



## Focused Visit Report

After the team reaches a consensus, the team chair completes this form to summarize and document the team's view. Notes and evidence should be essential and concise. **Note:** If the visit involved more than five areas of focus, please contact the institution's HLC staff liaison for an expanded version of this form.

Submit the completed draft report to the institution's HLC staff liaison. When the report is final, submit it as a single PDF file at [hlcommission.org/upload](https://hlcommission.org/upload). Select "Final Reports" from the list of submission options to ensure the report is sent to the correct HLC staff member.

Institution: Wright State University

City, State: Dayton, Ohio

Visit Date: April 24 - 25, 2023

**Names of Peer Reviewers** (List the names, titles and affiliations of each peer reviewer. The team chair should note that designation in parenthesis.)

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## Part A: Context and Nature of Visit

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### 1. Purpose of the Visit (Provide the visit description from the Institution Event Summary.)

**Event Description from HLC:** A focused visit in Spring of 2023 on Core Components 4B, 5C, and 5D.

1. The institution needs to provide evidence of ongoing, systematic assessment processes in undergraduate programs, general education, graduate programs, and co-curricular programs and that there is substantial involvement by faculty and staff in these assessment processes. The institution needs to provide evidence that a new Strategic Plan has been completed, approved, and is being implemented. Finally, the institution needs to provide evidence that it develops and documents performance in its operations. The institution should provide evidence that it learns from its experience and applies that learning to improve institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability in areas throughout the university.
2. In a letter dated October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, subsequently reissued on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Wright State University's President, Dr. Susan Edwards, was notified that "[the] IAC voted to change the [review] team's evaluation of Criteria 4B and 5D from 'Met' to 'Met with Concerns.' In conjunction with this action, [the] IAC required the following interim monitoring."
3. Subsequently, a focused visit was scheduled for Spring 2023 (March 27<sup>th</sup> and March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023) to address Core Components 4B, 5C, and 5D. The focused visit has, however, been changed to April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, because the originally scheduled visit was to take place during the HLC conference, which resulted in some unanticipated difficulties in scheduling a review team. Wright State University was informed the institution must provide evidence of **ongoing, systematic assessment processes** in undergraduate programs, general education, graduate programs, and co-curricular programs and show that there is substantial involvement by faculty and staff in these assessment processes. Additionally, Wright State University must **provide evidence that a new Strategic Plan has been undertaken, completed, approved, and is being implemented**. Finally, the institution needs to provide **evidence that it develops and documents performance in its operations** along with **evidence that it learns from its experience and applies that learning to improve institutional effectiveness**, capabilities, and sustainability in areas throughout the university.
4. In review, the IAC determined that the team's final recommendations did not align with the evidence provided in the assurance argument, stating that three Core Components (4B, 5C, and 5D) should be reevaluated as "met with concerns" and requiring a focused visit in two years to assure the institution is making progress in addressing the lack of evidence and performance in these three areas.
5. The IAC's action to assign a focused visit transitions the institution to the Standard Pathway for reaffirmation of accreditation. In doing so, the IAC considered materials from the most recent evaluation and the institutional response to the evaluation findings.
6. Revisions to HLC's Criteria for Accreditation began on September 1st, 2020, after which institutions will be evaluated against the revised Criteria for all reviews conducted after that date, including reviews related to previously assigned monitoring. Institutional reports submitted after September 1st, 2020, that reference the Criteria should be written to the revised version. We have availed ourselves of the information regarding revised Criteria, including a crosswalk between the current and revised versions, which is available on HLC's [website](#).

## 2. Accreditation Status

- Accredited
- Accredited—On Notice
- Accredited—On Probation

## 3. Organizational Context

Wright State University was accredited in July 1968 as a public university and carries the name of the Wright brothers (the Wright Cycle Company was located in Dayton, Ohio), who inspired our vision to offer a learning-centered and innovative university.

Guided by our mission, vision, and strategic priorities of Recruitment, Retention, and Relationships, as well as a continued commitment to fiscal sustainability, our strategic planning efforts identified five primary institutional objectives that will move us forward on our path over the next two years while infusing strength and adaptability throughout the institution. Each objective will be achieved through projects and initiatives that enhance the breadth, quality, and diversity of educational experiences and services we provide for our students and community. [View Strategic Plan 2023–25](#) and [Wright State University Bridge Strategic Plan 2023–2025 \(PDF\)](#)

Wright State University is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of the State of Ohio. The institution has a strong commitment to inclusiveness as demonstrated in its Mission and Vision statements. [View Mission and Vision](#)

### MISSION STATEMENT

We empower all students to excel in their lives and chosen careers through integrated learning, research, innovation, and experience.

### VISION STATEMENT

To be a diverse, inclusive university that positively transforms the educational, economic, and social fabric of the communities we serve.

The newly enacted mission outlined in the institutional bridge plan identifies five (5) major objectives, as follows:

Objective One: Student Success—Transformational Student Experience

Objective Two: Advancing Knowledge through Research, Entrepreneurship, and Creative Endeavors

Objective Three: Forging and Sustaining Strong Collaborative Relationships

Objective Four: Inclusive Excellence

Objective Five: Resource Management and Sustainable Operating Budget

The university's Quick Facts webpage records a current enrollment of over 10,798 students between seven colleges, two schools, 160 Undergraduate programs, and 155 Graduate programs. Wright State University is located in Dayton, OH, with a branch campus in Celina, OH, referred to as Wright State University-Lake Campus. The main campus has 32 academic buildings on 73 acres across the two campuses. As of Fall 2022, the institution

has over 585 full-time faculty and 326 adjunct faculty. The institution also has over 900 full-time staff. **View [Quick Facts](#)**

#### 4. Unique Aspects of Visit

No unique aspects of this visit are noted.

#### 5. Interactions With Institutional Constituencies and Materials Reviewed. List the titles or positions, but not names, of individuals with whom the team interacted during the review and the principal documents, materials, and web pages reviewed.

**LIST REQUIRED INFORMATION HERE:**

**TITLES (not names) OF PEOPLE INVOLVED**

**PRINCIPAL DOCUMENT TITLES**

**WEB PAGES:** Documents and evidence are linked throughout the report. Website construction, review, and continuous improvement are ongoing.

- [Assessment of Student Learning](#)
- [Student Learning Outcomes Statement](#)
- [Learning Outcomes for General Education \(Core\)](#)
- [Examples of Student Learning Outcomes for Co-Curricular Experiences](#)
  - [Academic Program Review for Co-Curricular Programs](#)
- [Learning Outcomes for Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees and Programs](#)
- [Course Syllabi](#)
- [Assurance of Learning Committee Charge and Minutes](#)
- [Program Effectiveness Review Overview](#)
- [Academic Program Review Evidence](#)
- [Assessment Resources](#)
- [Assessment Plans and the Process for Assessment Plans \(includes General Ed, Academic Programs, Co-Curricular, Student Perceptions/NSSE\)](#)
- [Stop Gap Application for Reporting Annual Assessment Activities](#)

#### Additional Links

- [Faculty Handbook](#)
- [Staff Handbook](#)
- [Student Handbook](#)
- [Academic Catalog](#)

#### 6. Areas of Focus. Complete the following A and B sections for each area of focus identified in the visit description on the Institution Event Summary. Note that each area of focus should correspond with only one Core Component or other HLC requirement.

##### A1. Statement of Focus:

- Academic programs were reviewed in conjunction with the Annual Assessment Process and the Academic Program Review process occurring every five years. An example of a completed review was not provided in the assurance argument or to the site visitors in 2020, although the site visitors found examples on the Wright State University website. For this visit, Academic Program Review documents and Annual Assessment documents can be viewed on the Office of the Provost website. Next, during the 2020 site visit, HLC visitors could not access or view Core Assessment evidence. These documents and evidence can now be viewed on the Core General Education Assessment webpage. **View [Academic Program Review](#) and [Core General Education Assessment](#)**

The initial Core Component outlined hereafter is identified as:

4.B. The institution engages in ongoing Assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

**B1. Statements of Evidence (check one below):**

- Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

**Evidence:**

This section focuses on the general 4.B. Criterion: *The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.* Specific concerns regarding sub-criteria 4.B.1, 4.B.2, and 4.B.3, as stated in the HLC Response dated 8/2020, are addressed in section A2/B2.

1. To ensure reviewer's access, the Academic Program Review documents, reports, and records for AY 2019/2020 are now available for review on the Office of the Provost website. **View [Academic Program Review](#)**

Wright State University's Academic Program Review processes and practices are undergoing a thorough redesign through a collaboration between the Office of Institutional Research and the Office for the Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer. The new design is still in draft form as it has not been fully vetted or approved. The approval process will require the document to be posted publicly for 30 days, an invitation for review and comments issued,

comments reviewed, and changes made where possible. Thereafter, the adoption process includes presentations to the administration, faculty, faculty senate, and the faculty senate executive committee. We anticipate unanimous approval by Fall 2023.

Under our previous cycle of conducting Academic Program Review every five years, our next Review would take place in AY 2024/2025. However, as we will explain later in this report, we propose a new schedule that will establish perpetual Academic Program Review going forward instead of undertaking an institution-wide effort once every five years. We anticipate our new design will establish a culture of assessment to continuously improve the student learning experience and ensure educational quality and integrity.

2. Our 2013-2014 Academic Program Review was revised to align with the generation of the university's Strategic Plan in place at that time. Historically, the Academic Program Review process occurred under the auspices of the Assurance of Learning Committee (ALC), consisting of faculty and assessment coordinators from each college and school. Under that revised format, all departmentally based curricular programs underwent Academic Program Review in 2014-2015 following the adoption of Wright State's five-year Strategic Plan. Co-Curricular Program Reviews, hereafter referred to as "Administrative Reports," took place in 2018 and are available on the Program Effectiveness Review 2018 webpage. Co-curricular programs are scheduled for their next review in AY 2023/2024 (our next academic year). We are in the process of designing a new cyclical schedule for co-curricular program review, which we plan to finish this in the Summer of 2023. We also intend to place co-curricular programs under perpetual review to mirror our redesign for Academic Program Review. **View [Program Effectiveness Review 2018](#)**
3. Documents, reports, and records for the 2020 Academic Program Review included several improvements in comparison to the review for 2013-2016. **View [Academic Program Review](#)**
  - a. It incorporated annual assessments, student success, and financial revenue and expenses.
  - b. Quantitative data was provided to programs by the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of the Controller.
  - c. Faculty, after a review, could supplement quantitative data with discussion and explanation of program outcomes (although we cannot provide evidence that this occurred).
  - d. Planning recommendations came at the program, chair, college, dean, and provost levels (although we cannot provide evidence that this occurred).
  - e. Programs could continue to assess one or more learning outcomes annually based on assessment plans (although we cannot provide evidence that this occurred).
4. **Action Steps to Improve Academic Program Review and Institutional Effectiveness**
  - a. Consultation with our seven academic units, Assurance of Learning Committee, Co-Curricular Committee, and Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, reveals that undertaking simultaneous Academic Program Review across all units every five years is taxing on the institution. Therefore, we are redesigning a new four-year rotation for Academic Program Review in which two or more units would undergo Review each year.

