengths and weaknesses, adequacy of resources and recommendations for future planning.

R411 Preparation and Submission. Following completion of the Review Committee’s final report, the department head prepares an R411 report based on the review process and submits it to the Provost’s Office. The provost submits this report to the Board of Trustees and Board of Regents. The R411 report includes: an introduction and mission including a description of the degree program; assessment data and results for the past seven years; resources including faculty, staff and facilities; retention and graduation data analysis and an analysis of the degree program’s strengths and weaknesses.

UNDERGRADUATE ASSESSMENT

General Education

Beginning in 2009, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) became an Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) state and a participant in Tuning under the leadership of the Utah Regents’ General Education Task Force. USHE also became a member of the Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment. Subsequently, USU created general education matrices and rubrics to be used in the oversight and development of general education. Using the Tuning process of faculty development, USU has created an intentional general education program that is prepared to convey what it does, where it does it and how it articulates to majors. The increasing intentionality in general education had to be undertaken before proper assessment could be done. Only when general education outcomes were defined could assessment commence. This intentional work has progressed concurrently with policy changes at the system level. General education policy in the USHE is guided by the Regents’ General Education Task Force. In 2017, the Task Force recommended the adoption of new general education outcomes for the system in all areas of general education. Approved in April 2017, this USHE policy is based on
the LEAP outcomes and VALUE rubrics and presumes a Tuning process that includes system-wide majors’ meetings. The new policy includes assessment requirements and a standardized set of essential learning outcomes for all general education courses throughout the state.

This new policy, bolstering USU’s outcomes and proficiency statements, makes it possible to proceed to the next level — assessment of general education at USU using genuine artifacts of practice. Utah’s Faculty Collaborative project, based at USU and funded by AAC&U and Lumina, has subcontracted with Academic and Instructional Services (AIS) at USU to develop these assessments. They will be based in the LMS, Canvas, and will provide assessable data on every general education course. The first courses to develop these assessments will be in the humanities, social sciences and arts where assessment is often more challenging. These tools also permit student-level tracking of proficiencies over time.

These assessment efforts underscore the strengthening ties between the experts in teaching and learning, support resources based in AIS and the faculty who teach general education courses. The General Education Subcommittee of the EPC is actively engaged in general education curriculum and outcomes assessment and implementation of State policy. The larger goal is to ensure that High-Impact Practices are implemented, because they are understood and made possible for all faculty including contingent and distance delivery instructors.

Recently, a Tuning the First Year working group, led by USU faculty and student services professionals, was established by the Utah Regents’ General Education Task Force for the USHE. It uses USU’s first-year experience as an inspiration for creating common outcomes for all first-year programs in the system ensuring that students who enter college anywhere are prepared to succeed regardless of where they end their college career. Ideally, this process will contribute to more efficient use of general education in the entire system, easing transfer and allowing articulation of first-year experiences.

Course Evaluations

All courses taught at USU, in all delivery formats, undergo the same evaluations using the IDEA Center Student Ratings of Instruction system (IDEA System) and peer reviews. Students evaluate each course at the end of the semester. All the data collected is used by the departments and colleges to improve the learning experience for students. The IDEA System makes use of indirect evidence of student learning, i.e., students’ perceptions of progress on the learning that was targeted by their instructor. The core of IDEA is the focus on student ratings of progress on learning objectives specified by the instructor. The IDEA System, as a supplement to direct measurement of student learning, provides two benefits. First, multiple forms of assessment help to increase the reliability of the feedback on student learning. Student rating of instruction can be used together with many other types of assessment. Second, because IDEA is based on student’s self-reported progress on the learning objectives – based on a modified Bloom’s taxonomy – chosen by the instructor, the IDEA System provides formative feedback to inform and improve teaching practice and provide data-informed suggestions for class instruction, thereby closing the assessment loop.
GRADUATE ASSESSMENT

The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) launched a major assessment initiative in 2012 with the aim of facilitating graduate programs across campus to maximize their potential. This process culminated in individualized five-year plans to ensure vitality of graduate programs in each university department. The graduate program review task force, comprised of a faculty member from each of the eight academic colleges, identified key elements of the process. The review was faculty-driven, focused on improvement and forward-looking. During the graduate program review, every department conducted an internal self-study of each degree program to gather the necessary information to determine where improvements could and should be made. Four core components were targeted during the self-study: recruitment, mentorship, management and funding. The task force formulated a battery of self-study questions to guide the departmental review process and created and administered the student satisfaction survey. The SGS compiled enrollment, completions and performance data for each degree and distributed it to the departments. Upon completion of the self-studies in March 2012, they were reviewed by the task force. Two task force members were assigned as reviewers for each department. Assigned reviewers independently evaluated and rated each degree within the department. The self-study reports (e.g., history, applied sciences, technology and education and environment and society) were then used by the SGS to share best practices with other departments across campus and to help the SGS improve programs in alignment with mission fulfillment and core themes. Following the self-study, departmental five-year plans (e.g., environment and society; wildland resources) were submitted to the president, college deans and dean of graduate studies in July 2012 with a midterm review and revised plan submitted in 2015 (e.g., geology, physics, CAAS, and ADVS).

CO-CURRICULAR ASSESSMENT

Programs and services that support student learning at Utah State University have continued to expand their quantitative and qualitative assessment efforts. Co-curricular assessment at USU follows a similar process to the annual assessment report process. The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) and the USU Libraries are examples of units that have well-established assessment programs in alignment with mission fulfillment and the core themes.

Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) is vital in providing services that enhance and support the academic mission and core themes of the university. The DSA is committed to best practices in realizing institutional goals while managing resources effectively. Staff members from the DSA are members of several institution-wide committees engaged in planning efforts. Using departmental and collaborative data, the division strives for evidence-based decision-making when considering new programs or initiatives or making changes in existing programs to better support students’ holistic development. Assessment efforts within the division are focused on evaluating and fostering student learning. The assessment efforts include
development of a dashboard using demographic data, student and stakeholder satisfaction surveys, cohort and longitudinal data comparisons and student learning outcomes based on specific learning objectives.

In addition, individual departments within the DSA each complete their own assessment of student learning. Each department has distinctive program goals based on the operational functions of the unit which are mapped to the overall division goals. This process encourages collaboration between departments/units and ensures alignment with the division goals that, in turn, are aligned with the institutional mission and core themes.

The Office of Student Affairs Assessment is responsible for coordinating the assessment efforts within the DSA. Using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, student affairs assessment efforts are designed to identify student needs, measure student satisfaction, plan for student development, assess outcomes, assess student learning outside the classroom and monitor the campus climate. Direct and indirect data is used to assess the effectiveness of student affairs programming and generate a report analyzing the data. The student data collected, analyzed and reported serves as a resource for several USU departments, faculty and staff to guide institutional data-driven decision-making. In addition to overall mission/vision, goals, learning outcomes, foundational documents, division-wide goal mapping and continuous improvement documentation for the DSA, each individual unit of the DSA has documentation of planning and assessment efforts. These reports address the learning outcomes for student affairs as well as the departments within the division. Each year the division reviews the assessment results from all departments and uses the data to inform programmatic changes to enrich the student experience at USU. When the assessment process is completed and data-driven decisions are determined, the results are posted to the DSA assessment dashboard. All student affairs unit assessment plans are available by clicking on the department name below.

Division
- Office of the Vice President

Student Success
- Academic Success Center
  - Student Support Services
- Career Services
- Exploratory Advising

Enrollment Services
- Admissions
- Financial Aid
- Registrar
- Student Orientation and Transition Services
Health, Wellness and Recreation
- Student Health and Wellness Services
- Counseling and Psychological Services
- Campus Recreation
- Disability Resource Center

Student Involvement and Leadership
- Access and Diversity Center
- Center for Civic Engagement and Service-Learning
- Student Involvement and Leadership

USU Libraries

The annual report for the USU Libraries summarizes the major accomplishments for instructional services in the libraries each year. A major objective of the report is to assess priorities to make certain the libraries are focusing on activities that are most closely connected to student learning outcomes. Librarians continue to seek out student and faculty feedback to improve teaching as measured by the surveys discussed below.

The library instruction program comprehensive assessment plan uses several methods to assess the effectiveness of library instruction, both formative and summative. Librarians maintain rigorous assessment and data collection to effectively assess instruction practice. The libraries have revised the teaching evaluation survey to gain better insight into what students found valuable and what could be improved. The surveys also ask students to respond to two broad statements reflecting on teaching expertise of the librarian and overall effectiveness of the library instruction session (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 the highest rating). The results are illustrated on the table below:

Figure 4.1: Library Instruction Student Ratings
Overall, student feedback suggests that librarians are teaching effectively and the sessions have value. Student comments regarding what they found valuable include one-on-one time with a librarian, learning research tools and learning processes for synthesis and evaluation. This student feedback, combined with other authentic measurements of student learning, give an overall view of where librarians are having an impact and what can be improved.

The libraries also assess the impact of the assignment design workshops for faculty by collecting feedback via an online survey at the end of each workshop, by interviewing participants on their experience in implementing their redesigned assignments and by assessing student work produced through these assignments.

Every six years, the libraries participate in the LibQual survey, a national instrument administrated by the Association of Research Libraries. The most recent results were from the 2013 LibQual survey which validated the efforts made after the 2007 survey to address faculty and graduate student needs for access to electronic journals either through subscriptions or interlibrary services. The 2013 survey results highlighted new areas to be addressed, such as improvements to the information infrastructure and the library’s website that make possible the digital discovery of library services and collections. Through the nationally normed LibQual survey, users of the USU Libraries expressed a significant improvement in satisfaction with the collections between the 2007 and 2013 administrations of the instrument.

Finally, the library instruction program is currently conducting a follow-up assessment study which is looking at how the changes made after the previous large-scale rubric study have had an impact in the second-year writing composition courses. This smaller scale assessment will provide information as to whether or not these changed practices are increasing students’ abilities to synthesize and use information effectively. Assessment studies and annual reports are available on the instruction services web page.

4.A.3 The institution documents — through an effective, regular and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement — that students who complete its educational courses, programs and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.

4.A.6 The institution regularly reviews its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AT USU

USU upholds assessment of student learning and the use of assessment results in the continuous improvement of student learning. Institutional core themes, as well as degree program level learning outcomes, provide a shared vision of institutional values and what students are expected to learn. Faculty members have the primary responsibility for curriculum
design, continuous improvement, development of learning outcomes, curriculum maps, assessment plans and the implementation of these assessment plans including making curricular changes based on the findings of the assessment process. It is the responsibility of the faculty, with assistance from AAA, to develop and implement ongoing and systematic assessment strategies to understand what, how much and how students learn. This is achieved through both direct (e.g., course embedded assessments, pre/post-tests, capstones, rubric assessment of student work) and indirect (IDEA SRI student self-assessment of learning) sources of evidence of student performance. Results from assessments guide decision-making for curricular change, enhanced learning opportunities for students, improvement of teaching and more effective academic and nonacademic support services.

Annual assessment is an integral part of the university’s system of accountability and continuous quality improvement of degree programs. Through assessment, faculty evaluate academic degree programs and make informed decisions that address ways to improve quality and effectiveness with the goal of improving student learning. Annual assessment is to be a continual process throughout the academic year.

In addition to annual assessment, every academic program at USU is reviewed on a regular cycle by the Regents. All programs that hold national accreditation are also reviewed regularly in conjunction with their professional or specialized accreditation review visit cycle. This work is managed and tracked by the Provost’s Office.

Assessment of student learning at USU is designed to examine, assess and enhance academic programs. Annual assessment is intended to be used as a tool to help in determining an academic unit’s ability to respond to future challenges and opportunities, evaluate strengths and weaknesses, determine priorities and provide data to inform academic unit decision-making and future programmatic plans. Most often, this process directs curricular changes to more effectively assess student learning.

