Assurance Argument

Truman State University - MO

11/6/2014
1 - Mission

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

1. A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

Argument

Truman’s Mission

At Truman State University, we live our mission. The formal mission statement, reaffirmed by the Board of Governors in August of 2014 follows:

The mission of Truman State University is to offer an exemplary undergraduate education to well-prepared students, grounded in the liberal arts and sciences, in the context of a public institution of higher education. To that end, the University offers affordable undergraduate studies in the traditional arts and sciences as well as selected pre-professional, professional, and master's level programs that grow naturally out of the philosophy, values, content, and desired outcomes of a liberal arts education.

Truman’s mission was established in 1986 following state legislative action in 1985 that proclaimed the University as Missouri’s liberal arts and sciences institution. Truman began a process of phasing out programs from its earlier mission as a regional comprehensive university and by 1994, we had reduced undergraduate programs from 140 to 40, and graduate programs from 38 to 9. Strong focus on the mission helped the University navigate that transition, and still pervades campus. Currently, the University has 48 undergraduate programs, 9 graduate programs, and 1 active graduate certificate program. Most departments and offices have mission statements that explicitly tie back to the mission of the University.

In 2010, the Missouri Department of Higher Education issued a mission review and performance report on the state’s public colleges and universities. For Truman, it said: “Truman State University’s program inventory is properly aligned with its mission as a liberal arts institution. The University offers both Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in many disciplines, which infuses traditional liberal arts elements into scientific fields.”

Truman regularly reviews its mission, a process in which faculty governance is heavily involved. Most recently, Faculty Senate reviewed the mission in Academic Year 2013-2014. They suggested
some minor wording changes, but also suggested clarifying the mission statement relative to the institution's goals and values. The Faculty Senate approved the changes in April 2014 and the Board of Governors followed with its approval in August 2014.

The mission and related documents are also routinely considered by the campus, especially at our annual Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshop and during our University Conference. These are opportunities for the entire campus community to reflect on what is most important to us as an institution. For example, a large section of our 2010 Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshop was spent redeveloping our core values. Several University faculty and staff still carry small laminated cards showing the core values.

Truman enhances the mission by maintaining a clear vision statement. The vision statement and the strategic plan help transform the mission into action. In 2013, Truman also began a branding campaign to more effectively communicate the mission to external audiences. The phrase “Don’t Follow, Pursue” is used throughout our public materials. It helps to encapsulate our commitment to being an outstanding, highly selective public liberal arts and sciences university into a brief message targeted to prospective students and their families.

Consistent with the mission, Truman’s enrollment policy is to admit and retain well-prepared students. First-year students who enrolled in Fall 2014 had an average ACT score of 27.07, an average high school GPA of 3.76, and seventy-two percent of those students graduated in the top 20% of their high school class. Truman also fulfills the goal of providing students with an exemplary education. On senior tests in the major for AY 2013-2014, 77% of Truman students scored above the 50th percentile nationally. Similarly, 42% scored above the 80th percentile.

**Programs are Consistent with Mission**

Truman’s general education curriculum includes a Liberal Studies Program (LSP), Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) requirements, and junior year interdisciplinary (JINS) work for all students, in addition to major requirements. The requirements of the LSP are consistent with the liberal arts and sciences portion of the mission. Many of the requirements are or have been assessed in the Truman portfolio. This continuous assessment of core requirements helps keep faculty engaged in the primary mission of the institution.

Most of Truman’s major programs are traditional liberal arts and sciences majors; others are select pre-professional programs to serve statewide and regional goals. These programs, which may seem to fall outside of the scope of the traditional liberal arts, nonetheless are grounded in the liberal arts within their program-level missions. Not only do all undergraduate students experience liberal arts and sciences in the general education program, those liberal arts and sciences learning outcomes are required in the major. For example, the School of Business communicates commitment to the mission in the following information to students: “The School of Business graduates ethically aware prospective business and civic leaders who are articulate communicators, effective team members, skilled critical thinkers, and problem solvers. The School of Business cultivates a community of learners by emphasizing:

- A rigorous, liberal arts and sciences educational foundation;
- Highly selective admission of students;
- Civic engagement;
- Leadership development; and,
- Experiential and applied learning activities to enhance student learning.”
Similarly, Truman's graduate programs build on a liberal arts and sciences foundation. The Master of Arts in English and Biology programs are in disciplines that are traditionally included in the liberal arts and sciences. The Master of Leadership program builds on interdisciplinary skills found in most liberal arts colleges, but furthers the study of leadership theories, decision-making, research, ethics and organizational change. The Master of Arts in Education teaches students who have deep knowledge in a discipline to build on the skills acquired from a liberal arts and sciences education in learning to become educators. From the outside, Masters in Communication Disorder and Accounting may seem less consistent with the mission as they are very clearly oriented toward professional skills. However, each of these disciplines emphasizes critical thinking and an interdisciplinary approach. The mission statement of each graduate program shows how the discipline is tied to Truman's mission.