- i. The revised cycle should reduce institutional strain and allow us to address possibilities for continuous improvement more efficiently. As a result, the institution would be positioned to become more agile and responsive, thus increasing institutional effectiveness.
  - ii. In the working draft for our new Academic Program Review process, we outline that the new schedule should begin in Fall 2024, earlier than previously planned, and would extend beyond the original end date in AY 2025/2026. **View [2024–2029 Academic Program Review DRAFT Proposal \(PDF\)](#)**
  - iii. With so many systems-design changes being considered and undertaken, the new schedule is necessary to stabilize and standardize effective and efficient operations, institutional assessment, and objectives and outcomes.
- b. We are pleased to report we have worked with constituents and stakeholders in support of shared governance for Academic Program Review, including:
  - i. Other offices and officers of Academic Affairs
    - 1. Vice Provost of Academic Affairs
    - 2. Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs
  - ii. Vice President of Enrollment Management
  - iii. Institutional Effectiveness and Research
  - iv. Office of the Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President
  - v. Deans of each academic unit
  - vi. Department Chairs
  - vii. Program Directors
  - viii. Assurance of Learning Committee
  - ix. Faculty Senate
    - 1. Faculty Senate Executive Committee
    - 2. Co-Curricular Committee
    - 3. Core Oversight Committee

## 5. Disclosures Regarding Annual Assessment

- a. Annual Assessment before AY 2019/2020 was collected, but programs should have received more feedback, critique, and follow-up to improve the quality of student learning.
- b. While annual assessment activities were undertaken in part, documentation or evidence that subsequent actions resulted in improvements in the student learning experience requires improvement.
- c. Beginning in AY 2019/2020, Wright State University designed a Microsoft 365 Power App as a stopgap solution to improve the organization and processing of annual assessment data and evidence and to provide better and more timely feedback. However, the institution's efforts to pursue an enterprise solution that could more accurately and reliably conduct or process annual assessment to improve student learning were stalled by the pandemic. **View [Stop Gap Application for Reporting Annual Assessment Activities \(PDF\)](#)**



- d. In AY 2019/2020, 94.5% of programs completed annual assessment, but programs should have received more feedback, critique, actionable analysis, or follow-up to improve the quality of student learning. **View [2019-2020 Program Assessment Reports](#)**
- e. In AY 2020/2021, 93% of programs completed annual assessment, but programs should have received more feedback, critique, or actionable analysis to improve the quality of student learning. **View [2020-2021 Program Assessment Reports](#)**
- f. Annual assessment for AY 2021/2022 has been completed. Of our 342 programs, 98.6% have completed annual assessment to date, demonstrating substantial improvement in participation. Programs with outstanding or unfinished annual assessment from prior years have also undertaken efforts to complete their efforts. As of this writing, feedback, critique, actionable analysis, and follow-up to improve the quality of student learning are pending upon completion of annual assessment. Unfortunately, this feedback will not be completed before this report's submission to HLC. **View [2021-2022 Program Assessment Reports](#)**
- g. Although annual assessment is a ubiquitous institutional mandate, the process was sometimes forestalled in certain programs. For instance, the Business College's AACSB accreditation assessment was thought to supersede Wright State University's annual assessment activities, precluding that unit's participation in annual assessment until AY 2020/2021. A similar arrangement precluded our Music program's assessment. Academic Affairs has communicated with all programs, explaining that participation in annual assessment is required even when external disciplinary accreditation assessment requirements also exist. We are also establishing expectations for mandatory annual assessment under our new cycle for Academic Program Review in the understanding that each successful annual assessment naturally provides information, data, and evidence for cyclical Academic Program Review.
- h. Wright State University's annual assessment process has focused on academic programs, using artifacts drawn from representative courses to assess achievement associated with program learning outcomes. As part of our efforts to develop a positive internal culture and system of assessment, Academic Affairs has begun advocating for the use of course assessment and analysis of learning outcomes to improve students' course-based learning experiences, because individual course assessment outside the scope of program assessment has not yet become a pervasive practice. Artifacts in support of programmatic assessment were collected from courses in our Education program, Nursing program, English program, and for the purpose of Core assessment. The artifacts and the assessments they supported were utilized inconsistently in support of course-level improvement to teaching and learning because faculty have favored programmatic assessment above assessment in individual courses.
- i. Co-curricular assessment was formerly designed to measure experiences associated with student employment rather than encompassing other activities, programs, and learning experiences that could complement, connect to, or mirror the academic curriculum. During Summer 2023, the Offices of Academic Affairs and Institutional Research will redesign co-curricular assessment to include activities, programs, and other learning experiences that complement or enhance students' classroom learning.
- j. We have increased the frequency of professional development for improvement in individual proficiency and assessment system functionality. (For details, see point 10 on pages 19-20 of this report.) Providing regular professional development opportunities is also among the goals of our



new Provost's Office Draft Strategic Plan. [View Office of the Provost Strategic Plan 2022–2024 \(PDF\)](#)

k. **Action Steps for Annual Assessment**

- i. Annual assessment for AY 2019/2020, AY 2020/2021, and AY 2021/2022 will be completed to the extent that data and evidence exists, and reports will be made available on the Academic Program Review webpage. [View Academic Program Review](#)
- ii. We have dedicated ourselves as an institution to providing review, feedback, critique, and actionable analysis to improve the quality of student learning, but these actions will still be incomplete by the time we file this report nor by the time of the focused visit (April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023). Therefore, documentation or evidence of corrective measures or solutions remains unavailable at present.
- iii. We're pleased to report that we are replacing the annual assessment app (designed as a stopgap solution) with five (5) Watermark assessment and record solution products that will integrate, organize, synthesize, and create reports for all our assessment needs, including:
  1. Course-level objectives and outcomes
  2. Program-level objectives and outcomes
  3. College-level objectives and outcomes
  4. Core assessment
  5. Annual program assessment
  6. Academic Program Review
  7. Accreditation self-studies and assurance arguments for both HLC and our many disciplinary accreditors
  8. Institutional learning objectives and outcomes
  9. Assessment of our institutional values, vision, and mission

A contract with Watermark will be secured during Spring 2023 to be launched for the start of Fall 2023, with initial results expected in Spring 2024. [View evidence of our communications with Watermark: Watermark's Educational Intelligence System Proposal and February 21, 2023 Watermark Memo.](#)

6. **Disclosures Regarding Core Assessment (General Education)**

- a. Responsibility for Core assessment at Wright State University resides with the Core Oversight Committee of the Faculty Senate. The committee charge can be found and reviewed on the Core Oversight Committee webpage on the Faculty Senate website. [View Core Oversight Committee and Faculty Senate](#)
- b. Core assessment activities have been conducted since the 2017/2018 academic year, and data collection process and the assessment template have been improved and upgraded. Subsequent activities to employ assessment data to improve the student learning experience in the Core require further improvement.
  - i. Under Wright State University's original design for annual Core assessment, actions recommended for improvement were evaluated to determine whether improvements in

student learning occurred during the next cyclical assessment of that element six years later. Therefore, Core assessments for AY 2018/2019 and AY 2019/2020 precluded efforts to ensure timely improvements in the student learning experience to date.

- ii. In addition, the Core Oversight Committee voted to delay Core assessment for AY 2020/2021 “by one year due to COVID.” (see notes associated with “-Element 5, Social Science, 2021-22\*\*”).
- iii. As seen in the disclosures about Academic Program Review, Core assessment for AY 2021/2022 is in process; therefore, improvements to the student learning experience informed by this assessment are pending.
- iv. The Core Oversight Committee had consistently granted leniency when programs requested a delay when they could not comply with their obligation for cyclical assessment (every six years), although other options such as recommending the removal of courses from the Core were also available. However, in February, 2023, the Core Oversight Committee recommended to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee that courses not participating in assessment be removed from the Core. **View [Core Oversight Committee Correspondence \(PDF\)](#)**

#### **c. Action Steps for Core Assessment**

- i. The Faculty Senate’s Core Oversight Committee and Assurance of Learning Committee planned to address the deficiencies in assessment data identified in the HLC 2020 report shortly after the results were published. The Core Oversight Committee began implementing those plans, making corrections, and collecting documentation. Relevant documents, evidence, and records are presently kept on a USB drive, a university-issued laptop, and our LMS (D2L, referred to as Pilot). Efforts to consolidate all records on a SharePoint site are underway. Recognizing that issues during our last visit prevented HLC reviewers’ access to SharePoint, we have located reports/evidence on the website. **View [Core General Education Assessment](#)**
- ii. As Core assessment remains the responsibility of the Faculty Senate’s Core Oversight Committee, professional development and monitoring will be recommended to ensure timely activity to improve the student learning experience and production of associated documentation and evidence. Specifically, we recommend rewriting the committee charge to fully account for all necessary activities, ensuring actions to improve the student learning experience and production of accompanying documentation and evidence.
- iii. The Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer will serve the Core Oversight Committee in an advisory capacity to strengthen its commitment and align its effort to meet HLCs expectations of good practice for Core assessment.

#### **Improvements and Progress to Date**

- iv. Since the 2017/2018 academic year the Core Oversight Committee has responded to its own internal review of its data collection methods, effectiveness, efficiencies, and has improved and redesigned the data collection template, resulting in more consistent data.

- v. Notable progress was made in February 2023 when the Core Oversight Committee communicated with and made recommendations to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to remove courses from the Core where compliance with assessment activities is absent, incomplete, or when leniency for a delay in reporting has been requested. [View Core Oversight Committee Correspondence \(PDF\)](#)
- vi. Additionally, as evidenced by recent Core Oversight Committee meeting minutes, the Core Oversight Committee is considering other changes and improvements as follows:
  - 1. Rewriting the Committee's charge to ensure compliance with accreditation requirements and good practice.
  - 2. Reducing the length of time between assessments from six years to three years, providing more timely review and allowing for improvements to the student learning experience.

**View [Core Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes \(PDF\)](#)**

- vii. Finally, the new Watermark system will aid in the completion and quality of Core assessment, with improved results anticipated by Spring 2024 and within AY 2024/2025.