Deans are ultimately accountable for assessment in their college or school, but faculty are responsible for creating, defining and developing program-level learning outcomes for academic majors that reflect standard expectations and, in instances where there is discipline-based accreditation, reflect the program criteria and learning outcomes established by the accrediting agency. At the course level, faculty are responsible for development of course syllabi including course learning outcomes, course planning, assignment design, selection of reading materials and establishment of assignment rubrics or other grading criteria. Faculty develop assessment plans to collect documents and data that can be used to evaluate student attainment of course and program learning outcomes. Faculty evaluate the information obtained from these instruments and make changes to the program, course and/or assignment design to improve attainment of learning outcomes as needed. All academic learning outcomes, assessment plans, outcomes data and data-informed decisions are listed on the webpage for each degree.
E V O L U T I O N  O F  A S S E S S M E N T  A T  U S U

Effective, regular and comprehensive assessment is a consistent need and challenge for all higher education institutions that seek mission fulfillment and continuous improvement. Prior to USU’s 2007 comprehensive self-study and review by NWCCU, the need for improvement, and more specifically, full participation by all programs in assessment activities, was a constant theme in both internal and external review. While program assessment had been very robust for many programs and departments, particularly those with specialized accreditation, participation in assessment efforts across the university was inconsistent.

USU’s annual assessment process continued to evolve after the 2007 comprehensive self-study and review by NWCCU. In response to the NWCCU review and the recognized need for improvement, the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA) worked with the University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC), academic leadership (Provost’s Office, deans, and department heads) and faculty to implement a systematic assessment structure for all academic departments and programs. The resulting comprehensive institutional assessment plan required that each department establish learning objectives, a curriculum map, an assessment plan, evidence of outcomes data and evidence of data-informed decision-making for their programs at the departmental level.

Following feedback from the mid-cycle review in 2013, focus shifted to assessment of student learning outcome data at the program level rather than at the department level. Focus shifted away from a reliance on mapping grades in courses to objectives and more toward specific outcome measures, capstone work, pre/post testing and course embedded assessment. Faculty reinforced the need to respect the de-centralized nature of assessment efforts at USU, and the UACC worked to address these concerns but also stressed to faculty and departments the need for full accountability. All academic programs, undergraduate and graduate, were expected to participate in every aspect of assessing student learning. Most undergraduate degree programs had developed their learning objectives and assessment plans, with some much more developed than others. Responsibility for developing the learning objectives and assessment plans remained with the faculty responsible for the degree programs being assessed. Efforts were also made to share and replicate best practices elaborated through USU departments participating in the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) and National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) as examples of programs effectively closing the assessment cycle loop. Finally, programs subject to external accreditation were instructed to better document their processes and results in a form available to students and the general public on the web and in written materials. The UACC, working with AAA, assumed the responsibility for continuous annual evaluation of the comprehensive assessment process to account for important distinctions between programs offered at different degree levels, make it sufficiently granular to ensure measurement of the specific skills and competencies achieved by students in each program of study and recognize specialized accreditations.

As the institution strives to refine and improve assessment of student learning, the process continues to evolve. In 2016, USU developed and implemented a deliberate, comprehensive
approach to accountability for assessment across the university to encourage widespread commitment toward a culture of assessment — one that would be sustainable and continuous. In consultation with the UACC, the director of AAA proposed that a report card of assessment efforts be established. This assessment report card, completed by staff in AAA using a rubric and under the direction of the UACC, is an annual review of all published program-level assessment efforts. Annual results including an assessment score and detailed notes are provided to the department, dean and provost for review and continuous improvement.

To produce the assessment report card, a 6-point rubric was established and approved by the UACC to serve as the basis for “grades” given to each department for their assessment efforts in their respective programs of study. Each program is rated on the following items:

- Learning Objectives
- Assessment Plan
- Outcomes Data
- Data-Informed Decisions (evidence of continuous improvement)

The list of programs for review in each department is taken from the University Catalog to further ensure comprehensive coverage. USU has set a minimum target score of “4” for all programs, in all areas, within the next three years. Once that threshold has been met, it is anticipated that the threshold will be raised to “5” with new expectations established for further improvement.

Response to the new assessment rating system has been notable. Subject to written accountability and review by the UACC, several departments that had failed to make significant progress in the last five years have worked admirably to catch up. The results of the 2016 report card are available here, and notes/feedback provided to departments are here. The 2017 report card is available here, and the table below highlights changes from 2016 to 2017.

Table 4.1: Annual Assessment Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent of Programs Achieving ≥ 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objectives</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Plan</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes Data</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data-Informed Decisions</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STANDARD 4.B: IMPROVEMENT

4.A.1 The institution engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data — quantitative and/or qualitative, as appropriate to its indicators of achievement — as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

4.B.1 Results of core theme assessments and results of assessments of programs and services are: a) based on meaningful institutionally identified indicators of achievement; b) used for improvement by informing planning, decision making and allocation of resources and capacity; and c) made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

4.B.2 The institution uses the results of its assessment of student learning to inform academic- and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements. Results of student learning assessments are made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

USU, through the planning and governance structure outlined in Standard 3.A, continuously analyzes a large volume of data related to institutional performance in all spheres of university
activity: human resources, education resources, student support resources, library, information resources, financial resources and physical and technological infrastructure. Unit, division and academic planning and assessment are active and ongoing. Governance, leadership, management, policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and evaluated. Assessment of acceptable achievement of core theme outcomes is interwoven through this analysis by means of high-level outcome-oriented indicators of success that, collectively, represent ongoing and continuous achievement of USU’s mission. The regular and systematic review of these measures — by the University Assessment Coordinating Council, the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees — at the level of each objective and in the context of USU’s mission and core themes, enables USU to evaluate the extent of its success in achieving mission fulfillment. It is the commitment of USU to dedicate the resources, planning and implementation required to achieve these outcomes. Core theme objectives, indicators and results are posted publicly on the AAA Office website.

CORE THEME: LEARNING

Objective 1: Faculty Teach Well, Students Learn and Achieve Success

Direct Assessment of Student Learning

Faculty have the primary role in the evaluation of academic programs and services. USU relies on a decentralized model organized at the department level to ensure an effective, regular and integrated system of assessment of student achievement. While this responsibility lies with the departments and the faculty in those departments, the university implements a purposeful, systematic and comprehensive system of centralized accountability to ensure that all academic programs have learning objectives that are actively assessed at the student level and reviewed by each department annually to drive data-informed decisions for continuous improvement. The assessment report card of academic program assessment efforts is the tool used by the University Assessment Coordinating Council (UACC) to hold departments accountable in their annual progress toward improving documentation and assessment of student learning outcomes for all programs of study. The results of these department efforts show significant improvement in assessment work between 2016 and 2017 with initial assessment “grades” in 2016 below targeted measures and moving to target in 2017.

Over the last 24 months, extensive effort has been dedicated to reviewing department and program assessment documentation. Formal critiques were written and shared with each department and college to help improve assessment efforts. Emphasis was placed on the need to be sure that learning objectives were written from the student perspective and measurable. Programs were instructed that their outcomes data needed to document student-level achievement in alignment with stated program objectives and the published assessment plan. The grading rubric reflects that outcomes data should rely more on direct measures and less on indirect measures, although both are valid. To receive a passing assessment grade, student outcomes data must correlate to the learning objectives and to evidence that assessments are being used to improve student outcomes in each program. Many departments and programs
use rubrics to measure students’ acquisition of skills and knowledge within the curriculum. Some, where appropriate to the discipline, have included standardized exams to assess student success. The reviews take place on an annual schedule to allow departments and faculty to assimilate and improve assessment processes.

### Student Self-Assessment of Learning: IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction

The IDEA SRI instrument provides a student-centered assessment of learning. A central feature of the system is student self-measurement of their learning progress. Essential course learning objectives are chosen by the instructor, and students rate their progress on those objectives each term. The SRI instrument controls for extraneous factors (e.g., class size, student work habits and motivation) beyond the instructor’s control and provides a statistically adjusted comparison of course, department and university results to results from peers (a national normed database of more than 400 institutions using the IDEA system). Based on a modified Bloom’s Taxonomy, the IDEA system aligns with NWCCU standards and mapping to domains of learning assessment such as LEAP and DQP.

**Figure 4.2: IDEA Results**

Use the drop-down menus to select by College, Department, Course, Peer Comparison Group, Year and Semester. Additionally, choose to color the histogram by number of responses or delivery method. The grey reference band denotes “Similar” in the IDEA Comparison Category. Download the Tableau Users Guide.
USU utilizes the “converted average score” for progress on relevant learning objectives provided by IDEA. These scores are T-Scores that use a large national database with hundreds of thousands of individual courses in the comparison group. Comparisons are also provided for discipline specific courses as well as courses taught only at USU. The AAA Office has built a suite of visualization tools that enable department heads and deans to review results and easily interpret trending over time. For example, the histogram tool above (Figure 4.2) provides visual cues for overall performance and trending while providing access to course level data.

At the university level, the results from the IDEA SRI system have shown students consistently self-report progress on learning at rates statistically higher than the average of institutions from IDEA Center’s national database. Faculty in specific programs have elected to use IDEA as a supplemental source of information to inform student learning and engagement as a part of program assessment efforts. IDEA SRIs are actively used to improve teaching practice.

Outcomes from Graduating Student Survey

USU uses the Graduating Student Survey as an indirect assessment of student learning. This survey is disseminated to all applicants for graduation and captures several important outcomes such as current employment status, academic goals and pursuit of graduate education. These self-reported outcomes are scored annually based on their difference from the standard deviation of historical growth/contraction for each measure with a trend analysis. Students’ employment at graduation and pursuit of post-graduate education have been consistent over the last three years. The percent of students reporting that their degree program experience at USU “met their educational goals” has declined from 89% to 87% in the last year. In reviewing these results, the UACC and Executive Committee have recommended waiting for the 2017-2018 data to determine if this is a consistent trend before requesting additional data collection to evaluate the decline. USU’s Career Services has been building its capacity to provide post-graduation survey data on employment, salaries and post-graduate education. Currently, data is available at the college, department and degree level, but not at the program level. The university is also actively working to increase the response rate of the graduating student survey through better follow-up with non-responders (e.g., calls), and to incorporate college and department-specific datasets of graduate outcomes. Many programs with external and specialized accreditation (AACSB, ABET, etc.) maintain their own databases of student-level program employment. Acknowledging the importance of accurate and complete post-graduate outcome data, the UACC has placed the question of how best to systematize and share this data as a priority agenda item for 2018-2019. As an investment in capacity, USU has recently purchased access to the Burning Glass resources, JobPulse and Labor Insight. These tools provide information on linkages between degrees and careers (to better define “jobs within the major”) as well as starting/average salary information and detailed labor demand information. The tools have been piloted with several of the applied and technical degree programs available through the ASTE department and other programs in the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences. The associate deans in the other colleges are working to expand programmatic access as well.
Objective 2: Student Retention and Completion Rates are Strong and Improving

Retention/Graduation Rates

Institution-wide discussion has helped USU determine that student graduation rates and fall-to-fall retention rates are two of the most important indicators of success for the institution. Given effective program level assessment and continuous improvement efforts, graduation rates reflect the success of the institution in achieving the learning core theme. The current graduation measure is based on the number of students entering the institution as full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students in a given year who complete their program within 150 percent of normal time to completion (total cohort). The primary challenge presented by a graduation rate measure is lag time. The standard measure of federal reporting, the IPEDS 150% rate, requires six years for bachelor’s programs and three years for associates before improvements are reflected in outcomes. For USU’s student population, measurement of the true graduation rate takes longer because of church missionary service. Historically, more than 26% of each bachelor’s cohort (and 5% of the less-than-bachelor’s students) take more than two years away on mission. These students have historically completed their degrees at a consistently higher rate, but the majority are not included in six-year graduation rates. The impact can be seen in USU’s 200% IPEDS measure, which typically adds almost 10 points to the graduation rate (e.g., the 2008 bachelor’s cohort 150% graduation rate is 49.6% and the 200% graduation rate is 58.2%). This is a situation unique to Utah institutions with a high percentage of students who are members of the LDS faith. Peer land-grant institutions have typically seen an increase in graduation rates of less than 3.0% between six- and eight-year graduations, and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has done a study showing that the overall increase for public institutions (excluding those with very high minority enrollments) averages a gain of 3.3% in graduation rates between 150% and 200% time.

Utah public institutions also have a relatively high percentage of inter-institutional transfers, many of which lead to successful degree completion. As a member of Complete College America and Student Achievement Measure (SAM), USU has been working to refine measures that more accurately reflect success/failure in completions.

The SAM uses information from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to account for subsequent enrollment and graduation for transfer students. The table below reflects those results. Transfers account for 22% of the outcomes recorded by NSC for the bachelor’s cohort at six years (13% “graduated from another institution” and 9% still “enrolled at another institution”). Using the SAM, only 23% of the cohort is unaccounted for after six years.
Unfortunately, SAM does not provide for trend analysis, nor does it provide reporting for part-time cohorts or transfer cohorts, so USU continues to work on developing a better long-term measure of graduation. Given the long lag time to see institutional change results reflected in graduation rates, effective proxies are needed to inform planning and implementation decisions. Fall-to-fall retention rates are the primary proxy relied upon as an overall indicator of institutional efforts to improve graduation rates.

The current retention measure is based on the percentage of first-time, full-time bachelor’s degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. The UACC has recognized that this measure is not comprehensive enough to provide a proxy for all degree-seeking students. In light of these concerns, USU has invested in a number of initiatives that are designed to better track term-to-term retention of all students (bachelor’s, associates, certificate, applied, part-time, full-time and transfer) and aid in the analysis of student success including identifying barriers to that success. These investments include reorganization of undergraduate student advising and purchase and integration of tracking and predictive analytics tools from Civitas.

### Student Tracking Database

The AAA Office is currently developing a database that will provide term-to-term tracking for all degree-seeking students enrolled at USU. The goal is to create a student record upon initial enrollment at the university and then provide a tracking status for every subsequent term. Leaves of absence will be recorded and represented each term. Transfers and subsequent enrollment at other institutions of higher learning will be accounted for based on data downloaded from the NSC. The ultimate result of this database will be a comprehensive picture of students’ enrollment, retention and graduation for all degree-seeking students. The tool is still under development, but examples of its functionality are provided in Figure 4.4. The view provides details by aggregate with individual student data available and fully filterable. This
database also seeks to track students through their degree pathways by recording their initial campus, department, program, major at admission and subsequent changes.

**Figure 4.4: Status by Term**

![Status by Term](image)

The *Success Dashboard* is already in use as shown in Figure 4.5. Other tools are currently in testing, as the NSC dataset needs to be refined. USU anticipates that tools will be released to administrators in fall 2018.

**Civitas**

To aid the alignment of USU’s core theme objective indicators of retention and graduation with the Regents’ strategic priority of completion, USU recently purchased and implemented Civitas Learning, Inc. analytics software. This software enables advisors to assess the academic progress of students in “real time” by analyzing student performance in specific courses throughout the semester and alerting instructors and academic advisors about students who would benefit from intervention. USU’s academic advisors have access to a Civitas product called *Inspire* that provides student-level insights into issues of retention and completion. Using over 1,800 covariates, a ridge regression is performed to determine which variables might be most highly associated with student persistence term-to-term. Then, a longitudinal logistic regression is used to create a model of persistence prediction that assigns each student a
persistence likelihood (0-100%). These results are surfaced to advisors via student profile pages that include an active feed of students’ grades in the LMS (Canvas). These metrics are used by advisors to target student outreach and shape conversations with students regarding academic well-being.

Data informed advising is just one area of investment in advising for student success. Another way the analytics are used to help academic departments deliver on the university mission is the correlation of course performance data with graduation likelihood. Using the Civitas Learning product called *Illume Courses*, associate deans, department heads and faculty can evaluate the rigor and stability of their courses over time. This analytics tool provides those making curriculum decisions with information related to grade distributions, course rigor, relative student performance and grade tipping points (the point in a grading scale where student performance is associated, in real-time, with increased/decreased graduation likelihood). This tool provides faculty with the opportunity to hone and craft their practice using analytics as a wayfinding tool through curriculum and instructional development.
USU recently created the Office of Student Retention and Completion and charged it with leadership for improvements in student transition, integration, persistence through programs, early academic alert and student orientation. Within the office, cohort-based analytics insights are provided by the Civitas product *Illume Students* which ingests data from Banner, Canvas and Blackboard Transact. More than 1,800 covariates are leveraged to make predictions about how each cohort will persist term-to-term. Covariates with a higher association with persistence are surfaced to generate insights into how the university can intervene on specific student behaviors to generate higher persistence rates. A key approach to intervening on these student behaviors is short, targeted communications called “Nudges.” Nudges are crafted by the Office of Student Retention and Completion to be relevant to a cohort of students at critical stages of the term. Nudges are positive, short, relevant, personal and invite students to take specific actions. For example, high performing seniors may receive a note of encouragement leading into finals week. Tailoring messages in this manner increases the relevance of each Nudge to the students receiving them, and also, increases the likelihood that students will respond to the messages.

Within the Division of Student Affairs, an analytics solution is provided that uses prediction-based propensity score matching (PPSM) to perform quasi-experimental estimates of the effectiveness of student programs. PPSM is a highly desirable analysis technique for evaluating the estimated impact of an elective service. This research uses a system of automated prediction-based matching to allow for rapid analysis of whether or not elective student services have an estimated impact on student persistence term-to-term. Since many offices on campus collect card swipe data regarding student utilization of services, it is easy to federate this data into a single location and process it through a uniform prediction-based propensity score matching system. This research project has already created a far-reaching, meaningful increase in the frequency of program evaluation across campus.

**Objective 3: USU Provides Inclusive Access to a Diverse Population; Course Offerings and Student Enrollments Support the Land-grant Mission to Provide Education throughout Utah**

**Course Offerings**

Assessment of the scope and quality of infrastructure and learning opportunities at regional campuses and through distance education is an important metric for USU’s state-wide mission. As Utah’s land-grant institution, the state-wide educational mission is foundational, and providing a breadth of course and program offerings throughout the state is a priority. Measures include the scope of course offerings, distance and regional campus enrollments and student-to-course ratios for distance and regional students. Overall trends for these measures have been very strong over the past five years. Notably, there have been significant changes made to online offerings in the last three years to realize a delivery-independent, flexible, state-wide tuition model that includes equivalent pricing for distance, online and face-to-face
delivery and places online courses within the tuition plateau. A few of the distance education initiatives and investments made in the last two years include:

- Implemented a USU Online certification course for instructors.
- Implemented faculty peer review of online courses.
- Improved US News and World Report ranking of Best Online programs from #14 to #5.
- Created an outreach campaign to students at risk for persistence and poor performance based on Civitas and Canvas data.
- Invested $180k in new online course development and $5K in course redevelopment.
- Invested in $675K in statewide classroom upgrades and $243K in Logan classroom upgrades.
- Invested $20K in Teaching with Technology Innovation Grants for faculty.

Student Enrollment

Measurement of inclusive enrollment of a diverse population is determined by five specific categories that are reflective of USU’s history and role as a land-grant institution. These categories include female, minority, non-Utah, first generation and low-income enrollments. The metrics are scored individually for three year rolling averages and then combined into an average student diverse enrollment score. In 2016, the UACC noted that while female, minority and non-Utah enrollments had been broadly stable; first generation and Pell-grant student enrollment trends showed a persistent statistical decline during that same period. After testing several hypotheses, evidence pointed to the increased number and percentage of Legacy scholarships awarded to undergraduate students in the last three years. These scholarships provide for out-of-state students to be eligible for in-state tuition waivers when their relatives attended USU in the past. This policy was implemented in 2009 through the Utah State Legislature but was expanded in 2013 to also include grandparents. Between fall 2010 and fall 2015, the number of Legacy scholarships for the incoming class increased from 130 to 515. In fall 2010, 4.2% of entering freshmen were Legacy scholars, but by 2015 and 2016, 12% of students had this designation. This increase is significant because Legacy scholars, by definition, cannot be first-generation college students, nor do they generally come from low-income families.

While the Legacy scholarship program provides benefits to USU, it also imposes potential costs. In response to this challenge, the Office of Admissions worked with all key stakeholders to make modifications to the Legacy scholarship program. For the 2017-2018 school year, a dedicated, need-based scholarship program was created with an initial budget of $1.8 million. When the most recent data and UACC deliberation was presented to the Executive Committee in fall 2017, the question arose of whether or not the Legacy scholarship program was the true source of this trend, so an analysis of historical retention trends for low-income and Pell-grant students was requested. The AAA Office determined that these retention trends, although lower on average than those for the general population, have not changed significantly in the last five years. There has simply been a lower enrollment of low-income and Pell-eligible students as a percentage of recent freshmen classes. Data will be re-analyzed after two years under the program changes (Legacy modifications, need-based aid and additional recruitment...
efforts for low-income student) with the expectation that declines in these two important populations will be reversed. Attention to the first-generation and Pell-eligible populations is an important focus of the Executive Enrollment Management Committee.

USU made several significant changes to tuition and student cost structures in line with the Regent’s 2020 Plan and as a part of an effort to increase the percentage of students attending full-time. Based on an analysis of the data, these changes were made in pursuit of multiple benefits: increased retention, reduced time-to-graduation, delivery independent pricing (so that students can choose the location and delivery method that best meets their needs) and better alignment with state higher education goals. USU broadened its tuition plateau in 2014, broadening the plateau for free credits from 13-18 credit hours to 12-18 credit hours. At the same time, USU revised its cost structure for online courses. First, it changed the tuition amount for online courses, lowering it to the same cost per credit as face-to-face classes. Second, online courses were included in the tuition plateau. Before the change, a student taking 12 credits would not have been able to add an online class without an additional charge. After the change, such courses could be added and count within the 12-18 plateau. The impact of these changes has been dramatic:

**Figure 4.6: Tuition Plateau**

![Tuition Plateau](image)

Prior to the change, less than 50% of degree-seeking undergraduate students were taking advantage of the tuition plateau. Presently, more than 75% of undergraduates are taking credits within the plateau. Prior to the charge, only 36% of students were taking a credit load sufficient to graduate within four years (15+ credits). The plateau offers students a financial incentive to take 15 or more credits per semester in keeping with the Utah Board of Regents “15-to-finish” campaign to promote faster college completion. A milestone was reached at USU in fall 2017 when 51% of undergraduate students took 15 or more credits. Analysis indicates that taking more credits does not negatively impact student performance; indeed, there may be a slight improvement. The percent of students taking online classes has risen dramatically in the past few years and approximately 40% of USU students now take at least one online class.
The online class option for students provides an opportunity for them to take more credit in a fashion that matches lifestyle. These changes in USU’s tuition and cost structure resulted in a savings to students last year of approximately $8 million dollars.

Perhaps more significantly, these changes are expected to continue. There is evidence of their impact at the individual class level as students that enter USU taking 15 credits as freshmen appear to continue to take a higher course load as they advance through their majors:

Figure 4.7: 15-to-Finish

In addition, these changes correlate with improvements in the retention rate without a decline in academic performance.
CORE THEME: DISCOVERY

Objective 1: Faculty are Engaged with Productive and Critically Recognized Programs of Research and Creative Endeavors

Significant Faculty Awards and Honors

At USU, discovery is the creation and development of knowledge through the achievement of productivity and excellence in research, scholarship and the creative and performing arts. An annual accounting of significant faculty awards and honors provides a measure of academic prominence and excellence of USU faculty. This measure has been consistent. The 2013 NWCCU peer review identified the “count of faculty awards and honors” as a potential point of concern as it was not clear to the review team that these were significant awards and honors. USU has worked to correct this impression by creating and publicizing the curated list of awards and honors that count toward this metric and ensuring that this list represents national and significant state-wide recognition of scholarly efforts.

Peer-Reviewed Scholarly Works

A composite metric is used to measure ongoing faculty productivity in research and discovery. The average number of peer-reviewed contributions per research FTE provides a measure of research productivity using peer-reviewed publications and creative works. The trend in this measure has shown a decline, although it has not been statistically significant in the last year. When questioned about this potential decline in faculty productivity, the colleges and departments indicated that they have not noted a significant decline in productivity or refereed publications. They suggested that initial data entry into the Digital Measures (DM) system by faculty may be a root cause of the apparent decline. It appears that not all departments are relying upon the information in DM for the annual faculty review process and that information in the system may not be complete. There was a large spike in data entry in the years immediately following implementation of DM. The comprehensive external program review process has not suggested a decline in faculty productivity which has cast further doubt on this metric. The AAA Office has agreed to meet with the DM Steering Group to review these issues and has created a set of diagnostic tools to help department and college administrators identify deficiencies in faculty data-entry practices. The UACC plans to revisit this metric in 2018.