## **7. Disclosures Regarding Program Learning Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes / Course Catalog**

- a. Learning objectives and outcomes for every program exist, but publication of these statements in Curriculog, which updates our course catalog system, Acalog, is inconsistent. The course catalog currently lists program learning objectives or outcomes for 67% of all programs.
- b. HLC offered constructive criticism in the 2020 response to our mid-cycle report that we distinguish, differentiate between, and clarify our program learning objectives, program learning outcomes, and learning goals, recommending that we adhere to good practice as outlined by HLC guidelines.
- c. Until Fall 2022, our Curriculog system required only program learning outcomes, not program learning objectives.
- d. The newest version of our course catalog for AY 2023-2024 will still not include program learning objectives and outcomes for every program due to the complexity of changes needed.
- e. Action Steps for Program Learning Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes / Course Catalog
  - i. The Office of the Provost and the Registrar plan to fully update our 2024-2025 course catalog to ensure that every program and course is entered correctly and accomplish any modifications necessary to ensure that all curricula and programs are current, accurate, and convey information about learning objectives and outcomes.
  - ii. Both program learning objectives and outcomes are now required whenever a program proposal or modification is processed through Curriculog, beginning in Fall 2022. Curriculog has been updated with instructions about writing and publishing program

learning objectives and outcomes. **View [Instructions in Curriculog for writing and publishing program learning objectives and outcomes \(PNG\)](#)**

- iii. A comprehensive review of all programs (majors, minors, and certificate programs) will begin in Fall 2023 to include both program learning objectives and outcomes in Curriculog and Acalog.
- iv. [The Wright State University Guide to Accreditation and Assessment](#) was published in November 2022. This document provides faculty and administrators with best practices and instructions on assessment and accreditation for future use in writing program learning objectives and program learning outcomes.
- v. Professional development sessions for institutional administrators, including program directors, department chairs, associate deans, and deans will be held in Summer 2023 to provide reskilling and upskilling in Curriculog administration, assessment procedures, and accreditation requirements, thereby improving our processes and ensuring improved compliance with HLC and other accrediting agencies criteria. Thereafter, administrators will assist with reskilling and upskilling faculty in these areas.
- vi. Professional development sessions to provide reskilling and upskilling for faculty, staff, curriculum committees, originators, and others responsible for program proposal and modification reviews will be held in Fall 2023.
- vii. Deficiencies in program objectives and outcomes were discovered after Wright State University's new administration began work in the summer of 2022, preventing immediate changes to every system necessary for full compliance. However, in collaboration with faculty, staff, and administration, we have begun to work diligently towards full compliance thanks to the efforts of our Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and our Graduate Curriculum Committee.
- viii. Finally, to ensure reliable standardization of our Curriculog process, the Registrar's office and the Office of the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs have begun creating an instructional guide to assist originators in submitting proper proposals for new programs, program modifications, deactivations, and terminations. This guide can be found on the Undergraduate Program Proposal Process webpage. **View [Undergraduate Program Proposal Process](#)**

## **8. Disclosures Regarding Course Learning Objectives and Course Learning Outcomes / Curriculum Workflow**

- a. In the 2020 response to our mid-cycle report, HLC offered constructive criticism that we distinguish and differentiate between our course learning objectives, outcomes, and learning goals and recommended that we adhere to good practice as outlined by HLC.
- b. Until Fall 2022, originators (the term used for those who propose(d) a new course or modification in Curriculog) were only required to supply *course learning objectives* (learning goals), not course learning outcomes.
- c. **Action Steps for Course Learning Objectives and Course Learning Outcomes**

- i. As of Fall 2022, both course learning objectives and outcomes are required whenever a course proposal or modification is processed through Curriculog.
- ii. A comprehensive review of courses in all programs (majors, minors, and certificate programs) will begin in Fall 2023 to ensure all courses include course learning objectives and course learning outcomes.
- iii. [The Wright State University Guide to Accreditation and Assessment](#) was published in November 2022, providing faculty and administration with best practices and instructions on assessment and accreditation practices for future use in writing course learning objectives and course learning outcomes.
- iv. Updated instructions have been created, issued, and included in Curriculog to guide course proposals and modifications, including objectives and outcomes. **View [Instructions in Curriculog for writing and publishing program learning objectives and outcomes \(PNG\)](#)**
- v. As mentioned in conjunction with action steps for program assessment (7.e.v., pg. 11), professional development sessions for institutional administrators, including program directors, department chairs, associate deans, and deans, to provide reskilling and upskilling in Curriculog administration, assessment procedures, and accreditation requirements, thereby improving our processes and ensuring improved compliance with HLC and other accrediting agencies criteria will be held in Summer 2023. Thereafter, administrators will assist with reskilling and upskilling faculty in these areas.
- vi. Professional development sessions to provide reskilling and upskilling for faculty, staff, curriculum committees, originators, and others responsible for course proposal and modification reviews will be held in Fall 2023.
- vii. As with program objectives and outcomes, a number of deficiencies in course objectives and outcomes were identified. However, in collaboration with faculty, staff, and administration, we have begun to work diligently towards full compliance thanks to the efforts of our Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and our Graduate Curriculum Committee.
- viii. Finally, to ensure reliable standardization of our Curriculog process, the Registrar's office and the Office of the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs have created an instructional guide to assist originators in submitting proper proposals for new courses, modifications, deactivations, and terminations. This guide can be found on the Curriculum Resources webpage. **View [Curriculum Resources](#)**

## 9. Additional Information:

- a. Wright State University's program approval procedures outlined in Curriculog provide information on who reviews, approves, or rejects graduate and undergraduate curriculum and program proposals. Evidence can now be viewed on the Graduate Program Proposal Process webpage. **View [Graduate Program Proposal Process](#)**

- b. Wright State University program learning goals are displayed in the Catalog. As noted previously, course catalog revision is pending to address inconsistencies and articulate learning objectives and outcomes for every program.
- c. As stated previously, all academic units have been informed that course learning objectives, course learning outcomes, program learning objectives, and program learning outcomes are required from this point forward. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) and Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) have begun to address missing objectives and outcomes, and subsequent communication with program administrators has also led to the recent writing and publication of missing learning objectives and outcomes. **View evidence of Curriculog work in progress: [Curriculog Objectives and Outcomes Correspondence I \(PDF\)](#) and [Curriculog Objectives and Outcomes Correspondence II \(PDF\)](#)**
- d. The university requires all new degree, minor, and certificate programs to develop program learning objectives and outcomes consistent with the Ohio Department of Higher Education's process for Academic Program Approval and the university's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and Graduate Curriculum Committee Program Approval Procedures. Modifications to all programs require updates to program learning objectives and program learning outcomes, which must be submitted for review by the department, college, and university faculty through the university's Curriculog Curriculum Management System. **View a blank proposal form for new programs and program modifications from Curriculog and an [Example of a Completed Proposal \(PDF\)](#).**
- e. Following the hiring of a permanent Provost in summer 2022, a new Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer were hired, dividing the former Vice Provost's duties into two new positions. Each officer's job descriptions and duties are available: [Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Job Description](#) and [Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer](#).

**View [Provost](#) | [Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Job Description \(PDF\)](#) | [Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer](#) | [Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer Job Description \(PDF\)](#)**

- i. The Vice Provost for Academic Affairs is responsible for initial curricular reviews, approvals for next steps, rejection/denials, recommended revisions, and reporting further to the Provost and the Board of Trustees, who hold executive responsibility for final review and approval in partnership with the President. The Registrar holds functional responsibility for adding or deleting courses to the Catalog. Wright State University utilizes the Curriculog System to advance proposals logistically. The process for new course proposals, modifications, and deletions follows a system of consideration outlined by Policy 4280 and managed within Curriculog.

**View [University Policy 4280: Course Addition, Modification, and Deletion Policy](#) | [Curriculog Review Example I \(PDF\)](#) | [Curriculog Review Example II \(PDF\)](#) | [Curriculog Objectives and Outcomes Correspondence III \(PNG\)](#) | [Curriculog Objectives and Outcomes Correspondence IV \(PNG\)](#) | [Curriculog Objectives and Outcomes Correspondence V \(PNG\)](#)**

- ii. The Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer also assists with curricular reviews in association with assessment procedures and reviewing student learning objectives, student learning outcomes, program learning objectives, program learning outcomes, and comprehensive Academic Program Review, among other duties. This process is also documented in Curriculog. Evidence can be found at the following links

View [Curriculog Review Example III \(PNG\)](#) | [Curriculog Review Example IV \(PNG\)](#) | [Curriculog Review Example V \(PNG\)](#) | [Curriculog Review Example VI \(PNG\)](#) | [Curriculog Review Example VII \(PNG\)](#)

10. To review, we have identified and are diligently working toward many areas for improvement, including:

- Assessment
  - Annual Assessment
  - Academic Program Review
  - Core Assessment
- Curriculum design
- Instructional design
- Program design
- Catalog accuracy
- Professional development
- Adherence to accrediting criteria
- Improvement of the Wright State University student learning experience

11. Given the increased administrative stability we have achieved, combined with improved faculty and staff support, Wright State University is on track to move beyond the issues we've faced to achieve full compliance with HLC expectations and establish a culture of continuous improvement of the student learning experience.

## A2. Statement of Focus:

HLC noted other components associated with Criterion 4.B in the 2020 mid-cycle review. These are addressed in the following statements of evidence.

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

4.B. The institution engages in ongoing Assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

## B2. Statements of Evidence (check one below):

- Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.



- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

Evidence:

**This section addresses specific concerns raised in the HLC Response dated 8/2020 regarding HLC Criterion 4.B. Italics indicate direct quotations from the HLC Response or the HLC Criteria for Accreditation.**

*4.B.1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and co-curricular offerings.*

1. The Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer heads the Assurance of Learning Committee and the Co-Curricular Committee. These committees formerly met once per semester, but they are now meeting monthly to oversee annual assessment activities and comprehensive Academic Program Review. These committees will continue their frequent meetings in subsequent semesters. The Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer proposed consolidating the two committees to promote cohesiveness, consistency, and accomplishment. The proposal for uniting the committees, evidence of current activities, meeting minutes, records, rosters, and meeting schedules is available. **View [Proposal for uniting the Assurance of Learning Committee and the Co-Curricular Committee \(PDF\)](#)**
2. The Academic Program Review page formerly indicated that all plans were located on a SharePoint site inaccessible to previous reviewers. These files are now available for review on the Assessment webpage in the Accreditation and Assessment section of the Office of the Provost website, which now serves as our repository for data and information that will provide continuous communication with constituents and stakeholders. **View [Academic Program Review](#)**
3. *A Student Affairs example was provided, which indicated stated learning goals but did not explain the process used to assess these learning goals. Similarly, the Administrative Program Effectiveness Review provided a list of administrative reports that the reviewers were unable to view.*
  - a. All academic and administrative departments are periodically required to refine/update their goals for student learning and plans for assessing those goals.
  - b. Learning goals and assessment findings for academic programs are reported annually (annual assessment) and are thoroughly reviewed in the comprehensive Academic Program Review process occurring every five years (2014-2015 and 2019- 2020). Evidence can be found in the Assessment section of the Office of the Provost website. **View [Assessment](#)**
4. *Overall, there is limited evidence to demonstrate processes used to assess student learning goals. It is important to provide a narrative and additional examples of how assessment plans and methods align with expectations and good practices. It is important to provide a narrative and additional examples of how assessment plans and methods align with expectations and good [practice].*
  - a. At Wright State University, we conduct assessment of student learning, learning goals, and outcomes. We also review assessment plans. Some feedback has been communicated to faculty and staff in connection with co-curricular efforts, although greater clarification is needed to ensure that data, feedback, and information are subsequently employed to improve student learning.

- b. The assessment plans, systems, and methodology used to align our efforts with expectations of good practice require increased cohesion, consistency, effectiveness, and efficiency so that they are utilized centrally and reliably to improve the student learning experience.
  - c. Wright State University is making good progress in these areas. We are reviewing our performance to redesign our assessment efforts, although these efforts are still undergoing development. Gaps continue to be discovered and addressed. As such, our investigation, planning, and redesign processes are ongoing as we identify, test, evaluate, and adopt or reject actions after testing and evaluation. All present and successful actions will be reaffirmed by our 2026 reaffirmation visit, at which time we will have a new assessment system and reliable evidence. We will strengthen our efforts to utilize data to improve student learning, backed with documentation testifying to our success and supporting our arguments.
5. *The Wright State Core has processes for faculty review and evaluation of outcomes. An example report, including methods and results, would have provided additional evidence of how the Core is assessed. The evidence provided was [an] overview report for a faculty senate meeting. [. . .] The Wright State Core results are also collected and shared. An example report was not provided in the assurance argument. It is not clear how these assessment results are used other than possibly removing a course.*
- a. Wright State University Core Assessment operates in a system that includes the following actions and procedures.
    - i. As stated previously (and like many other institutions), Wright State University formerly used the words “objectives” and “outcomes” interchangeably. Furthermore, our Curriculog system required course proposals to include only student learning objectives, not outcomes. In addition, many student learning objectives were written as student learning outcomes and vice-versa, which caused some functional difficulties.
    - ii. HLC criterion 4.B.3 states, *The institution’s processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.*

Recognizing and responding to this criterion, we have re-calibrated our efforts as follows:

1. We have defined student learning **objectives** as something students **will** learn (future learning), describing “goals” for the learning that is about to occur in a course.
2. Student learning **outcomes** describe what a student **can do** or **knows** as the **result** of their learning experience in a course or program.
3. If a statement uses the word “will,” it *generally* refers to an objective.
4. If a statement uses the word “can” (can do) or describes what a student “knows,” it *generally* refers to an outcome.
5. Bloom’s action verbs are commonly employed in both objectives and outcomes. For our purposes, Bloom’s action verbs associated with the word “**will**” (to indicate future learning) state a student learning **objective**. Consequently, learning outcome statements omit the word “will” to provide differentiation from objectives.

- iii. As stated previously, these operational standards are outlined in a new governing document titled [Wright State University Guide to Accreditation and Assessment](#), which was written to align our course learning objectives and outcomes, program learning objectives and outcomes, and assessment efforts in support of HLC recommendations, requirements, and standards.
6. *Without additional examples (accredited/non-accredited undergraduate, general education, graduate programs, and co-curricular programs), there is a lack of evidence indicating ongoing, systematic assessment processes. It is recommended that the institution build upon their commitment to Assessment by demonstrating the various ways student achievement is assessed. It is also important to demonstrate the criteria or standards used in assessment processes.*
- a. In response to identified deficiencies in Wright State University’s systematic assessment processes for accredited, non-accredited, undergraduate, general education, graduate programs, and co-curricular programs, we are engaged in identifying comprehensive improvement opportunities and conducting research to examine, review, propose, and ultimately redesign all assessment efforts.
  - b. We will launch a new comprehensive institutional assessment prototype in Fall 2023, which will operate while simultaneously undergoing review for further improvements to ensure sustainability. This process will include internal and external stakeholders and utilize the methodologies of action research, design thinking, and systems thinking, all of which will be aided by the purchase and implementation of new Watermark platforms for assessment. Although we are in the initial stages of these efforts, we are highly optimistic that this approach will successfully demonstrate the various ways student achievement is assessed.

#### ***4.B.2 The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.***

7. *There was no indication the institution uses standardized assessments, such as NSSE, to make student learning improvements.*
- a. Wright State University previously participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2017 and 2019. Wright State University’s two campuses (Dayton and Lake) participated in NSSE during Spring 2021 and the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) data in 2022. The implementation of NSSE and SSI surveys are alternated annually.
- View [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\) 2017 and 2019](#) | [BBCSSE Institutional Report 2017](#) | [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\) 2021](#) | [Student Satisfaction Inventory \(SSI\)](#)**
- b. The Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer has recommended future participation in surveys offered by Indiana University, Bloomington, as follows, subject to official enrollment and data provisioning.
    - i. BCSSE: Summer 2023, 2024, 2025
    - ii. CUTE: Fall 2023, 2024, and 2025
    - iii. FSSE: Spring of 2024 and 2025
    - iv. NSSE: Spring of 2024 and 2025

8. *It is recommended that the institution build upon their commitment to Assessment by documenting evidence of continuous improvement based on results and that continuous improvement efforts involve stakeholders at all levels.*
- a. Wright State University has conducted assessment and gathered data. We will now take the next step in fully demonstrating with evidence that we consistently use our assessment data to fuel continuous improvement efforts involving stakeholders at all levels.
  - b. Comprehensive and system-wide assessment is a powerful strategic imperative we've embraced in earnest, beginning with restructuring in Academic Affairs as of August 2022. Responsibilities associated with assessment and accreditation are undergoing thorough consideration and examination to create and implement sustainable processes.
  - c. With the addition of the new Watermark technology platforms, plus improved planning, research, and professional development, we will implement our redesigned assessment processes in AY 2023/2024, accompanied by ongoing action research. By our reaffirmation visit in 2026, we will have operated three assessment cycles and continuously reviewed our processes and results to improve and operate assessment for the benefit of stakeholders at all levels.

*4.B.3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.*

9. *There is a lack of evidence demonstrating substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.*
- a. Faculty participate in assessment activities through committee service in every college (sometimes through the curriculum committee and sometimes the assessment activities).
  - b. Submission of the 2020 Academic Program Review involved faculty and staff with approval required at different levels: faculty members, a representative from Academic Affairs, program chair(s), department chair(s), college committee(s) including one or more of the Graduate Program or Curriculum Committee, Undergraduate Program or Curriculum Committee, dean(s), the Provost, and the President.
  - c. Annual assessment of the Core is driven by shared governance, as explained in the Charge of the Core Oversight Committee. **View [Core Oversight Committee](#)**
    - i. Committee charge: The Committee shall ensure the integrity of the Wright State Core and oversee all assessment activities related to the Wright State Core and shall report to the Faculty Senate at least once per year. The Committee shall have the responsibility for the following:
      1. Taking part in regular assessment of all courses within the Wright State Core, including Wright Core courses tagged with Integrated Writing, Multicultural Competence, and Service Learning attributes to ensure the learning goals and objectives associated with the course attributes are satisfied.
      2. Recommending modifications to courses with the General Education, Integrated Writing, Multicultural Competence, or Service Learning attributes that fail to

measure learning goals and objectives associated with the course's attribute(s) or removal of the course's attributes to the UCC, UAPC, or the Faculty Senate itself as appropriate.

3. Communicating regularly with the University Assurance of Learning Committee.

- ii. Membership: One (1) faculty representative from each degree-granting undergraduate college, including the Lake Campus. Colleges may name an alternate faculty representative who has voting privileges when the regular member is absent. The Program Director or designated faculty representative associated with any Faculty Senate-approved course attribute, the University Provost or designee, the CTL Faculty Director or faculty-ranked designee, and one (1) undergraduate student representative (selected by Student Government) will serve as ex-officio, non-voting members. Past chairs of UCRC may be asked to represent the Faculty Senate on the University Assurance of Learning Committee. **View the official roster on the [Assurance of Learning Committee webpage](#).**

10. *Additional evidence is needed on professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to learn about Assessment best practices. It is unknown what guidance or expectations ensure that processes and methodologies are used to reflect good assessment practices.*

- a. In partnership with the Center for Faculty Excellence, the Vice Provost of Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer and a Fellow from the Center for Faculty Excellence collaborated to create a series of professional development resources available on the Center for Faculty Excellence website. Each resource includes:
  - i. PowerPoint Slide Deck
  - ii. Lecture Script
  - iii. Lesson Plans

**View [Center for Faculty Excellence Professional Development Resources](#)**

- b. Resources created to date include the following:
  - i. Student Learning Objectives (how to create and write)
  - ii. Student Learning Outcomes (how to create and write)
  - iii. Program Learning Objectives (how to create and write)
  - iv. Program Learning Outcomes (how to create and write)
  - v. The Difference Between Student Learning Objectives, Program Learning Objectives, and why both are necessary
  - vi. The Difference Between Student Learning Outcomes, Program Learning Outcomes, and why both are necessary
  - vii. Assessment 101
- c. These resources will be utilized regularly for the following purposes:
  - i. Training department chairs who will train faculty and staff
  - ii. Self-guided professional development resources housed on the Center for Faculty Excellence Website
  - iii. Professional development seminars and webinars for faculty and staff in academic units
  - iv. Professional development for members of the following committees:
    - 1. Academic Affairs Committee

2. Provost & Deans Committee
  3. Co-Curricular associated personnel
  4. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
  5. Graduate Curriculum Committee
  6. Others, as deemed necessary
- d. In addition to these resources and professional development opportunities, the following activities were planned and executed before the end of Fall 2022:
- i. Center for Faculty Excellence - Course Design Institute: Professional development for faculty in
    1. Objectives and outcomes
    2. Who are our students?
    3. Aligning your assessments
    4. Creating assessments
    5. Adding writing to your course
    6. Creating a course schedule and map
    7. Lesson planning
    8. Collaborative learning
    9. Problem-based & project-based Learning
    10. Communication with students
    11. Effective feedback
    12. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
    13. Writing a student-centered syllabus
    14. Creating a culture of care

**View [Course Design Institute](#)**

- ii. EAB Professional Development: Leadership Strategies to Reduce DFW Rates and The Course Completion Playbook Presentation (PDF) delivered to:
  1. Provost
  2. Vice Provosts
  3. Deans
  4. Associate Deans
  5. Chairs

View [EAB Professional Development: Leadership Strategies to Reduce DFW Rates](#) and [The Course Completion Playbook Presentation \(PDF\)](#)

- iii. A schedule of additional professional development activities offered in Fall 2022 included, but was not limited, to the following:
  1. October 7, 2022: Training was held for associate deans and department chairs on differentiating between Student Learning Objectives, Student Learning Outcomes, and how to write effective Student Learning Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes. This training had two main goals.
    - a. First, the persons responsible for reviewing curricular (and program) proposals received the training to ensure that Student Learning Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes are clear, effective, aid

student learning, and facilitate continuous and cohesive assessment efforts, and continuous improvement, which, although it never completely closes the loop, restarts the action assessment process, similar to action research.

- b. Second, by training chairs and associate deans, who are both faculty and staff, we encourage continuous development as they subsequently train the faculty with whom they work."

**[View Student Learning Outcomes vs Student Learning Objectives for Curriculum Training](#)**

2. October 12, 2022: deans and department chairs received training in and refamiliarization with the Assessment app used at Wright State University since AY 2019-2020. These individuals collect and report assessment data and write assessment narratives. Training included data reporting and review, providing feedback to programs and departments, and generating evidence for reporting purposes. **[View Annual Assessment App Training](#)**
3. December 9, 2022: Faculty were invited to attend the Course Design Institute mentioned earlier, which will be repeated on Tuesday, April 25, 2023. The Course Design Institute will be offered every academic year in perpetuity. **[View Course Design Institute](#)**
4. Finally, the Vice President for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer wrote, distributed, and published the **[Wright State University Guide to Accreditation and Assessment](#)**, which fully instructs faculty about assessment best practices.

**Summation of Response to Criterion 4.B:**

The reorganization of Academic Affairs, including a new Provost, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer, has created a cohesive and high-functioning team. Since August 2022, we have achieved marked institutional progress toward addressing HLC's expressed concerns. Nevertheless, we realize much must still be done, especially with using assessment data to improve student learning. Wright State University's path over the past five years has been challenging, but we are emerging with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to successfully meeting HLC Criteria for Accreditation.

**4.B. Action Steps**

1. Academic Program Review
  - a. Redesigning a new 4-year rotation for Academic Program Review in which two or more units undergo Review each year.
  - b. Creating and implementing a similar schedule for Annual Reports (Co-Curricular Review).
2. Annual Assessment
  - a. Completing Annual Assessments for AY 2019/2020, 2020/2021, and 2021/2022 to the extent that data and evidence exist and posting these reports on our website.
  - b. Replacing the stopgap annual assessment app with integrated products from Watermark will allow us to organize, synthesize, and create reports for all of our assessment needs.