Annual Research Expenditures, as Reported to the National Science Foundation

Financial resources that support faculty and student research are critical to the overall success of the university’s discovery mission. The broadest and most regularized national measure of these resources are the total annual research expenditures reported by USU to the National Science Foundation each year. USU’s performance on this measure has been excellent and is considered an area of strength by faculty and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
Objective 2: Students Participate in Strong Research and Creative Programs and Achieve Success

Student Participation in Discovery

Student participation in research and creative work is measured by the percentage of undergraduates who reported participating in research and creative programs outside of their regular coursework and the annual count of graduate student assistantships awarded. Approximately 24% of undergraduate students report participating in discovery activities outside of their classes. USU would like to see this percentage increase as participation in these discovery opportunities has been identified as a high-impact practice to improve retention and graduation as well as enrich the student experience. Providing resources that enable students to take advantage of discovery opportunities is integral to the success of these efforts. Research assistantships are an important resource in increasing opportunities for graduate students. The number of graduate students with assistantships has increased by more than 10% in the past two reviews. This investment in resources is designed to help stem a decline in graduate student enrollments that has been identified through the assessment and review process.

Student Success in Discovery

Research and creative output by undergraduate and graduate students are measured in the number of peer-reviewed student publications and intellectual contributions. This measure, like the one for faculty peer-reviewed output, suggests a trend with a slight decline, but it is not statistically significant. In discussions, the college associate deans have noted that accounting for refereed student work relies upon faculty data-entry as students do not have access to DM accounts. As such, sole-authorship work by graduate students, or lagging data-entry by faculty, could both contribute to an apparent reduction in student productivity. Efforts are proceeding to better systematize the tracking of students’ scholarly works with discussions underway in the colleges on how to better track student work. Creative engagement is also an important component of discovery, and an additional measure is enrollment in production, performance and studio programs. This remains a consistent strength of USU’s programs with many state and nationally recognized opportunities.

Graduate Student FTEs and PhD Degrees Awarded

After several years of consistent enrollment, graduate enrollments at USU have seen a decline. The number of PhDs awarded has also declined. When these two measures were initially reviewed by the UACC the trend results caused considerable concern as maintaining and increasing graduate enrollments and completions are mission priorities for the university. Further discussion with the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), however, helped to clarify the issues underlying the data. While not widely communicated, the decline in graduate FTEs was actually anticipated by the SGS. One of the major findings from the recent graduate program review was that many of USU’s graduate programs required more course credits to be
completed when compared with peers. In the last three years, numerous graduate programs have revised their credit requirements downward resulting in a decline in the average SCHs taken by graduate students from 8 credits to 7.6 credits. This 5% decrease more than accounts for the FTE trend. In discussions at Executive Committee, it was suggested that the FTE metric should be changed to “degree-seeking, graduate student headcount — with details for masters and doctoral students” to provide a more accurate view of enrollments.

The decline in the count of PhDs awarded, however, is real and a point of concern. The SGS also acknowledged that enrollments of new graduate students had experienced significant declines in 2015 and 2016 but noted that enrollment of new graduate students in 2017 were up by more than 100 students. The state competitive environment has changed in the past several years with an expansion in program offerings and increased competition in graduate programs from other state institutions. The SGS is also currently analyzing graduate student retention trends within the colleges and departments in advance of a wider discussion around strategies that could improve retention. To address these issues, attention has been placed on improving graduate student recruitment efforts and ensuring that sufficient resources are provided (e.g., assistantships, etc.) to retain students. In its December 2017 review, the Executive Committee requested that this measure (PhDs awarded) also be expanded to include master’s degrees. This recommendation was referred to the UACC for review and implementation.

CORE THEME: ENGAGEMENT

Objective 1: University Intellectual Capital and Assets are Leveraged to Grow Human Capital, Encourage Lifelong Learning and Improve Quality of Life

Federally Reported Extension Statistics

USU Extension activities provide for development of an educated and skilled workforce, encourage lifelong learning and improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities throughout Utah and beyond. USU Extension programs are subject to extensive assessment requirements and detailed federal reporting. Extension programs are widely publicized and promoted throughout the state and online. To help community members and stakeholders make sense of the detailed data collection and assessment efforts made at the project level, program impact statements are made available to the general public. Given the program development, assessment and reporting requirements inherent to extension programs, the UACC (in consultation with Extension, AIS and the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences) determined it was best to use the three top-level measures of activity reported to the federal government: direct contacts, indirect contacts and faculty-delivered activities and events. Together, these macro-level measures provide an overall gauge of extension work growth and/or decline. One of the most interesting points of discussion raised by these measures is the decrease in direct contacts and the concurrent increase in indirect contacts with faculty-delivered activities and events steadily increasing in the same period. Extension faculty and leadership have clearly documented that the interchange between direct
and indirect contacts is driven by the increasingly ‘digital’ nature of Extension work, which
provides increased opportunities for state-wide stakeholder groups and the general public to
access resources and developmental support not just through the web, but also through social
media and other technologies. These increased opportunities for virtual interaction and
exposure effectively reduce physical turn-out for some more traditional resources and
opportunities.

Improved Quality of Life: STARS Sustainability Rating

Sustainability is a measure of improved quality of life and the proxy measure for this is USU’s
certified rating through STARS (Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Ratings) administered
by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS
provides a measure of institutional sustainability using a standardized set of more than 100
individual indicators that require extensive reporting and regular renewal. Although indicators
are tracked as a level of sustainability (e.g., bronze, silver, gold, etc., much like the Green
Building Council’s LEED rating system), an iceberg of data supports the measure from below.
USU has invested extensively in sustainability efforts over the last ten years engaging campus
administrative and academic departments as well as students and the local community through
initiatives led by the USU Sustainability Council, the campus sustainability coordinator and the
Office of Sustainability.

Objective 2: University Intellectual Capital and Assets are Leveraged to Identify,
Secure and Create Economic Development

Patents and Innovation Disclosures

One measure of the conversion of USU’s intellectual capital into economic development is
formal patent filings and innovation disclosures reported by USU’s Office of Commercialization
and Regional Development. This measure includes innovation disclosures, patents filed and
patents awarded. Trends for patent awards are consistent, and even slightly up in the last
period, but trends for patents filed and innovation disclosures are down precipitously. As
desired, these trends produced a robust discussion in the UACC and Executive Committee. The
organization, leadership and philosophy of Technology Transfer Services (formerly known as
the Office of Commercialization) have changed significantly in the last several years. Prior to
2016, there was a strong emphasis on submitting as many patent applications as possible, but
the cost of those applications (in time and money) did not yield an increase in the average
number of patents issued. The yield rate for patents was fairly low, and there developed a
sense among some faculty that their work could be “locked up” for a considerable period of
time while the application process played out. In the last couple of years with new leadership,
the office has focused on only submitting patent applications with a high probability of success.
In essence, the office argues that the decline in patent applications is by design, and patents
issued, or even a ratio of applications-to-issued, are better measures than application numbers.
Innovation disclosures, on the other hand, is an area where the office is concerned about the decline and is working to improve the numbers. They have created a disclosure portal to ease the ability of faculty to initiate disclosures. Feedback from the deans in Executive Committee suggests that the office has been active in reaching out and letting faculty know the value of such disclosures. The conclusion of the discussion at the December 2017 Executive Committee meeting suggested a bit of frustration with the difficulty of collecting data on economic impact. These metrics are relatively easy to collect and aggregate — they were adopted as regular and consistent measures of leveraging university intellectual assets into economic development — but the UACC has found them somewhat disappointing as “global” measures of the core theme and not just because of current trending. In its most recent discussions with the Executive Committee, UACC is searching for potential alternative measures of economic development that might be used even if they might be more difficult to collect and organize. The challenge remains to develop measures that are systematic and standardized and not just accounts of economic impact. This remains a topic of active discussion in UACC and Executive Committee.

Financial Impact

With current spending on payroll and procurement approaching $600 million dollars, Utah State University’s direct financial impact as an employer and economic engine is very significant in the city of Logan, the Cache Valley and the state of Utah. Direct measurement of this spending is an excellent proxy for an overall measure of USU’s leveraging of assets to create economic development. USU has been recognized by USHE and the state of Utah for its strong and prudent fiscal management in comparison with peer institutions.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING INFORMS POLICY AND PRACTICE

The following are examples of some of the programmatic and curricular changes that have occurred in selected programs during the past three to five years as a result of assessment of student learning outcomes. These represent examples where departments have established student learning outcomes, evaluated student learning and used the results for data-informed decision-making to implement educational improvements.

Although direct links have been provided to the full assessment and continuous improvement documentation for all programs of study at USU, following are a few specific examples of program and curricular modifications from recent assessment efforts. These include:

Music

To address a discrepancy in actual student knowledge at the end of the freshman year and knowledge expectations for the sophomore year, the music department is currently developing an online, self-paced series of competency-based quizzes to assess students’ skills with music notation and recording technologies. Students who do not pass a quiz will be directed to online learning modules for further instruction. Students may repeat each quiz until they have passed.
it. Students must have successfully completed all module quizzes before their sophomore year.

Music Fundamentals was added to the common music core in response to several factors including the unacceptably high first-attempt fail rate in MUSC 1110 (Music Theory I) and student attrition decisions based solely on trouble with passing MUSC 1110.

**Agriculture and Applied Sciences**

To assess students’ graduate experience and to respond to critical issues needing immediate attention, ADVS has begun conducting oral graduate student exit interviews. The results will be used to inform curricular development.

Nutrition science faculty have added several new courses based on student exit interviews and faculty program assessment of learning outcomes. Courses have been added to address program deficiencies as well as addressing student needs.

A climate science undergraduate degree started in spring 2017. Scientific interest in climate science and climate change science on campus and around the world indicated the need for an undergraduate degree program in climate science. This is a natural outgrowth of the graduate program in climate science already present in the department.

**Engineering**

Engineering has made several curricular changes to bolster content and better serve students based on assessment of student learning outcomes. Here are a few examples:

- ENGR 2010 (Statics) changed from 2 credits to 3 credits to increase engineering content of the curriculum.
- BENG 1890 (Introduction to UG Research) was re-designed to strengthen engineering design concepts, professional and ethical responsibilities, communication and global impact of engineering relative to contemporary issues.
- ENGR 2030 (Engineering Mechanics Dynamics) was replaced with ENGR 2141 (Strength of Materials) to better serve the current needs of biological engineers.

**History**

In order to improve graduation rates, the history department created a new required course (Research Seminar) for all students entering their second year. This class was offered for the first time in fall 2017. The goal is to provide students with structured class time to write a chapter of their thesis or Plan B paper. The department will assess the effectiveness of the new course in spring 2018.
Science

To improve assessment of student learning, a newly designed database is in place to allow the graduate program directors to more efficiently monitor completion of program benchmarks by the graduate students. It will also maintain current data on the employment of program alumni.

Business

Based on outcomes data suggesting that students did not have a firm grasp of certain basic finance principles, the two corresponding courses were expanded from two to three credits and repositioned. The first course now emphasizes basic principles and tools, and the second focuses on applied financial decision making.

Students in the MBA program performed poorly on the finance emphasis so changes have been made to include additional time spent assessing the level of student achievement, developing a practice set and providing more detailed explanations and reviews for students.

Natural Resources

Based on transcript reviews, exit interviews with graduating seniors and career placement records, the fisheries and aquatic sciences department decided to strengthen the capstone course by requiring a two-semester capstone course instead of just one semester. As a result, a two-semester capstone course was developed for the 2017-2018 academic year. The fall semester will cover professional topics and an introduction to design projects. The spring semester will focus on the design project.

General Education

The General Education Committee incorporated the Connections first year program remaking it to ensure students understand the goals of the institution, appreciate the purpose of general education and use their knowledge to achieve their educational goals. Nearly 70% of freshmen participate in Connections, and the multi-year data collected on participants suggests that the students are becoming more intentional about using the curriculum and, as a result, are being retained at higher levels than those who have not taken it. It uses a common syllabus and is taught by faculty and student services personnel so students receive a common message about the purpose of a college education and the uses of general education.