3. Core Assessment (General Education)
  - a. Integrating documents, evidence, and records from the Faculty Senate’s Core Oversight Committee on a SharePoint site and making that site accessible to HLC reviewers.
  - b. Delivering professional development to members of the Core Oversight Committee to help them link assessment to improving student learning.
  - c. Rewriting the Core Oversight Committee charge to include all activities, ensuring actions to improve the student learning experience and production of accompanying documentation and evidence.
  - d. Collaborating with the Core Oversight Committee members and the Vice Provost for Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer to improve its practice in meeting HLC expectations for Core assessment.
4. Program Learning Objectives and Outcomes / University Catalog
  - a. Clarifying that program originators must include both program learning objectives and outcomes in all new program proposals or modifications.
  - b. Offering professional development to assist faculty in writing program learning outcomes and program learning objectives (to be offered yearly).
  - c. Publishing the *Wright State Guide to Accreditation and Assessment*, providing best practices and instructions on assessment and accreditation.
  - d. Providing professional development to reskill and upskill faculty, staff, curriculum committee members, originators, and others responsible for program proposal and modification reviews to facilitate improved processes in Curriculog administration, assessment procedures, and meeting accreditation requirements.
  - e. Updating information about every program and course in Curriculog for AY 2024/2025 to ensure that all curricula and programs are current, accurate, and convey learning objectives and outcomes.
  - f. Creating an instructional guide for originators to facilitate the creation of proper proposals for new programs, program modifications, deactivations, and terminations through a collaboration between the Registrar’s office and the Office of the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs.
5. Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes
  - a. Requiring proposals for new courses and course modification to include course objectives and outcomes when entered into Curriculog.
  - b. Updating Curriculog with instructions to guide course proposals and modifications, including objectives and outcomes.
  - c. Conducting a comprehensive review of all courses in all programs, including majors, minors, and certificate programs, beginning in Fall 2023 to ensure all courses include learning objectives and outcomes.
  - d. Publishing the *Wright State University Guide to Accreditation and Assessment* to help faculty and administrators adhere to best practices in assessment and accreditation, including writing course objectives and outcomes.
  - e. Providing professional development to reskill and upskill faculty, staff, curriculum committee members, originators, and others responsible for course proposal and modification reviews to facilitate improved processes in Curriculog administration, assessment procedures, and meeting accreditation requirements.
  - f. Creating an instructional guide for originators to facilitate the creation of proper proposals for new courses, course modifications, deactivations, and terminations

through a collaboration between the Registrar's office and the Office of the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs.

6. Procedures for Assessment of Student Learning and Achievement of Learning Goals in Academic and Co-Curricular Offerings
  - a. Consolidating the Assurance of Learning Committee and Co-Curricular Committee to promote cohesiveness, consistency, and accomplishment.
  - b. Developing a new website to serve as a repository for assessment data and information that will ensure access by HLC reviewers and other stakeholders.
  - c. Creating and implementing a new assessment system that produces reliable evidence.
  - d. Ensuring that assessment results are used to improve the student learning experience.
  - e. Defining differences between student learning objectives and outcomes, requiring both types of statements for all courses and programs, delivering professional development on writing such statements, and publishing the *Wright State University Accreditation and Assessment Guide* to ensure clarity and facilitate future efforts.
  - f. Continuing to identify deficiencies in systematic assessment and its application to improve the student learning experience and addressing these discoveries through continuous redesign of assessment practices.
  - g. Purchasing the new Watermark products and migrating assessment processes to these products from the stopgap assessment app currently in use.
  - h. Participating in NSSE, BSCCE, CUTE, and FSSE assessments and using the data generated to improve student learning.
  - i. Improving planning and implementation for assessment procedures, including the new Watermark products, new assessment cycle, improved data management practices using the new Academic Affairs website repository, and ongoing professional development.
7. Substantial Participation of Faculty and Other Instructional Staff Members
  - a. Providing ongoing professional development on topics related to assessment and accreditation, such as the Course Design Institute, reducing DFW Rates, writing course and program student learning objectives and outcomes, and engaging in good practices for applying assessment results to improving the student learning experience.
  - b. Clarifying expectations and procedures for assessment and accreditation.
  - c. Continuing to adhere to shared governance through the Faculty Senate's Core Oversight Committee and participation on university-level committees such as the Assurance of Learning Committee.

Wright State University has worked diligently to address HLC's expressed concerns and implement the action steps necessary to bring us into full compliance with HLC's Criteria for Accreditation. Although we know our task will require sustained effort, we have a firm plan in place and are confident that with the support of our distinguished and hardworking faculty, staff, and administrative team, we will achieve success for the benefit of our students, alumni, community, and region.

In the next section, we will address HLC's concerns regarding Criterion 5 relating to Wright State University's strategic planning process, reporting on the positive progress we've made since HLC noted that the university did not have an active strategic plan after 2018.

### A3. Statement of Focus:

HLC stated that the institution must provide evidence that a new Strategic Plan has been completed, approved, and is being implemented.

The Bridge Strategic Plan 2023-2025 was approved by the Wright State University Board of Directors on December 9, 2022, and can be viewed at the [Strategic Plan 2023-2025 website](#).

#### Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

### B3. Statements of Evidence (check one below):

- Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

#### Evidence:

This section focuses on the general 5.C. Criterion: *The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement* and the sub-criterion 5.C.3: *The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups*. We address the accreditation concerns stated in the HLC Response dated 8/2020 regarding the completion, approval, and implementation of a strategic plan, and we explain what Wright State University has been using to guide decisions in the absence of a formal strategic plan.

*Evidence that Wright State University engages in a planning process that encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups is incomplete. Evidence was provided in the self-study that Wright State University had been engaging in a broad-based strategic planning process until mid-October of 2018, this plan was never brought to completion. Wright State University's Strategic Planning website still has prospective language: "Wright State University's strategic planning process WILL guide the university ..." [emphasis added], and the most recent posting to this website is dated 31 October 2018. Similarly, Wright State University's "Strategic Planning Documents and Resources" website has no entries more recent than a Draft Strategy Document dated 18 October 2018. There is ample evidence that up until that date, Wright State University's planning process was broad and inclusive of internal and external constituents. Given the lack of evidence that this process came to fruition, this level of shared governance and consultation unfortunately had no result. The institution states in its self-study that this delay was due to the change in leadership. The delay has lasted nearly two years and there is no evidence at this time of a plan to re-start the strategic planning process during Fall 2020.*

For the Focused Visit, the university was asked to provide evidence and analysis of three topics:

- 1. Evidence that a strategic planning process has been restarted, or that the draft strategic plan has been implemented*
- 2. Evidence and analysis of what Wright State University has been using to guide its decision making in the absence of a formal strategic plan*
- 3. Evidence of a schedule for the completion of a strategic planning process moving forward*

*HLC Request 1: Evidence that a strategic planning process has been restarted, or that the draft strategic plan has been implemented*

1. The Wright State University Board of Trustees approved the Bridge Strategic Plan 2023-2025 on December 8, 2022. Here is the timeline of events leading up to the Bridge Strategic Plan:
  - a. The Wright Path to 2025 strategic plan referenced in the 2020 Mid Cycle Review stalled due to events including the faculty strike in January-February 2019; changes in leadership at the President, Provost, and several Dean levels; and disruptions resulting in remote and combined remote/face-to-face operations due to COVID from March 2020 until the end of the 2021 academic year.
  - b. Internal and external constituents were engaged in developing the Bridge Strategic Plan 2023-2025, which started with a kickoff by President Susan Edwards on August 19, 2022.
  - c. The Bridge Strategic Plan was developed in collaboration with members of the six working groups including faculty, staff, students, and board members focusing on the following objectives: 1. Student success – transformational student experience (subgroup on student support services and a subgroup on academic programs); 2. Advancing knowledge through research, entrepreneurship, and creative endeavors; 3. Forging and sustaining strong, collaborative relationships; 4. Inclusive excellence; and 5. Resource management and sustainable operating budget.
  - d. The priorities and initiatives of the five Objectives of the Bridge Strategic Pan 2023-2025 reflect similar priorities and initiatives contained in the previous “Wright Path to 2025” strategic plan Objectives: 1) Collaborative delivery of services; 2) Research, innovation, and entrepreneurship; 3) Strategic relationships and partnerships; 4) Student life and engagement; 5) Teaching, learning, and programming; and 6) Strategic foundations.
  - e. Two-hour listening sessions were held for each of the six groups on September 30 and October 7, 2022. Attendance at the live video sessions ranged from 30-50, including students.
  - f. The working groups revised their plans based on feedback from the listening sessions. A draft strategic plan was posted to the Strategic Plan website for public comment on November 14, 2022.

- g. The final Bridge Strategic Plan was presented to the Board of Trustees on December 8, 2022, and approved unanimously.

View [Strategic Plan 2023–2025](#) | [Working Group Members](#) | [Listening Sessions](#)

*HLC Request 3. Evidence of a schedule for the completion of a strategic planning process moving forward.*

## 2. Timeline for the strategic planning process

- a. The Bridge Strategic Plan is a set of objectives and initiatives to be implemented from January 2023 through the end of the 2024-2025 academic year, which was the scheduled end of the previous Wright Path to 2025 plan.
- b. The process for analyzing the strategies and initiatives in the Bridge Plan have been developed by the six working groups.
- c. Progress on each Objective will be reported to the Board of Trustees at its meetings in April and December 2023 and to the Faculty Senate at their April and December 2023 meetings and regularly updated on the Strategic Plan web page.
- d. Progress reports for the Bridge Plan will continue to be shared with the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees during Spring 2024 and Fall 2024.
- e. By the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, a committee will be formed to begin work on the next 5-year strategic plan (2025-2030), including students, faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustee members, community employers, and other community constituents. This committee will recruit persons involved in the Bridge Strategic Plan.
- f. The tentative timeline for the 2025-2030 strategic planning is as follows.
  - 1) A planning committee will be formed by April 2024.
  - 2) Working groups will develop goals, objectives, student success outcomes, and metrics to present to the Board of Trustees by their February 2025 meeting. Working groups will share their draft plans with the campus community through listening sessions and posting materials to a public strategic planning website.
  - 3) The 2025-2030 strategic plan with metrics and a timeline for reporting progress will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval at their April 2025 meeting.

## 3. Disclosures about disruptions to the Strategic Planning Process

- a. Even though the university experienced many challenges while the strategic planning process was stalled, we continued to use systematic planning when making decisions. The primary limitation of not having a Strategic Plan involving input from all constituents was that some constituents felt excluded from decision-making, especially budgetary decisions.