Graduate Studies

The data-informed graduate program review process reinforced the importance of building quality graduate programs and resulted in a written five-year plan for improvement in each graduate program. Significant outcomes of the reviews, as outlined in the summary report, included restructuring of the credit requirements for PhD degrees in many programs, the
conversion of Plan C (non-thesis) Master of Science programs into Professional Master’s
degrees and elimination of underutilized or outdated degrees and specializations.

**Student Affairs**

In response to a division self-study, the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) has planned several
programs to advance staff development and assessment work across the division through
several continuous improvement initiatives. Here are a few examples:

- Complete and deliver a training needs assessment to all division staff members.
- Finalize and launch the student affairs Canvas course for training within the division.
- Hold a regular series of assessment camps during FY2018 with a focus on assessment
techniques.
- Review the division mission, vision and goals based on departmental assessment
mapping to determine if changes or additional strategies are needed.

In 2010, 2011 and 2016, the division contracted with Scannel and Kurz, a higher education
strategic enrollment management and planning services firm, to conduct a data-driven review
of current pricing and financial aid strategies for incoming freshmen/transfers to make
recommendations for policy adjustments that would better support the university’s enrollment,
retention, financial aid and revenue goals. *Student Affairs Narrative, fall 2017, NWCCU*

The division was reorganized into four functional areas: student success; enrollment services;
health, wellness and recreation, and student involvement and leadership. Also in 2015, the
Staff Development and Assessment Committee was formed to standardize assessment planning
and reporting for the DSA.

In addition to assessment at the division level, all departments in the DSA have established
assessment plans that align with DSA goals, the institutional mission and core themes. The
outcomes and continuous improvement for each department in student affairs is located on
the DSA website.

**Student Advising**

As in many other areas of operation, student advising had historically been a very decentralized
process at USU. Advisors are housed in departments and colleges with exploratory advising for
undeclared majors managed through student affairs. Based on review and reflection, the
university created the Office of University Advising in 2015 to provide for more centralized
coordination and assistance for advising efforts. University Advising uses NACADA principles
and core competencies as a model for training and assistance work. The need for better
assessment of outcomes from ongoing decentralized advising efforts, replication and sharing of
best practices and improved provision of resources and support were all driving motivations for
the creation of the new office and the investment in these resources.
SPECIAL TASK FORCES

The president, provost or Executive Committee may call for the creation of specialized task forces to research and develop strategies to address challenges or pressing issues identified through the annual review and planning processes or which arise due to internal or external events that impact the institution. Recent examples of task force work within the last seven years include the General Education Task Force, the Enrollment Management Task Force, the Student Success Task Force and the Sexual Violence Task Force.

In fall of 2011, a General Education Task Force was convened to address data from the Registrar’s Office, the AAA Office and advisors that showed expanding waitlists for several general education courses. The task force included representatives from the faculty, student affairs and administration. Further data collection and analysis by the group confirmed the initial feedback that there were not enough general education seats created to address current demand and planned enrollment growth. Further data analysis revealed a potentially larger issue. An increasing number of students were waiting until their junior, and even senior year, before completing their foundational general education courses. Initial task force analysis focused on ENGL 2010, the second course in the sequence for Communications Literacy (CL) requirements. Best practices call for undergraduates to complete CL coursework early in their academic careers as the competencies developed are foundational to most subsequent academic work. There was astonishment among many stakeholders to see the large percentage of students that were waiting until the last two years to complete the foundational writing course and great concern that the number of juniors and seniors enrolled in ENGL 2010 had jumped by more than 35% between 2011 and 2012. The data suggested two major causes: not enough seats in the CL2 classes and potential issues with advising where students were not guided or placed in the general education courses early or in some cases were even encouraged to save some general education courses for later. ENGL 1010 was reviewed as well but did not show the same trends. Early data analyzed included this:

Figure 4.8: Communications Literacy (CL)
The task force, integrating feedback from faculty and administrative stakeholders, implemented an action plan with multiple components: increased investment in more core general education sections to not only address the current demand but also take care of the backlog of upper-class registrations; improved advising and more directive course planning/sequencing so that students were encouraged to register and/or be placed into appropriate CL and Quantitative Literacy (QL) courses within their first two years and, finally, the creation of two-year/four-year plans for all undergraduate programs at USU. The results of this work were apparent within two years with dramatically reduced upper class enrollments in CL and QL courses (see Figure 4.9) even as overall enrollments increased.

**Communications Literacy Assessment**

Assessment of communications literacy (CL) has a strong but somewhat episodic history at USU. The English department faculty have a long history of regularized assessment for both majors and English teachers in the department. The communications literacy program has used this expertise to comprehensively assess student outcomes. However, efforts have not been standardized until recently. A comprehensive assessment was completed in 2006 and again in 2012-2013. These assessments were based on a large-scale review of essays from the capstone CL course, ENGL 2010, and relied upon an extensive rubric along with reviewers who were trained and calibrated for validity and reliability. Recognizing that the amount of labor required to complete this assessment model had created a barrier to annualized assessment of communication literacy student learning outcomes, program staff and leadership undertook a re-design of the assessment process in 2016-2017.

After extensive stakeholder discussion, the original 20-point rubric was reduced to a five-point rubric. Statistical analysis was conducted to determine the required sample size (170+) and characteristics required for an annualized representative sample of results. A larger group of “raters” was trained on the five-point rubric so that two-person teams would be able to conduct reliable reviews with a third rater available to arbitrate cases when necessary. Finally, a formal relationship was established with the Center for Innovative Design and Instruction (CIDI) to systematize the assessment process.

The new annual process now uses Canvas data to pull a list of assignments labeled with [final] in the assignment name from all fall 2017 ENGL 2010 courses. A scripted tool is used to randomly select three assignment artifacts from each course and load them into the files section of a separate Canvas course. After the files are collected, a Python script is used to remove names from the files and any remaining names are manually removed. A separate course is created with anonymous users added as students and reviewers added as teachers. The ENGL 2010 rubric is loaded into the course using Canvas outcomes. Teachers/reviewers are assigned to specific sections in Canvas where they are limited to viewing only their assigned sections, and anonymous users are evenly distributed across sections. Two assignments are created in Canvas and each artifact is manually submitted as one of the anonymous students to the two assignments. Reviewers then login, access the course with the submissions and grade...
all anonymous submissions for their assigned sections to the two assignments using the rubric. Rubric scores track back to the outcomes in a manner that can be reported.

A pilot of this system was conducted in the summer of 2017 and full implementation began in late fall of 2017 with reviews of essays currently underway.

Figure 4.9: General Education Course Enrollment Trends (Freshman/Sophomore vs. Junior/Senior)
Quantitative Literacy Assessment

Another example of data-informed improvement is the complete review and restructuring of general education mathematics and statistics at USU. From 2011-2013, data analysis by the General Education Task Force showed a high level of quantitative literacy (QL) course retakes and DFWs and much higher remedial math enrollments than were desirable for student success. It was also clear from the data that almost 40% of degree-seeking undergraduates were waiting until their junior or senior year to take their math/statistics general education courses. Over the past five years, quantitative literacy at USU has been transformed to match national best practices. It started with intensive advising (2013-2015) to ensure that students took advantage of the opportunity to enroll in the appropriate QL courses as early as practicable in their college career. Established degree pathways and four-year plans were an important part of this work. Parallel to these efforts, USU assessed remedial math programs. The university eliminated two remedial math courses, MATH 990 and MATH 1010, that were often taken in sequence (7 total credits) and replaced them with a new course, MATH 950. In the last two years, there has been a comprehensive program-level review of QL core competencies required for student success in their major, and 66 programs have revised their specific QL course requirements. In the last year, the Accuplacer test has been replaced by ALEKS for math assessment, improvement and placement. ALEKS is a developmental math and statistics suite of products that enables students to improve specific skills and competencies. The cumulative impact of these changes has been dramatic:

Table 4.2: Quantitative Literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Total SCHs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014*</td>
<td>Math 0990/Math 1010</td>
<td>1,482</td>
<td>6,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016*</td>
<td>Math 0995</td>
<td>1,066</td>
<td>4,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017#</td>
<td>Math 0995</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>2,372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Before creation of Math 0995 and elimination of Math 099 and Math 1010
+Before ALEKS
#After ALEKS

The percentage of juniors and seniors enrolled in their QL courses has gone from 40% to only 26% in 2016-2017 and continues to decline. More students are now in major-aligned courses. In addition to these changes, the department petitioned through the budget hearing process for funds to establish a Math Prep and Success Office and was able to formally separate general education/QL advising from advising primarily focused on the majors in the department. This systemic approach for quantitative literacy is already assessed as having positive impacts.

In 2014, the provost called for the creation of an Enrollment Management Task Force. The immediate genesis for its creation was a change in LDS church policy that was anticipated to significantly increase new freshmen enrollments on a one-time basis thus generating the need for additional resources — first for general education and advising, but as the large freshmen class advanced, also for courses within the majors. This enrollment task force took up where
the General Education Task Force had left off, but with an even broader mandate to continue the review and address the need for general education capacity and look for opportunities to develop systematic improvements and solutions for current challenges. The Enrollment Management Task Force addressed multiple bottleneck issues including the expansion of online and broadcast offerings and their relationship to face-to-face instruction and provided a variety of data-informed recommendations to faculty, advisors and academic programs. But by far, its largest contribution was in the development of a new budget model that would incentivize departments to create additional course capacity to address student demand.

The Enrollment Management Task Force focused on the fact that for several departments demand-based financial assistance for instruction from the Provost’s Office had become more or less permanent. The new budget model called for additional instructional lines/positions in all cases where short-term assistance had become long-term and where continued demand was projected. It also created a base-line measurement of the SCHs generated in each department and an incremental incentive payment system for SCHs generated over that baseline. The end result is a system that rewards increased teaching in programs and departments.

Figure 4.10: Enrollment Management Tool

Once the new budget model was introduced and accepted by the academic departments and colleges, the task force moved to its second major goal: create a self-service culture of enrollment knowledge and management at the department and program level. Now that
departments could increase their budgets by increasing their SCHs, there was a demand for better knowledge of course and program enrollment registration and enrollment trends. Tools were disseminated that enable departments to see and manage enrollment demands (in real time) prior to each term. Figure 4.10 is an example of such a tool showing current enrollment (blue lines), wait lists (green lines), course cap (grey line) and room cap (red line).

Detailed course section information (schedule, location, room capacity, delivery options, etc.), and extensive filtering options enable department heads and faculty to better understand student demand and look for opportunities to right-size course section enrollments and improve delivery. Historical enrollment charts (bottom right corner) provide historical enrollments by class level so backlogs like the one for ENGL 2010 do not happen again.

The work of the Enrollment Management Task Force evolved into the Student Success Task Force charged directly by the president to identify and address barriers to student success and completion. In practice, this has included continuing the work to ensure sufficient support for both general education seats and courses within the majors, but also tackling new challenges. Currently, the task force is working on proposals that address a persistent challenge, students that are in “satisfactory” academic status (with GPAs of 2.0 and higher) but are unable to matriculate into a major because they cannot meet the major’s requirements. In the past, some of these students have been advised into associates or general studies degrees, but the task force is looking at the potential to use the evolving push for meta-majors to create an integrated studies degree with clear programmatic learning outcomes that match with coursework already taken and available to these students. An additional intervention is proactive advising, better using the data available to advisors and administrators to identify and intervene with students at risk. Implementation of the Civitas tools are an important investment in this capacity. The task force has also provided unified advocacy for full implementation of Degree Works ensuring that all students have a program of study recorded and tracked.
STANDARD 5
MISSION FULFILLMENT, ADAPTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The institution regularly and systematically collects data to clearly defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data and formulates evidence-based evaluations of the achievement of core theme objectives. It demonstrates clearly defined procedures for evaluating the integration and significance of institutional planning, the allocation of resources and the application of capacity in its activities for achieving the intended outcomes of its programs and services and for achieving its core theme objectives. The institution disseminates assessment results to its constituencies and uses those results to effect improvement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 24

REQUIREMENT 24. SCALE AND SUSTAINABILITY
The Institution demonstrates that its operational scale (e.g., enrollment, human and financial resources and institutional infrastructure) is sufficient to fulfill its mission and achieve its core themes in the present and will be sufficient to do so in the foreseeable future.

Utah State University conducts ongoing assessment of available resources to ensure that operational scale is sufficiently matched to the institutional mission and core themes. The university is committed to enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities by promoting sustainable operations and academic and service missions. USU utilizes data-informed planning for budget allocation that is linked to the university mission and core themes and continually adjusted to meet the ongoing and changing internal and external needs of the institution. The university financial statements provide documentation of the institution’s operational scale and ability to fulfill the mission and achieve the core themes.
STANDARD 5.A: MISSION FULFILLMENT

5.A.1 The institution engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective and evidence-based assessment of its accomplishments.

5.A.2 Based on its definition of mission fulfillment, the institution uses assessment results to make determinations of quality, effectiveness and mission fulfillment and communicates its conclusions to appropriate constituencies and the public.

Standards Three and Four of this report have documented the comprehensive, bottom-up nature of the university’s regular, systematic and evidence-based planning and assessment processes. Utah State University is committed to timely internal and external assessment of its programs as core elements of productive academic planning and the fulfillment of its mission and core themes. To meet this commitment, university units gather, analyze and publish data annually that connects to planning and evaluation of the accomplishment of the mission and core themes. These efforts inform the university’s determination of the extent to which programs and services meet their goals and objectives and further the mission of the university. They establish a culture of data-informed improvement and address the standards of the Regents, the Trustees, NWCCU and university stakeholders. The core theme indicators serve as bellwethers that measure progress against specific goals while also calling attention to underlying trends for further research, discussion and analysis. Assessment is a continuous
process which appropriately involves faculty, staff and students. Assessment results directly inform planning and decision-making. USU demonstrates evidence of continuous improvement and transformation of programs and services to ensure enduring institutional sustainability while achieving its mission as a land-grant and space-grant university.

Core theme results, and unit assessment results, pass through an organized system of analysis, interpretation and discussion that includes Faculty Senate, the UACC, Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees. The university has developed a scoring system, detailed below, to measure the adequacy of its mission fulfillment in each of the three core theme areas. USU annually assesses whether or not it is meeting expectations for each core theme, and discusses, in detail, its performance under each measure. More importantly, it examines the underlying details (current environment, trends, decisions and operations) that result in specific scores as outlined above. Regular reports on a host of indicators and measures are made to the Regents, the State of Utah, and the federal government, as also outlined in the sections above. The University Catalog and the Office of Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation (AAA) both provide detailed information clearinghouses for appropriate constituencies and the public. The AAA Office publishes the mission, core themes and performance indicator results annually to inform the campus and community of the university’s current trends and performance on the accreditation website. AAA also posts documents pertaining to USU’s regional institutional accreditation including the most recent reaffirmation letter and all reports from the current and the last accreditation cycles. The AAA website also includes a link to the NWCCU website.

CORE THEMES

As summarized in preceding sections of this report, USU used a comprehensive, participatory process to identify core themes, incorporated feedback and participation from all stakeholder groups to develop objectives to advance these themes and continues to work to perfect specific indicators that provide a bellwether of performance and accomplishment of the core themes and objectives. The detailed discussions underlying USU’s performance under each core theme objective measures can be found in Standard Four.

Summary of Quantitative Performance Indicators

Core Theme 1: Learning

Core theme learning has three objectives and six performance indicators (two for each objective). Several of the indicators are composite measures (e.g. inclusive enrollment where the average of the sub-measure results is used to determine the indicator score). Table 5.2 shows that four of the measures meet, one exceeds, and one fails to meet the target. The university has determined that an average score of “3” meets expectations across all indicators is mission fulfillment for each core theme. With six indicators, the threshold for learning mission fulfillment is a score of 18 (3x6), which was achieved in 2017.
Table 5.1: USU Core Themes and Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Theme</th>
<th>Core Theme Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Learning     | 1. Faculty teach well, students learn and achieve success  
2. Student retention and completion rates are strong and improving  
3. USU provides broad access; course offerings and student enrollments support the land-grant mission to provide education throughout Utah                                                                                                                                               |
| Discovery    | 1. Faculty are engaged with productive and critically recognized programs of research and creative endeavors  
2. Students participate in strong research and creative programs and achieve success                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Engagement   | 1. University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to grow human capital, encourage lifelong learning and improve quality of life  
2. University intellectual capital and assets are leveraged to identify, secure and create economic development                                                                                                                                                                               |

Table 5.2: Core Theme: Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Since 2013</th>
<th>2017 Target Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1         | Assessment of student learning  
1. Department assessment of program learning outcomes  
2. IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction survey tool | ↑ (new)    | 3 (Meets Expectations) |
| 1         | Graduating student outcomes  
1. Employment at graduation  
2. Met educational goals  
3. Post-graduate education | ↔ ↔ ↔ | 3 (Meets Expectations) |
| 2         | Retention rates                                                                      | ↑          | 4 (Exceeds Expectations) |
| 2         | Graduation rates                                                                     | ↓          | 2 (Not Meeting Expectations) |
| 3         | Course offerings and enrollments support mission  
1. Student/course ratio  
2. Breadth of course offerings  
3. Total enrollment through distance education | ↔ ↔ ↑ | 3 (Meets Expectations) |
| 3         | Inclusive enrollment  
1. Gender  
2. Race  
3. Utah residency  
4. First generation college  
5. Pell eligibility | ↔ ↔ ↔ ↔ ↓ | 3 (Meets Expectations) |
| **Total Score: Learning Performance Indicators** | ↔ | **18** |
Objective 1 addresses USU academic program assessment efforts. As outlined in detail in Standard Four, USU continues to move in a positive direction since 2013 with many more programs documenting program assessment. Also, more academic departments and faculty members are posting program learning outcomes and assessment results on their departmental/program websites and (new in 2017-2018) links to assessment details for each department’s programs will be available in the University Catalog. USU has made considerable progress toward exercising continuous improvement in academic program outcomes assessment in the last four years. More work needs to be done to make certain programs are publishing student learning outcomes regularly. The UACC will continue their work with AAA to raise expected benchmarks in student learning assessment, so that all programs are closing the loop using data-informed decision-making and achieving their curricular goals. The UACC and AAA provide a resource for review and assessment and offer annual feedback to academic programs on their assessment efforts. AAA will continue to annually update colleges and departments using the assessment report card to document compliance and programmatic progress on assessment of student learning. As more programs participate in the annual assessment of student learning, a more institutional culture of assessment is being established.

Objective 2 addresses retention and graduation rates. As outlined in standard four, graduation rates do not meet expectations. The retention rate, on the other hand, has improved due to specific university efforts and investments, as discussed above. To address this objective, the Executive Committee has implemented several initiatives to improve retention and graduation rates including the “15-to-finish” initiative, the lower tuition plateau, Civitas, improved online course delivery and operational changes and investments (e.g. new budget model), particularly in general education. It is believed these programs and initiatives are having an impact on the retention rate, and will have a substantial impact on improving graduation rates in the future.

Objective 3 measures broad and inclusive access that support USU’s land-grant mission. The performance indicator for the breadth and state-wide scope of the university’s educational offerings has been consistently strong over the last five years, with year-on-year growth in course availability and double-digit growth in online enrollments. This expansion and growth has not come at the cost of quality, as demonstrated by course and programmatic assessments, and USU’s recent move from #14 to #5 on U.S. News and World Report’s list of the best online Bachelor’s programs. The second measure, inclusive enrollment, reveals a trend that is a significant cause of concern. The decline in Pell eligible and first-generation students, as a percentage of the undergraduate class, has generated strong responses, including the creation of a need-based scholarship fund. Although USU continues to be one of the lowest cost land-grant institutions in the United States, with a very high return on investment, the university is committed to ensuring that finances are not a barrier to access for the student population.

Core Theme 2: Discovery

Core theme discovery has two objectives and six performance indicators (three for each objective). As in core theme one, several of the indicators are composite measures where the average of sub-measures combines to create the score. Table 5.3 indicates that all of the performance indicators have met or exceeded the 2017 targets. With six measures, the
threshold for discovery mission fulfillment is a score of 18 (3x6), which was exceeded in 2017.

Table 5.3: Core Theme: Discovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Since 2013</th>
<th>2017 Target Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Faculty awards and honors</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>3 (Meets Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Peer-reviewed contributions</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>3 (Meets Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Total research expenditures (Reported to NSF)</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>4 (Exceeds Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student participation in research/creative programs</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>4 (Exceeds Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Evidence of student success</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>3 (Meets Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Graduate enrollments and degrees</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>3 (Meets Expectations)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score: Discovery Performance Indicators: ↔ 20

Objective 1 is focused on faculty success and productivity, and on the resources available to support these efforts. As outlined in Standard Four, above, USU continues to see consistent recognition with regard to faculty honors and awards. The average number of peer-reviewed intellectual contributions has seen a trend with some decline, although the decrease has been within the standard deviation of historical productivity. The Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees have asked the UACC to explore potential reasons for this negative trend, including potential data entry issues with faculty. USU continues to excel in the amount of research expenditures reported nationally. Faculty are productive in research and creative activities and are awarded an increasing amount of research dollars that can be invested in discovery work on campus.

Objective 2 addresses student enrollment and participation in research and creative programs. Almost a quarter of all undergraduate students report engaging in discovery activities outside of class. The university has also been able to increase the number of graduate student assistantships over the last several years. In terms of production, graduate students continue to see success in publishing peer-reviewed work, and enrollment in creative programs continues to be high. Although initial analysis of the declining trend in graduate student FTEs was perplexing and concerning, further analysis revealed that the reduction in required course credits in a majority of graduate programs had created the change. As a result, the UACC is considering the recommendation from the Executive Committee that the measure be changed...
to “headcount,” perhaps breaking out full-time and part-time graduate student. The decline in PhDs awarded, however, remains a cause of concern. While it is unclear the exact source of the decline in degrees awarded, the School of Graduate Studies is working with departments to improve recruiting and retention, and to minimize obstacles that might be preventing students from successfully completing their degrees. The Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee requested that a measure of Master’s degrees awarded be added to the indicators.

Core Theme 3: Engagement

Core theme engagement has two objectives and four performance indicators. Table 5.4 indicates that two indicators exceeded, one failed to meet, and one met expectations. With four indicators, the threshold for engagement mission fulfillment is a score of 12 (3x4), which was exceeded in 2017.

Table 5.4: Core Theme: Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Since 2013</th>
<th>2017 Target Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>USU Extension</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>4 (Exceeds Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Direct contacts</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Indirect contacts</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Faculty delivered activities and events</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sustainability rating based on AASHE STARS standards</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>4 (Exceeds Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Create economic development</td>
<td>↓ ↓ ↔</td>
<td>2 (Not Meeting Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Patents filed</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Innovation disclosures</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Patents awarded</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>USU’s direct financial impact</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>3 (Meets Expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Investment in Utah employees (payroll)</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Investment in Utah businesses (procurement)</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Score: Engagement Performance Indicators</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective 1 focuses on human capital development and quality of life. The first indicator uses a composite measure of federally reported statistics to measure the consistency of university efforts through Extension programs, faculty and offices. The second indicator is USU’s status in achieving STARS recognition. Both indicators are elaborated in more detail in Standard Four.

Objective 2 addresses USU’s role as an engine of economic development, both through the creation and leveraging of knowledge and innovation, and through direct spending. Recent changes to the Commercialization Office have resulted in changes that have significantly impacted several of the key sub-measures of innovation and patent productivity. Please read Standard Four, above, for more details. USU’s direct financial impact as an employer, customer, and partner in economic activity continues to grow, to more than $576 million dollars in 2017.
STANDARD 5.B: ADAPTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

5.B.1 Within the context of its mission and characteristics, the institution evaluates regularly the adequacy of its resources, capacity and effectiveness of operations to document its ongoing potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives and achieve the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

5.B.2 The institution documents and evaluates regularly its cycle of planning practices, resource allocation, application of institutional capacity and assessment of results to ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. It uses the results of its evaluation to make changes, as necessary, for improvement.