- b. Provost [Susan Edwards](#) became the 8th President of Wright State University on January 1, 2020. As Provost and as President, she emphasized that the path to student success is the 3 Rs: Recruitment, Retention, and Relationships. Although building and increasing these three areas was not the official strategic plan, the 3 Rs were featured in reports given by the President to the faculty senate and Board of Trustees. Examples can be found at the following links:
- i. Slide presentation from President Edwards' first Faculty Senate meeting in January, 2020 and her presentation at the April 25, 2022, Faculty Senate meeting. **View [Slide Presentation from Faculty Senate meeting in January 2020 \(PPTX\)](#) and [April 25, 2022, Faculty Senate meeting \(PPTX\)](#)**
  - ii. Provost's Office reports to the Faculty Senate using the 3Rs relating to student retention implications of increasing faculty submission of participation rosters and midterm grades at the November 2022 meeting. **View [November 2022 Faculty Senate meeting](#)**
  - iii. Enrollment update reports using the 3Rs provided at every Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees meeting since January 2020. For example, see the enrollment update report on recruitment at the January 2023 meeting. **View [January 2023 Faculty Senate meeting \(PPTX\)](#)**
  - iv. President and Provost Reports to the Board of Trustees, such as the combined report given at the December 9, 2022, meeting, slides 1-20. **View [December 9, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting \(PDF\)](#)**
- c. Disruptions to the strategic planning process were described above. Wright State University experienced significant challenges to its resource sustainability resulting from a continuous decrease in enrollment. In conjunction with faculty input, a retrenchment plan was developed in Fall 2021 following the procedures outlined in Articles T17 and N17 in the Collective Bargaining Agreement with AAUP-WSU. **View [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)**
- d. The Board of Trustees renewed President Edwards' contract through 2026 at the meeting on May 21, 2021, and passed A Resolution to Adopt Performance Goals for President Edwards in Academic Year 2021-2022 with specific goals relating to the University's mission and vision, including the need to develop metrics for each of these goals and build these goals into the bridge strategic plan:
- 1) Model an approach to customer service that puts students first
  - 2) Provide a comprehensive enrollment management plan
  - 3) Increase employer engagement in meeting students' academic and instructional needs
  - 4) Increase relationships with Wright Patterson Air Force Base
  - 5) Maintain financial strength through appropriately balanced budgets
  - 6) Continue to be a champion for Diversity and Inclusion.
- View [Resolution to Adopt Performance Goals for President Edwards in Academic Year 2021-2022 \(PDF\)](#)**
- e. The 2022-2023 academic year began with revitalized energy among students, staff, faculty, and administration. For one, face-to-face operations are back for all offices, and most classes are face-to-face. Newly hired Provost Thompson has implemented many student success curriculum policies with the support of new Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Hozien and Vice Provost for

Assessment and Chief Accreditation Officer Mackh. The Faculty Senate, student government, and the Offices of the Provost and President are working together to implement those initiatives.

- f. Negotiation for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement began on January 26, 2023. The president of the Wright State University chapter of AAUP addressed the Board of Trustees at its December 2022 meeting with words welcoming a positive working relationship between faculty and the Board of Trustees.

#### 4. Action Steps for implementing the strategic plan

- a. As previously stated, the Bridge Strategic Plan 2023-2025 was developed through shared input from students, faculty, staff, administration, and the Board of Trustees. A dashboard for this plan will be created to report the progress of the initiatives under each of the five overall objectives and made available to the campus community.
- b. The Bridge Strategic Plan incorporated the six goals outlined in the Board of Trustees resolution to extend President Susan Edwards' contract through 2027. Additionally, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Success, Susan Schauer, has submitted a comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan. This plan is attached with the HLC report due to trade secrets. An example of increasing relationships with Wright Patterson Air Force Base is the recent partnership to provide Air Force researchers access to the Neuroscience Engineering Collaboration Building, which houses the region's only advanced magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner dedicated exclusively to research. **View Wright State University Newsroom: [Wright State, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base announce enhanced collaborative working relationship](#)**
- c. Additionally, work toward the next strategic plan will occur simultaneously during the review of progress on the Bridge Plan. The timeline for review of the Bridge Plan will also include the timeline for including external and internal constituents in developing a five-year strategic plan for 2025-2030.
- d. Wright State University's new Provost, Dr. Amy Thompson, has built a solid rapport with a team that includes the Academic Deans and Vice Provosts for Academic Affairs, Assessment and Accreditation, Faculty Affairs, Research and Innovation, Lake Campus, and Student Success. Dr. Thompson's curricular initiatives have included:
  - 1) Providing faculty with data on DFW rates in their courses and assistance on how to decrease those rates.
  - 2) Requiring departments and colleges to either deactivate low enrolled classes and programs or provide an argument for why such courses or programs should remain.
  - 3) Increasing compliance on faculty reporting 14-day participation rosters.
  - 4) Instituting mid-term grade reporting
  - 5) Issuing a weekly Provost's newsletter promoting student and faculty success, college activities, student success resources available on campus, and mental health resources available to students.
  - 6) Promoting college/school-wide budget committees to review budgets that support curricular and operating needs of the college/school.
  - 7) Completing a two-year Provost Office Strategic plan with goals, metrics, and benchmarks; colleges/schools are also preparing their strategic plans.



- e. After multiple changes in the Enrollment Management Office, Ms. Susan Schauer was hired as Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Success in 2022. She provides regular enrollment updates at Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees meetings, such as this Enrollment Update presentation at the September 2022 Board of Trustees meeting. [View Enrollment Update Presentation at September 2022 Board of Trustees meeting \(PDF\)](#)

*HLC Request 2: Evidence and analysis of what Wright State University has been using to guide its decision-making in the absence of a formal strategic plan.*

Also, from the IAC letter dated October 29, 2022:

*The institution needs to provide evidence that it develops and documents performance in its operations. The institution should provide evidence that it learns from its experience and applies that learning to improve institutional effectiveness, capabilities and sustainability in areas throughout the university.*

It is noted here that the above comments related to Core Component 5.D., and that the HLC has since revised the Criteria for Accreditation that went into effect on September 1, 2020. As stated in the October 29, 2022, IAC letter, “Institutional reports submitted after September 1, 2020, that reference the Criteria should be written to the revised version.”

5. The draft strategic plan created by the previous administration was being followed even though it had not been formalized. A formal strategic plan was in place upon Board approval of the Bridge Plan 2023-2025 in December 2022. The Faculty Senate approved the revised Mission and Vision statements in February 2022: “We empower all students to excel in their lives and chosen careers through integrated learning, research, innovation, and experience,” and “To be a diverse, inclusive university that positively transforms the educational, economic, and social fabric of the communities we serve.”

Examples of analysis and planning used to make decisions during the period when the Wright Path to 2025 was not implemented (2018) to the current implementation of the Bridge Strategic Plan (2022) include:

- a. **Academic Program Review:** Planning related to program assessment, program review, and Core (General Education) assessment was previously addressed in A1/B1 and A2/B2.
- b. **Campus Completion Plans:** The Wright State University Division of Student Success prepares a Campus Completion Plan every two years. Using the 2022 plan as an example, it includes the Board of Trustees' resolution to approve the report, executive summary, connection to the University mission, student profile, barriers to persistence and completion, progress towards goals, completion goals, strategies for 2022-2024, and workforce development priorities. The plans from 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022 are available on the Campus Completion Plan webpage, on the Wright State University website and are included in the Evidence Files. [View Division of Student Success and Campus Completion Plan](#)

“The completion agenda for the 2022-2024 period includes the following initiatives focused on ten priorities across five key areas: A) curricular redesign, B) academic support, C) student engagement and support, D) advising pathways, and E) career planning” ([View 2022-2024 Campus Completion Plan](#), p. 3). The ten priorities and measurable goals are described in the plan. These initiatives prioritized reducing two barriers to retention:

- 1) “over half of new students enrolling at Wright State University did not meet the State of Ohio remediation-free standards” (p. 6)

2) “an equity gap in the retention on underrepresented minorities” (p. 7).

One student success strategy that has been effective is providing gateway, co-requisite remediation English and math courses, which target remediation and university learning outcomes in the same semester. “Completion of gateway English and math in the first year of enrollment is up 7% and 4% respectively since implementing co-requisite remediation strategy; underrepresented minorities experienced similar gains.

Although overall enrollment is down, retention is trending up slightly with our most recent cohort (currently 66%, a slight increase from 65% last Fall, and up from 62% the previous Fall). Four- and six-year graduation rates increase steadily. The six-year graduation rate is 44%, up from 40% the previous year. The four-year graduation rate is 23%, up from 19% from the previous year” (p. 8).

As stated in the Board resolution approved on June 16, 2022, “President Edwards has established a goal of 75% for Fall-to-Fall first-year student retention rate” (p. 2), up from the 66% in 2021. The Board resolution also references the University Alliance for Recruitment, Retention, and Completion (UUARC) and the Undergraduate Student Success committees approving the 2022-2024 Completion plan initiatives. [View Board of Trustees Approval of the 2022–2024 Campus Completion Plan Resolution \(PDF\)](#)

- c. **Academic Reorganization.** The following college reorganizations have been implemented since 2020 to improve student success. Faculty and community constituents were actively involved in these reorganizations.
- i. After years of collaborative planning, Wright State University launched the College of Health, Education, and Human Services (CHEH) in Fall 2021, dedicated to preparing students for in-demand careers in health care, education, and human services. CHEH merged undergraduate and graduate programs that had previously been housed separately in the School of Professional Psychology, College of Nursing and Health, College of Education and Human Services, and College of Liberal Arts. The programs moved to the new College are Nursing, Kinesiology and Health, Professional Psychology, Social Work, Human Services, Teacher Education, and Leadership Studies in Education and Organizations. Reorganizing multiple health-related programs in the new college created clear pathways designed to enhance student success, including integrated advising and retention strategies. The reorganization also allowed programs to share resources such as interview lab space for human services and social work students. The Board of Trustees passed a resolution approving the new college on February 19, 2021.  
  
[View College of Health, Education, and Human Services Recommendation for academic reorganization memo, December 16, 2020](#) | [Wright State's College of Health, Education, and Human Services will open next fall](#) | [Board of Trustees College of Health, Education, and Human Services Resolution 21 \(PDF\)](#)
  - ii. At its February 2022 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved a faculty-driven reorganization of the College of Liberal Arts (COLA) that “promotes increased interdisciplinary interaction, research, and shared curriculum.” As a result, COLA’s ten departments were consolidated into three schools: School of Fine and Performing Arts, School of Humanities and Cultural Studies, and School of Social Sciences and International Studies. View the final Report of the COLA Reorganization Committee.

[View Board of Trustees Approval of College of Liberal Arts Reorganization Plan Resolution 22 \(PDF\)](#) | [New school structure will facilitate interdisciplinary learning and teaching in College of Liberal Arts](#) | [Report of the CoLA Reorganization Committee \(PDF\)](#)

- iii. At its December 2022 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved an innovative plan to create the College of Graduate Studies and Honors Programs. The Provost's presentation to the Board on the benefits of this new college is on slides 8-19 of the Board of Trustees President's Report. Merging the two programs creates a pipeline for undergraduate honors students who want to pursue a graduate degree at Wright State.

[View Board of Trustees Approval of the College of Graduate Programs and Honors Studies Reorganization Plan Resolution 23 \(PDF\)](#) | [Board of Trustees President's Report, December 9, 2022 \(PDF\)](#) (provost's presentation on the benefits of this new college is on slides 8-19). | [Wright State creates new College of Graduate Programs and Honors Studies](#)

- d. **Annual Budget Reports.** The Office of Budget, Planning, and Resource Analysis provides an annual Budget Presentation to the Board of Trustees every Spring. The presentations for FY 2019-2023 are open to the public and posted in the [Public Session Archive](#) on the [Board of Trustees](#) website.