The planning and assessment system (see Figure 3.1: UACC, Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, AAA, etc.) relies on well documented policies and process for incorporating data and stakeholder feedback on the adequacy or resources, capacity and effectiveness of operations. The process for planning, review of resources and assessment results from the individual units up through the core theme performance indicators are discussed at length in Standards 3 and 4. Unit and co-curricular assessment is active and ongoing. Systematic, participatory, self-reflective and evidence-based assessment of core theme indicators occurs annually. Each year, the UACC, Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees discuss and assess progress on core themes,
and recommend academic, co-curricular and operational changes for prioritization in budget and program decision-making to improve mission fulfillment.

The AAA Office provides a clearinghouse of self-service business analytics and statistics, as well as regular reports to the UACC and Executive Committee throughout the year to track progress of the core theme performance indicators. Academic units conduct regular assessment of student learning with reporting requirements for annual assessment and program review as well as budget requests. Academic and unit assessments provide the foundation for institutional planning, budgeting and continuous improvement efforts at the university.

Assessment of Achievements

Many initiatives have been implemented during the current accreditation cycle and will continue to be developed and evaluated for their effectiveness on the performance indicators. Based on analysis of capacity and the core theme indicators, the university has systematically invested in programs and initiatives to improve performance. The university has a new budget model that incentivizes departments to provide additional courses and seats in areas of student demand and growth, both in general education and in the majors. The lower tuition plateau has increased the percentage of students receiving “plateau” credits from less than half to more than three-quarters. Estimated savings for students in the last year exceeded $8 million dollars. For the first time in the last decade (or more), a majority of undergraduate students enrolled at USU are taking 15+ credits. This has increased retention rates and is anticipated to increase graduation rates. Changes to the pricing and delivery model for online courses, as well as increased offerings and quality of those courses has resulted in more than doubling online course enrollment, providing key flexibility to USU students in an environment where many seniors (and some juniors) are working and potentially married with children. Degree pathways and four-year (and two-year) degree plans have been implemented for all programs of study. Student advising has been organized to better share best-practices and improve resources to benefit students, and the Office of Retention and Completion was established as part of the institution’s completion initiative. The university has made significant, multi-sector investments in analytics, focused on student persistence and retention, and ultimately, on improved completion. The university continues to expand the use high-impact practices to increase student engagement and learning at the university because these have been shown to increase retention and completion. Examples of these high-impact practices at USU include participation in undergraduate research, internships, study abroad, capstone projects, the first-year experience and community engagement opportunities for students. Finally, USU has just completed a comprehensive risk assessment process to help ensure the sustainability and survivability of its resources and capacity.

As an institution of higher education, USU strives for continued quality improvement in all endeavors. USU is a complex and heterogeneous institution with dozens of locations, thousands of programs, tens of thousands of students, thousands of staff and faculty, and a diversity of efforts. Historically, the university has relied upon a highly accountable, bottom-up process of planning and assessment, established systems, processes and procedures, and
excellent hiring to ensure continuous improvement and the achievement of core themes and mission fulfillment. The self-study process has given the university the opportunity to comprehensively organize and review these efforts, and to review and discuss institutional effectiveness in ways that will inform ongoing assessment and planning processes. USU uses the results of ongoing assessment efforts to optimize mission fulfillment, sustainable changes and future strategic planning.

Through the governance system, assessment cycle and the budget hearing process, the institution will use the findings from this self-study to inform current strategic planning in line with the core themes and the Regent’s 10-year planning cycle. The institution will also use this opportunity to review and, perhaps, revise the mission, core themes, core theme objectives and indicators of achievement to make certain they are providing all the necessary data to inform institutional decision-making. The Executive Committee will work with AAA, the UACC and the Board of Trustees to provide the leadership to discuss these results, derive meaning from them and use them for continuous improvement planning for the next accreditation cycle.

5.B.3 The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends and expectations. Through its governance system it uses those findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, core themes, core theme objectives, goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement.

As detailed previously, the university has just completed a comprehensive risk assessment process that incorporated planning and information regarding internal and external environments and potential threats to sustainability. As demonstrated in this self-study, USU has a dedicated leadership team, adequate resources and adequate planning processes for continued self-assessment and mission fulfillment. The institution, led by the president, the Executive Committee and other governance structures, continuously evaluates a diverse variety of internal and external factors as inputs to planning and assessment for the direction of the university. Assessment efforts are data-informed and bottom-up, with sufficient participation and coordination that integrates the core themes and objectives. Together, the governance and educational resources at USU support institutional effectiveness and mission fulfillment.
CONCLUSION

Utah State University is a land-grant and space grant research university nationally recognized for the breadth and strength of its programs and the excellence of its students. In its more than 129-year history, the university has continued to evolve and improve, while maintaining a commitment to affordable, open access to students in Utah, the United States and the world.

Utah State University is submitting this *NWCCU Year Seven Report* with confidence that it documents the adequacy of its resources and capacity, and its actions in fulfilling the stated mission, accomplishing its core theme objectives and achieving the intended outcomes of its programs and services. This report documents USU’s policies, procedures, governance and decision-making structures as well as the processes in place to establish, review and revise those policies and procedures to promote effective management and operation of the institution. The Year Seven Report forms a part of the seven-year reporting cycle and includes all the elements of the *NWCCU Year One Report* and *Year Three Report* as revised by the university to address all recommendations from peer-evaluation review.

In the Year One Report, submitted in 2011, the university took advantage of the revision of the NWCCU standards to renew a campus-wide dialogue on accreditation, establish an outcomes-oriented framework, develop a set of measurable objectives and indicators and articulate thresholds of fulfillment for each indicator of the core themes. The new framework was developed in an inclusive and participatory fashion by the University Assessment Coordinating
Council (UACC), which included key stakeholders from all colleges and units throughout the university and required active participation from all of them to arrive at a consensus vision of the USU mission, the parameters for mission fulfillment and an acceptable threshold of fulfillment. Completion of the Year Three Report (2013) required even greater involvement from leaders and staff throughout the university to document USU’s resources and capacity. Each member of the UACC served as a coordinator for responses to applicable sections, and teams were formed at the unit level to address the specific questions (e.g., finance, student affairs and libraries). The Year Three Report generated helpful feedback regarding core theme indicators and strengthened USU’s attention to assessing student learning.

Given consistent feedback from peer-evaluators that the university should focus more attention on direct outcome measures and less on indirect measures, the UACC has focused on developing a set of indicators that would effectively measure outcomes for students, faculty, the institution and community stakeholders. The most significant dedication of UACC time and resources in the past four years has been in the development of the assessment report card to ensure that all academic programs of study achieve a minimum standard of assessment for student program learning outcomes, most importantly those programs that have lagged in these efforts because they have not been subject to external or specialized accreditation. Although these efforts still require more work, significant progress has been documented.

The initial elaboration of mission, core themes, objectives and indicators was aspirational. It has been operationalized in the past seven years and will continue to be refined going forward. The feedback from the Year One and Year Three reviews was very helpful in focusing university attention and resources on areas in need of improvement. This Year Seven Report is intended to demonstrate that USU has the resources and capacity to fulfill the mission outlined, that the university is regularly assessing and evaluating performance at all levels and that USU is engaged in continuous improvement. We welcome the feedback from our peers in strengthening that process and the resulting outcomes.
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- https://regionalcampuses.usu.edu/degrees/20/

Standard 2.C.13

- http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/graduate-council/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/apply/
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3183&hl=Graduate+Degree+Requirements&returnto=search
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3203&hl=Graduate+Student+General+Information&returnto=search

Standard 2.C.14

- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3068

Standard 2.C.15

- http://www.usu.edu/degrees/index.cfm?browse
- http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/graduate-degrees/

Standard 2.C.16

- http://ais.usu.edu/ceu/
- https://online.usu.edu/degrees/
- https://concurrent.usu.edu/
SELF REPORT 2018

- https://studyabroad.usu.edu/
- https://www.usu.edu/policies/103/
- https://extension.usu.edu/impacts

Standard 2.C.17

- https://www.usu.edu/epc/subcommittees/curriculum/

Standard 2.C.18

Standard 2.C.19

Standard 2.D: Student Support Resources

Standard 2.D.1

- http://www.usu.edu/asc/
- https://career-services.usu.edu/
- http://sss.usu.edu/
- http://www.advising.usu.edu/exploratory/
- https://veterans.usu.edu/
- https://health.usu.edu/
- http://counseling.usu.edu/
- http://www.usu.edu/drc/
- https://globalengagement.usu.edu/
- http://honors.usu.edu/

Standard 2.D.2

- https://dps.usu.edu/police/index
- https://dps.usu.edu/fire/
- https://dps.usu.edu/emergency/

Standard 2.D.3

- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3795
- http://www.usu.edu/admissions/
- https://www.usu.edu/registrar/transfer/
- http://www.usu.edu/orientation/
- https://www.usu.edu/connections/
- https://www.usu.edu/orientation/logan
- https://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/orientation/
Standard 2.D.4

- https://higheredutah.org/policies/r401-approval-of-new-programs-program-changes-discontinued-programs-and-program-reports/

Standard 2.D.5

- http://catalog.usu.edu/
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3070
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3795
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3201
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3799
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3843
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3174
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3084#Tuition_Refund_Policy
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3903
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3320

Standard 2.D.6

- https://cehs.usu.edu/teached/index
- http://www.cehs.usu.edu/teached/application
- http://www.cehs.usu.edu/teached/educator-licensing
- http://www.cehs.usu.edu/teached/writing-exam
- http://www.cehs.usu.edu/teached/praxis
- http://www.cehs.usu.edu/teached/background-check
- http://teal.usu.edu/
- http://career-services.usu.edu/students/career-assessments
- http://www.career-services.usu.edu/career-aggie
- http://catalog.usu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=9308&hl=Aviation+Technology+-+Pilot+BS&returnto=search

Standard 2.D.7

- http://it-archive.usu.edu/recovery/
- https://usu.service-now.com/usu/knowledge.do?syparm_document_key=kb_knowledge,4bc69c40c59b900bd5cf32b21101208
- http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3144&hl=FERPA&returnto=search
- http://iso.usu.edu/you

Standard 2.D.8

- http://www.usu.edu/financialaid/index
• http://www.utahstateaggies.com/saas/academichighlights1.html
• http://www.utahstateaggies.com/saas/ust-saas.html
• http://www.utahstateaggies.com/saas/saac.html
• http://www.usu.edu/admissions/apply/
• http://www.utahstateaggies.com/saas/lifeskills.html
• https://www.usu.edu/connections/
• http://www.utahstateaggies.com/saas/studentathletementors.html

Standard 2.D.14

• https://rcde.usu.edu/mats/
• https://testing.usu.edu/students/find_proctor
• https://www.usu.edu/online/testing
• http://testing.usu.edu/faculty/proctorio
• https://www.proctoru.com/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI6arC6dbI1gLIV0brACH29dw9aEAAAYAIAEgLhdfD_BwE

Standard 2.E: Library and Information Resources

Standard 2.E.1

• https://library.usu.edu/
• https://price.lib.usu.edu/
• https://blanding.lib.usu.edu/
• https://edithbowen.usu.edu/our-school/moore-library
• http://qcnr.usu.edu/quinney/
• https://www.hathitrust.org/
• https://www.lyrasis.org/Pages/Main.aspx
• https://archives.usu.edu/
• http://digital.lib.usu.edu/
• http://exhibits.usu.edu/
• https://library.usu.edu/digital-collections.php
• https://library.usu.edu/digital-collections.php
• https://upcolorado.com/

Standard 2.E.2

• https://www.readcube.com/
• https://openstax.org/
Standard 2.E.3

- http://libguides.usu.edu/2010lessons
- http://libguides.usu.edu/curriculummaps
- https://library.usu.edu/instruct/index.php
- https://library.usu.edu/instruct/research-guides.php
- https://library.usu.edu/instruct/restut/
- http://exhibits.usu.edu/exhibits/show/domesticity
- https://rgs.usu.edu/srs/
- https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/researchweek/ResearchWeek2017/
- https://library.usu.edu/instruct/research-concepts.php
- http://libguides.usu.edu/assignmentdesign