The Board of Trustees Financial Governance Policy provides specific financial and non-financial indicators and benchmarks to monitor the university's sustainability of resources in support of its Mission and Vision. The process for determining each indicator and benchmark, as determined by ODHE, HLC, or other financial best practices, is described throughout the policy and Appendices. The table in Appendix E of the policy provides a list of each indicator, the projected target, and the performance of each indicator from 2017-2022. [View Financial Governance Policy](#)

The Appendix E table shows that Wright State University has improved on all benchmarks from 2017 to 2021. The only category for which the target (A2 Stable) has yet to be met is Moody's Credit Implied Index, but this indicator rose from Baa2 Negative in 2017 to Baa1 Stable in 2021. [View Excerpt of Dayton Daily News: Strike deal will help improve WSU finances, independent report claims](#) and [Wright State gets ratings upgrade from Moody's](#)

The overall improvement of financial indicators was highlighted in the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget presentation (slide 17), as was the projection that outstanding debt obligations will continue to decline and reach 0 by 2032 [slide 18]. [View Fiscal Year 2023 Budget presentation \(PDF\) \(slide 17\)](#)

External audits by the Ohio Auditors Office also chronicle Wright State University's financial indicators, enrollment, and other factors impacting the budget. Separate annual audits are conducted for the Wright State Foundation, the NCAA audit for Athletics, and the overall Wright State University audit. [View Ohio Auditor of State Wright State University audits](#)

The Board of Trustees Finance, Audit, Governance, and Compliance Committee (FAGC) reports on revenues, expenses, and comparisons between the budget and actuals during the bi-semester Board of Trustees meetings. The minutes from the December 2022 Board meeting serve as an

example. [View Board of Trustees Finance, Audit, Governance, and Compliance Committee December 8, 2022 meeting minutes \(PDF\)](#)

- e. **Retrenchment.** Every budget plan from 2017 to the present has reflected the challenges caused by decreasing enrollment. Wright State University reached its second highest total enrollment of 19,600 students in the Fall of 2011, the last Fall term under a quarter system before Ohio's requirement that all Ohio public colleges and universities convert to semesters. In contrast, Fall 2022 enrollment was 10,798. [View Wright State home to 19,600 students this fall](#) and [Quick Facts](#)

During Fall 2020, President Edwards charged Provost Leaman to study the continued decrease in enrollment despite efforts to raise transfer student enrollment and increase media outreach. Based on at least four consecutive semesters of decline and using multiple models to predict future enrollment, Provost Leaman recommended that the university explore implementing the retrenchment process outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. President Edwards notified the AAUP on Nov. 12, 2020, of Provost Leaman's report and the intention to begin the retrenchment process. [View November 12, 2020 Letter from President Edwards to AAUP-WSU Executive Committee of Provost Leaman's report and the intention to begin the retrenchment process \(PDF\)](#)

President Edwards addressed questions from members of the Faculty Senate during its December 7, 2020, meeting. She presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Faculty Senate on January 12, 2021, that provided evidence for implementing retrenchment and addressed questions submitted by faculty. The retrenchment committee, which included representatives from the AAUP, was asked to submit recommendations to President Edwards by February 6, 2021. President Edwards submitted recommendations to the Board of Trustees at their meeting on February 19, 2021. [View December 7, 2020 Faculty Senate meeting minutes \(PDF\)](#) and [January 15, 2021 President's Report Special Faculty Senate Meeting \(PDF\)](#)

The Joint Committee on Retrenchment submitted its report on Feb. 8, 2021, requesting that the university *reconsider* using retrenchment and utilize other options, such as a voluntary retirement incentive package. Provost Leaman provided a report to President Edwards on February 9, 2021. "Retrenchment is not our first or preferred tool for addressing this significant and continuing reduction in enrollment. But other tools have not been sufficient. For years, the University has attempted to rely on natural attrition and selective re-hiring when faculty resigned or retired. We attempted to accelerate and amplify the effectiveness of attrition by offering retirement incentives, but those voluntary efforts fell short. As a result, the University must now act through the retrenchment provisions of the CBA". His analysis resulted in the recommendation of the retrenchment of 113 faculty positions across all colleges, except for the Lake campus, which had enrollment increases, the College of Nursing and Health, and the Boonshoft School of Medicine. [View February 8, 2021 Report of the WSU Joint Committee on Retrenchment \(PDF\)](#) and [February 9, 2021 Executive Summary of Report and Recommendation Concerning Faculty Retrenchment from Provost Leaman \(PDF\)](#)

On February 15, 2021, President Edwards sent her recommendations to the Board of Trustees based on her review of the recommendations from the Joint Committee on Retrenchment and the analysis provided by Provost Leaman. In the letter, President Edwards noted that Provost Leaman used multiple models of predicting future enrollments based on the continuous decline in previous years. She also noted the recommendations by the Joint Committee: • Maximizing

University efforts around enrollment and retention • Viewing retrenchment as a dynamic process interacting with and being offset by the results of enrollment and retention successes • Developing incentive programs around voluntary retirement or early exit • Reducing the need and use of adjunct faculty • Prioritizing the filling of all open administrative positions through internal hires whenever possible • Improving community public relations efforts, preventing negative headlines, and maximizing the perception of the institution within the community.

The minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting on February 19, 2021 reflect the discussion and public feedback to the retrenchment recommendations (pp. 23-32). The Board approved the Resolution to Retrench Bargaining Unit Faculty. The date of the presentation was also Interim Provost Leaman's last day, as he accepted a position as Dean of the College of Science at Auburn University at Montgomery Alabama. Dr. Oliver Evans began his role as Interim Provost beginning February 23, 2023. It is important to clarify and report that in the end other options to reduce personnel were exercised. In fact, only one faculty member was retrenched, whereas all other separations were associated with a voluntary retirement incentive package. [View February 15, 2021 Recommendation concerning Faculty Retrenchment from President Edwards \(PDF\)](#) | [February 19, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting minutes \(PDF\)](#) | [Board of Trustees to Retrench Bargaining Unit Faculty Resolution 21](#) | [Oliver Evans named interim provost of Wright State](#)

- f. **Affordability and Efficiency Report.** Wright State University submits an annual Affordability and Efficiency report to the Ohio Department of Higher Education. The Board of Trustees reviews and approves this report each fall. The report template covers the following categories:
- i. Section I: Efficiency and Effectiveness –practices likely to yield significant savings or enhance program offerings through strategic partnerships and information on progress made from such partnerships.
  - ii. Section II: Academic Practices – areas more directly related to instruction, with an emphasis on actions taken to reduce the costs to students of textbooks, including Inclusive Access and Open Education Resources options.
  - iii. Section III: Policy Reforms – responses to suggested policy reforms originating from state initiatives, including transcript withholding and Second Chance Grants.
  - iv. Section IV: Future goals – request for feedback on steps the state can take to support the institution's goals.

The links to the reports from 2014-2022 are provided on the Campus Completion Plan webpage The 2022 report provides examples of Wright State University improving its operations and outcomes. [View Campus Completion Plan](#) and [Campus Completion Plan 2022-2024 \(PDF\)](#)

- i. As an ongoing effort, Wright State continues to develop and market transfer pathways in collaboration with Sinclair, Clark, and Edison Community Colleges in critically high-demand workforce areas, including applied systems industrial engineering, computer science and cybersecurity, public safety, human services, science and math, and teacher education, as well as creating a bachelor's completion pathway from technical to leadership programs in applied business and health sciences areas (p. 6).

- ii. Wright State leverages the pipeline of students with learning in technical and employable skill areas at career-technical and two-year partner institutions where Wright State does not offer programs by re-imagining its Wright Path program to include opportunities for academic research and lab assistantship.
  - iii. Wright State has been working with the Community College of the Air Force to provide bachelor's degree completion (or opportunity) for airmen and women worldwide through AU-ABC (Air University-Associate to Baccalaureate Collaborative).
  - iv. Initiatives to reduce costs for students to attend Wright State are listed on pp. 15-18.
- g. **Enrollment Management Reports.** The Vice President of Enrollment Management and Success reports to the campus community during Faculty Senate meetings, Board of Trustee meetings, and the annual budget presentation. The recruitment update presentation to the Board of Trustees on September 15, 2022, and to the Faculty Senate on September 22, 2022, illustrated that the Fall 2022 enrollment had increased among the following populations compared to Fall 2021:
- 1) Ohio dual high school/higher education program (College Credit Plus) + 5.7%
  - 2) Transfer students + 3.5%
  - 3) First-time enrolling students + 10.5%
  - 4) under-represented minorities + 27.6%
  - 5) Pell recipients + 10.8%
  - 6) First-generation students + 12.5%

View [September 15, 2022 Enrollment Update \(PDF\)](#)

Retention data included Fall to Fall retention rates from 2018-2021 that ranged from 62.2 % (2018) to 65.8% (2020) and six-year graduation rates that ranged from 34% (2010-2011 cohort) to 44% (2013-2014 cohort).

Many initiatives were implemented in AY 2022-2023 to reverse the decreasing enrollment trend and increase the retention and graduation rates. Those include:

- i. Increasing faculty submission of participation rosters by the 14<sup>th</sup> day in Fall 2021 to 85% in Fall 2022.
- ii. Increasing faculty submission of mid-term grades in Fall 2022.
- iii. Coordinated outreach by Student Success advisors through virtual and face-to-face communication as students responded to faculty outreach about absences and mid-term progress.
- iv. Multi-semester registration is being implemented in Spring 2023, whereby students can simultaneously enroll for Fall 2023 and Winter 2024.
- v. Increased advertisement for Open Houses in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023.
- vi. Coordination of communication and access to data between the Enrollment Management Office, Provost, and Deans.



- h. **Remediation reports.** Per Ohio Revised Code, Wright State University must submit a report of the number of students requiring remedial education. This report must be approved by the Board of Trustees. The 2022 University Remediation Report contains information used by the Student Success Center to improve the curricular and support systems for students needing remedial education and describes their impact. **View [2022 University Remediation Report \(PDF\)](#)**
- i. **Low enrollment reports.** Per Ohio's revised code, Wright State University must submit a Low-Enrollment Course and Program and Duplicate Program Report, approved by the Board of Trustees, every five years. Provost Thompson has charged the college deans to use the low enrollment report for curricular decisions, such as deactivating low-enrollment courses and programs or justifying the continuation of the course or program. **View [Low-Enrollment Course and Program and Duplicate Program Report \(PDF\)](#)**
- j. **Provost Thompson's initiatives:** Dr. Amy Thompson was hired in June 2022, and she has built a solid rapport with a team that includes the Academic Deans and Vice Provosts for Academic Affairs, Assessment and Accreditation, Faculty Affairs, Research and Innovation, Lake Campus, and Associate Vice Provost for Student Success. Dr. Thompson's curricular initiatives are highlighted in her weekly Provost Newsletter – Forward Momentum and have included:
  - i. Providing faculty whose courses demonstrate high DFW (Drop, Fail, Withdraw) rates with professional development assistance on decreasing those rates.
  - ii. Requiring departments and colleges to deactivate low-enrolled classes and programs or provide an argument for why such courses or programs should remain.
  - iii. Increasing the 14-day participation rosters.
  - iv. Increasing mid-term grade reporting.
  - v. Publishing a weekly newsletter promoting student and faculty success, college activities, student success resources available on campus, and mental health resources available to students.
  - vi. Promoting college/school-wide budget committees to review budgets that support the curricular and operating needs of the college/school.
  - vii. Completing a two-year Provost Office Strategic plan with goals, metrics, and benchmarks. Colleges/schools are also preparing their strategic plans.

**View [Provost Newsletter: Forward Momentum](#) and [Office of the Provost Draft Strategic Plan \(PDF\)](#)**

## **6. Disclosures about engaging in systematic planning without a formal strategic plan**

- a. President Edwards began promoting a campus-wide focus on three strategic priorities when she became the President at Wright State University on January 1, 2020: Recruitment, Retention, and Relationships. The campus embraced these priorities as evidenced by the widespread use of the “3 Rs” in campus presentations by the President, Board of Trustees, and other offices at the same



time the university was operating without a formal, campus-wide approved Strategic Plan. Other disruptions to campus operations (faculty strike, change in administration, COVID) stalled the strategic planning process in 2018 and thereafter, however these events did not halt President Edwards' initiatives.

- b. Disclosures about disruptions to the assessment of student learning outcomes were described in A1/B1 and A2/B2, with action steps being taken to ensure the assessment of student outcomes to improve student learning. Further actions to link student outcomes assessment with systematic planning and improvement campus-wide are underway. Analysis from the annual Core assessment will guide decisions regarding changes to the Core. For example, the institution is reviewing its current General Education program (Core) to align with new changes to the Ohio Department of Higher Education's General Education program called "Ohio Transfer 36." Another example is college budget committees' use of annual program assessment when making proposed budget changes. **View [General Education program \(Core\)](#)**
- c. We will improve the integration of systematic planning and reporting taking place in separate campus units. The reports described in section 4B provide important information that collectively can improve operations and student success, but because unit reports often seem pertinent only to the unit producing the report, this perception limits the application of their results to decision-making in other units. For example, biennial campus completion reports contain detailed quantitative analysis of the student support initiatives provided to all students, and the remediation report provides data concerning specific curricular approaches for students beginning college at remedial levels in writing or math. Integrated reporting will allow these data to guide curricular decisions made by program directors, chairs, and deans and inform budgetary decisions related to student success initiatives.
- d. Due to the lack of a central website to serve as a document repository, annual reports described above in B3.4.6 are often located on the websites of the units collecting the data for the report. For example, Completion reports are contained on the Student Success website, and Budget reports are on the Budget Office website. Also, reports are often noted and linked in Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees meetings minutes but are not always archived in a central, accessible location. Our improved data reporting processes will address these issues. **View [Faculty Senate](#) and [Board of Trustees](#)**
- e. We have changed some of the university's software to enhance integration of data analysis systems across campus. For example, PowerEB will replace Cognos, and we have contracted with Watermark to integrate the current Watermark products used to assess student success.
- f. Budgetary reports and analysis are contained in the Budget, Planning, and Resource Analysis Office, again separate from program assessment of student outcome reports. For example, required outside audits provide an overview of campus-wide financial decisions that are not always accessed by curricular units. Establishing a central repository for planning reports across units, including the Budget Office, will provide easier access, allowing for integrated assessment and financial decision-making.
- g. The newest Mission statement of February 2022 will be fully integrated into documents and policies implemented throughout the university, including the [Faculty Constitution](#) and [Board of Trustees Financial Governance Policy](#), which presently connect their purpose to the University's previous mission statement. Revisions to both documents were a year-long process occurring at

the same time as revisions were approved for the new mission and vision statements. [View Faculty Constitution](#) and [Financial Governance Policy](#)

7. **Action steps to implement institutional plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.**

- a. Wright State University has not tapped into its reserves since FY 2018.
- b. Faculty and staff voiced concerns about their reduced participation in discussions about the Budget process during the last five years as budget cuts were implemented to address declining enrollment. The following steps are being taken to address these concerns:
  - i. Revisions to the Board of Trustees Financial Governance Policy of April 2022 state that membership on the Finance, Audit, Governance, and Compliance Committee (FAGC) shall consist of a financial professional, a representative of the Faculty Senate, and a representative of the Staff Senate. The FACC reports financial updates stated in the Financial Governance Policy at every Board meeting and works with the Wright State University Office of Budget, Planning, and Resource Analysis to develop the annual fiscal budget. [View Financial Governance Policy](#)
  - ii. The Faculty Senate has two working committees collaborating with the Wright State University Budget Office. The Building and Grounds Committee makes recommendations concerning the utilization of capital funds provided to the institution through the Ohio biennium budget process, among other charges. The Faculty Budget Priorities Committee has arranged to meet with staff from the Budget Office to discuss the annual budget in the Fall and early Spring to provide input while the Budget is being developed, much sooner than the Budget Presentation in June 2023. [View Recent Capital Budget Expenses \(PDF\)](#) and [Recent Building and Grounds Committee Report concerning the Latest Parking Policy \(PDF\)](#)
  - iii. The Budget Office provided the Provost and Deans with program-level financial indicators in January 2023 as the colleges convene budget committees to prepare their budgets with faculty and staff input for FY 2024. The business managers of each college will submit their budget requests to the Budget Office by April 2023. The Budget Office will share preliminary budgets with the Provost and Deans before the Budget presentation to the Board in June.

**Summation of Response to Criterion 5.C:**

The preceding section demonstrates how our institution made decisions in the absence of a formalized strategic plan. Although strategic planning efforts stalled in 2018 due to several factors, including administrative turnover, a faculty strike, COVID-19, and retrenchment, Wright State University has now implemented a Bridge Strategic Plan for 2023-2025, during which time we will undertake formal efforts to write a new strategic plan covering 2025-2030. Although these efforts were not perfect, we have renewed our commitment to the Strategic Plan, and we are poised to move forward with greater efficacy and efficiency.

**5.C Action Steps**

1. Creating a Bridge Strategic Plan 2023-2025 dashboard to report the progress of initiatives under each of the Plan’s five overall objectives, which were developed through shared input from students, faculty, staff, administrators, and the Board of Trustees. **View [Wright State University Bridge Strategic Plan 2023-2025 \(PDF\)](#)**
  2. Creating and implementing a comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan.
  3. Beginning work on a five-year strategic plan for 2025-2030 according to the following schedule:
    - a. April 2024: form a planning committee and establish working groups.
    - b. February 2025: working groups report to the Board of Trustees meeting and share draft plans with the campus community to gather feedback.
    - c. April 2025: present the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees for approval.
  4. Meeting HLC’s request for information regarding how Wright State University has been making decisions in the absence of a formal strategic plan from 2018 to the present through the information presented in this report, as seen in the following:
    - a. Academic Program Review
    - b. Campus Completion Plans
    - c. Academic Reorganization
    - d. Annual Budget Reports
    - e. Retrenchment
    - f. Affordability and Efficiency Reports
    - g. Enrollment Management Reports
    - h. Remediation Reports
    - i. Low-Enrollment Reports
    - j. Description of initiatives implemented by Provost Thompson.
  5. Including faculty representatives in finance and budget discussions, better meeting our mandate for shared governance in these matters.
  6. Developing and implementing the Provost’s Strategic Plan. **View [Office of the Provost Draft Strategic Plan \(PDF\)](#)**
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## Conclusion

HLC’s concerns prompting this Focused Visit provided valuable feedback and alerted us to areas requiring our attention. In response, we have risen to this call to action, beginning with the assembly of the new Academic Affairs team, which is leading the University through a renaissance in our approach to accreditation and assessment. We have reaffirmed our commitment to students by embracing an institution-wide understanding that assessment is not an end unto itself but a vital tool to improve teaching and learning as we also demonstrate adherence to HLC’s Criteria for Accreditation. Our dedication continues to spark changes and innovations at every level, from student services to our graduate programs. Although efforts are still underway, we are proud of what we have achieved in such a short time and excited about what we will still accomplish by our next full HLC review in 2025-2026. By then, our Bridge Strategic Plan will have come to fruition, and a new five-year plan will be in place. We will be able to demonstrate significant progress in every area of concern to HLC and prove that Wright State University has emerged from a difficult period in its history to become stronger, more agile, more committed to student success, and reliably achieve all Criteria for Accreditation. We offer our sincere thanks to HLC for being our partners in this transformation, and we look forward to our work together for the benefit of all stakeholders.

**A4. Statement of Focus:**

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

**B4. Statements of Evidence (check one below):**

- Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

Evidence:

**A5. Statement of Focus:**

Relevant Core Component or other HLC requirement:

**B5. Statements of Evidence (check one below):**

- Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention, rather than monitoring, is required in the area of focus.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

The team will also note its determination as to each applicable Core Component or HLC requirement in Part B.

Evidence:

7. **Other Accreditation Issues.** If applicable, list evidence of other accreditation issues, identify the related Core Components or other HLC requirements and note the team's determination as to each applicable Core Component or other HLC requirement in Part B.

## Part B: Recommendation and Rationale

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### Recommendation:

- Evidence demonstrates that no monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that monitoring is required.
- Evidence demonstrates that HLC sanction is warranted.

### Rationale for the Team's Recommendation

#### Stipulations or Limitations on Future Accreditation Relationships

If recommending a change in the institution's stipulations, state both the old and new stipulation and provide a brief rationale for the recommended change. Check the Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Report for the current wording. (Note: After the focused visit, the institution's stipulations should be reviewed in consultation with the institution's HLC staff liaison.)

#### Monitoring

The team may call for a follow-up interim report. If the team concurs that a report is necessary, indicate the topic (including the relevant Core Components or other HLC requirements), timeline and expectations for that report. (Note: the team should consider embedding such a report as an emphasis in an upcoming comprehensive evaluation in consultation with the institution's HLC staff liaison.)

The team may call for a follow-up focused visit. If the team concurs that a visit is necessary, indicate the topic (including the relevant Core Components or other HLC requirements), timeline and expectations for that visit. (Note: The team should consider embedding such a visit as an emphasis in an upcoming comprehensive evaluation in consultation with the institution’s staff liaison.)

**Core Component Determinations**

Indicate the team’s determination(s) (met, met with concerns, not met) for the applicable Core Components related to the areas of focus or other accreditation issues identified by the team in Part A. If a Core Component was not included in an area of focus, it should be marked as not evaluated.

Number	Title	Met	Met With Concerns	Not Met	Not Evaluated
1.A	Core Component 1.A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.B	Core Component 1.B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.C	Core Component 1.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.A	Core Component 2.A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.B	Core Component 2.B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.C	Core Component 2.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.D	Core Component 2.D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.E	Core Component 2.E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.A	Core Component 3.A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.B	Core Component 3.B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.C	Core Component 3.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.D	Core Component 3.D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Number	Title	Met	Met With Concerns	Not Met	Not Evaluated
4.A	Core Component 4.A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.B	Core Component 4.B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.C	Core Component 4.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.A	Core Component 5.A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.B	Core Component 5.B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.C	Core Component 5.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Other HLC Requirement Determinations

Indicate the team's determination(s) (met or not met) for the HLC requirements related to the areas of focus or other accreditation issues identified by the team in Part A.