Standard 2.E.4

- https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1004&context=oadc

Standard 2.F: Financial Resources

Standard 2.F.1

- http://www.usu.edu/budget/

Standard 2.F.2


Standard 2.F.3

Standard 2.F.4

- https://www.ellucian.com/student-information-system/
- https://www.usu.edu/internal-audit-services/
- https://www.usu.edu/internal-audit-services/pdfs/charter2.pdf
Standard 2.F.5


Standard 2.F.6


Standard 2.F.7

- http://controllers.usu.edu/reports
- http://www.usu.edu/trustees/bylaws/#4

Standard 2.F.8

- http://www.case.org/
- https://www.usu.edu/advancement/usu_foundation_board/index

Standard 2.G: Physical and Technological Structure

Standard 2.G.1

- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/utility_systems/energy-use
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/campus_services/sustainability
- https://www.usu.edu/map/
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/operations_maintenance/about
- http://www.usu.edu/facilities/files/nwccu/CI%20History.xlsx
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/planning_design_construction/about
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/planning_design_construction/design-requirements
- https://dfcm.utah.gov/
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/utility_systems/cep
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/operations_maintenance/landscape
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/customer_service/snow-removal
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/regional_campus/manager

**Standard 2.G.2**

- http://rgs.usu.edu/ehs/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/ehs/laboratory/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/ehs/safety-policy/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/ehs/industrial hygiene/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/ehs/laboratory/

**Standard 2.G.3**

- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/files/nwccu/master-plans

**Standard 2.G.4**

- https://www.usu.edu/budget/
- http://ais.usu.edu/
- https://www.usu.edu/policies/552/
- https://rgs.usu.edu/iacuc/services/
- http://biosystems.usu.edu/
- http://uwrl.usu.edu/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/microscopy/
- http://www.usual.usu.edu/
- https://controllers.usu.edu/team/equipment-management

**Standard 2.G.5**

- http://it.usu.edu/
- http://ais.usu.edu/
- https://www.ellucian.com/
- https://usu.service-now.com/usu/welcome.do
- https://www.canvaslms.com/
- https://www.panopto.com/
- https://www.civitaslearning.com/about/
- https://www.chpc.utah.edu/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/hpc
- https://myid.usu.edu/
- https://www.incommon.org/
standard 2.g.6

- https://ais.usu.edu/
- http://cidi.usu.edu/
- http://empowerteaching.usu.edu/
- https://ais.usu.edu/ltl/
- https://ais.usu.edu/classroommediaproductions/
- https://hr.usu.edu/banner/training
- https://www.usu.edu/connections/
- https://training.usu.edu/required-trainings/required_training
- https://controllers.usu.edu/training-security

standard 2.g.7

standard 2.g.8

standard 3

standard 3.a: institutional planning

information about institutional planning
Standard 3.A.2

- http://www.usu.edu/president/executivecommittee/
- https://www.usu.edu/policies/105/
- https://www.usu.edu/policies/
- http://www.usu.edu/aaa/org_charts.cfm
- http://www.usu.edu/policies/104/
- http://www.usu.edu/policies/105/
- www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/FY18%20Budget%20Hearing%20Summary.xlsx
- http://rgs.usu.edu/about-research-graduate-studies/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/research-council/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/graduate-council/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/directory/
- http://rgs.usu.edu/annual-report/
- https://www.usu.edu/facilities/files/nwccu/master-plans

Standard 3.A.3

- http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm
- http://rgs.usu.edu/research-and-graduate-studies-strategies/
- https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/assessment/index

Standard 3.A.4

- https://www.usu.edu/policies/103/

Standard 3.A.5

- https://higheredutah.org/policies/policyr345/
- https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/emergency/index
• https://dps.usu.edu/emergency/preparedness-tips

Standard 3.B: Core Theme Planning

Standard 3.B.1; Standard 3.B.2; Standard 3.B.3

• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/Accreditation_Working_Group.cfm
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/External%20Accreditation%20Table.pdf
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Assessment%20Rubric%20for%20Program%20Assessment%20Efforts.docx
• http://www.aashe.org/
• https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/utah-state-university-ut/report/2016-11-01/

STANDARD 4

Eligibility Requirement 22

• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/assessment_detail.cfm
• https://higheredutah.org/policies/policyr411/

Eligibility Requirement 23

• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/admin_tools.cfm

Standard 4.A: Assessment


• https://www.usu.edu/provost/program-reviews/
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/frontpage/tableau_index.cfm
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/assessment_detail.cfm
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Assessment%20Rubric%20for%20Program%20Assessment%20Efforts.docx
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Program%20Assessment%20Report%20Card_2017-2018.xlsx
• https://higheredutah.org/policies/policyr411/
• https://www.usu.edu/epc/R401proposals/
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Master%20Program%20Review%20Spreadsheet.xlsx
• https://co1.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsControlPanel/File.php?Filename=ADVS+external+review+7-14.pdf&Size=314559&Type=application%2Fpdf&F=1_pAWtS0SwVsPngCJ
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/APEC%20R411.pdf
• https://www.usu.edu/sots/assessment/index
• https://health.usu.edu/assessment/
• https://counseling.usu.edu/assessment/index
• https://www.usu.edu/campusrec/assessment/index
• http://www.usu.edu/drc/assessment
• https://accesscenter.usu.edu/assessment/index
• http://www.usu.edu/ccesl/CCE_Assessment
• https://ususa.usu.edu/assessment/index
• https://library.usu.edu/instruct/annual-reports.php
• http://www.libqual.org/home
• http://www.arl.org/
• https://library.usu.edu/accreditation/assessment.php
• https://library.usu.edu/instruct/assessment-studies.php
• https://library.usu.edu/instruct/index.php


• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Master%20Program%20Review%20Spreadsheet.xlsx
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/assessment_detail.cfm
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Assessment%20Rubric%20for%20Program%20Assessment%20Efforts.docx
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Program%20Assessment%20Report%20Card_2016-2017.xlsx
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Program%20Assessment%20Details%20Notes_2016-2017.xlsx
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Program%20Assessment%20Report%20Card_2017-2018.xlsx

Standard 4.B: Improvement

Standard 4.A.1; Standard 4.B.1; Standard 4.B.2

• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/frontpage/tableau_index.cfm
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Program%20Assessment%20Report%20Card_2017-2018.xlsx
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Program%20Assessment%20Details%20Notes_2016-2017.xlsx
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Assessment%20Rubric%20for%20Program%20Assessment%20Efforts.docx
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/HIST%202700%20rubric%20for%20survey%20course.pdf
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/assessment_detail.cfm
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=2
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=3
• https://qcnr.usu.edu/envs/about_envs/undergraduate_assessment_plan_2016_17
• http://www.ideaedu.org/Resources-Events/Support-For-Current-Clients/Accreditation-and-Professional-Standards-Support
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/admin_tools.cfm
• https://qcnr.usu.edu/envs/about_envs/undergraduate_assessment_plan_2016_17
• https://empowerteaching.usu.edu/foundations
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/graduating_students_survey_2014_15.cfm
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=4
• https://career-services.usu.edu/pdf/FINAL%20Annual%20Report%202015-16%20NO%20SALARY.pdf
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/BurningGlass_LMIResearchReport.pdf
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/EDU%20JobPulse%20US%20Flyer%202017W.PDF
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/EDU%20Labor%20Insight%20US%20Flyer%202017W.PDF
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=6
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Graduation%20Rates.pdf
• https://completecollege.org/
• http://www.studentachievementmeasure.org/participants/230728
• http://studentclearinghouse.org/
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=5
• http://ais.usu.edu/analytics/
• https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRPI0furXHcZ7yLgvVNIHDg
• http://thrive.usu.edu/
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/CIVITAS/4.%20Institutional%20Hurdles%20and%20Measuring%20the%20Impact%20of%20University%20Initiatives.docx
• http://statewide.usu.edu/faculty-can-now-request-peer-reviews-for-online-and-blended-courses
• https://www.usu.edu/today/index.cfm?id=57321
• www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/CIVITAS/3.%20Illume%20Impact%20Regional%20Campus%20Card%20holders.docx
• http://ais.usu.edu/grants/ttig
• https://le.utah.gov/~2009/bills/static/HB0364.html
• https://le.utah.gov/~2013/bills/sbillamd/sb0051s01.htm
• https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/scholarships/index
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=10
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/pdf/accreditation/awards_list.pdf
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=11
• http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=12
- http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=14
- https://yearofthearts.usu.edu/on-campus/
- http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=15
- www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/Extension_Water_Quality_Program/Final%20Report_FY%202012%20Utah%20statewide%20WQ%20Outreach.docx
- https://extension.usu.edu/impacts
- http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=17
- https://extension.usu.edu/
- https://extension.usu.edu/marketing/social-media/index
- https://www.youtube.com/usuextension
- http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=18
- http://www.aashe.org/
- https://sustainability.usu.edu/
- https://rgs.usu.edu/techtransfer/
- https://rgs.usu.edu/techtransfer/disclose/
- http://fiscalhealth.higheredutah.org/usu/financial
- https://www.usu.edu/connections/
- https://www.usu.edu/connections/instructors/resources/index
- https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/assessment/docs/Student_Affairs_Assessment_Narrative_Fall_2017_for_AAA.pdf
- https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/assessment/index
- https://cehs.usu.edu/advising/
- https://huntsman.usu.edu/advising/
- http://advising.usu.edu/exploratory/
http://advising.usu.edu/advisors/resources/universityadvising
https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/
https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/About-Us/NACADA-Leadership/Administrative-Division/Professional-Development-Committee/PDC-Advisor-Competencies.aspx
http://advising.usu.edu/advisors/training-development/index
http://advising.usu.edu/advisors/resources/
http://advising.usu.edu/advisors/news/
http://advising.usu.edu/advisors/resources/cla
http://advising.usu.edu/advisors/resources/acc
http://advising.usu.edu/advisors/resources/reports
http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3592
https://english.usu.edu/about/assessment/undergraduate/english-teaching/english_teaching_data_based_decisions
www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/ENGL_Assessment/ENGL%202010%20Assessment%20Report%20PPT%202012%202013.pptx
www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/ENGL_Assessment/Assessment%20Rubric%20Final%20Draft.docx
www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/documents/ENGL%202010%20Final%20Artifact%20Review.docx
www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/Documents/2017.11.17%20BoR%20Presentation%20FINAL.pptx
http://www.usu.edu/aaa/admin_tools.cfm
http://www.usu.edu/aaa/frontpage/viz.cfm?v=CourseCapacityandEnrollmentTrendDashboard-201820/Dashboard-CourseCapacity
www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/documents/Analytics%20in%20Action%20-%20Initial%20Successes.pptx

STANDARD 5

Standard 5.A: Mission Fulfillment

Standard 5.A.1; Standard 5.A.2

http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=1
http://www.usu.edu/aaa/Accreditation_Working_Group.cfm#
http://www.usu.edu/aaa/pdf/Accreditation/NWCCU%20Accreditation%20Letter%202015.pdf
http://www.nwccu.org/
http://www.usu.edu/aaa/accreditation/USUAccreditationMetrics.cfm?story_id=2
Standard 5.B: Adaptation and Sustainability

Standard 5.B.1

Standard 5.B.2

Standard 5.B.3
# COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Associate of Arts Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>Office of Analysis, Assessment &amp; Accreditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAC&amp;U</td>
<td>American Association of Colleges &amp; Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AACSB</td>
<td>Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS</td>
<td>Applied Associate of Science Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AASHE</td>
<td>Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABB</td>
<td>Aggie Blue Bikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABET</td>
<td>Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>American College Testing (standardized test)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADVS</td>
<td>Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIS</td>
<td>Academic &amp; Instructional Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALO</td>
<td>Accreditation Liaison Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARC</td>
<td>Architectural Review Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Associate of Science Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>Academic Success Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASTE</td>
<td>Applied Sciences, Technology Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY</td>
<td>Academic Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAC</td>
<td>Business Affairs Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOSS</td>
<td>Budget Officers System Subcommittee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAS</td>
<td>College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPS</td>
<td>Counseling and Psychological Services</td>
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