Truman has not experienced significant mission creep. Since 1993, few new undergraduate programs and graduate programs have been created. Those which have been created all draw on the expertise of existing programs. The new undergraduate programs are Art History, Athletic Training, Classics, Creative Writing, Interdisciplinary Studies (B.A. and B.S), Romance Language, and Russian. Some other departments have added concentrations or made existing concentrations into programs. For example, Linguistics is now a major program rather than a concentration within English. Only one new Master’s program has been added, the Master of Arts in Leadership. When new courses or programs are proposed, faculty governance first asks about their relevance to the mission.

Truman has had four graduate certificate programs approved, though only one is currently active. The graduate certificate in Sustainability and Environmental Studies is intended for those individuals who want to improve their knowledge of the relationships between the environment, environmental policies and their businesses or future careers. This certificate is also for those who seek work in developing or implementing environmental policies in businesses or the government, or for those who possess a strong personal interest in global ecological relationships and how their roles as workers, consumers, leaders, and everyday citizens interact with our global commons. The certificate is online to help bring this liberal arts and sciences program to working adults, but is also available to currently enrolled undergraduates as an elective option in their curriculum.

Several new minors have been created and many of those are interdisciplinary, drawing from existing strengths of the liberal arts and sciences program. For example, a Disability Studies minor was added to the catalog in Fall 2010, drawing from courses in Art, Biology, Health Science, Exercise Science, Communication Disorders, etc. Other new minors include Asian Studies, Astronomy, Business Administration, Celtic Studies, Environmental Science, Film Studies, Folklore, Forensic Science, Information Systems, Italian Studies, Jazz Studies, Linguistics, Mathematical Biology, Photography, Political Communication, Spanish for the Professions, and Statistics.

Student Support Services Align with the Mission

Support services are also consistent with the mission. Residential life is a key part of the student experience. The mission statement for Residence Life shows consonance with the University mission: “As part of Truman State University, Residence Life fosters the development of respect, responsibility, and accountability in our students. Within safe, comfortable, and intellectually engaging living communities, we nurture students to become productive citizens and lifelong scholars.” Nearly all first-year students live on campus, and approximately 42% of all students live on campus in any given year. This is in line with the COPLAC average of 44%.

Truman also maintains a wide array of services that allow students to make the most of their
curricular experience. Some of these are directly related to the curriculum. For example, the Center for Academic Excellence provides academic advising and tutoring. The Career Center provides mentoring, database resources, networking with alumni, recruitment events, and much more. The Center for Student Involvement connects students with out-of-class experiences that allow them to apply their learning.

The University also provides support services that allow students to thrive in the campus environment. For example, University Counseling Services supports the University mission in promoting the liberal arts and sciences value of self-awareness, life-long habits of social and emotional wellness, and the achievement of human potential. The Student Union offers the campus community convenient services, a social environment, and a place to participate in co-curricular activities. Campus Athletics provides student athletes with opportunities for meaningful engagement and the broader community with a chance to come together for events. The Student Health Center enhances the ability of students to succeed academically by providing compassionate, accessible, affordable, efficient, high-quality health care services. The SERVE Center matches volunteer interests with appropriate agencies in the community. The mission of the Women's Resource Center (WRC) is to promote awareness and understanding of women's and gender issues. The Multicultural Affairs Center provides a support system for underrepresented students by creating a campus environment that nurtures Latino, African American, Native American and Asian American students academically, socially, culturally, and personally. More information on student support services is available in Criterion 3.C.

Planning Priorities Support the Mission

Support for the academic mission is the University’s highest budget priority. Truman currently has a 17:1 student faculty ratio, creating a supportive environment for meaningful student-faculty interaction. The University exceeds all of its performance measures established by the Missouri Department of Higher Education, which include budget support for mission and academic measures. For fiscal years 2009-2011, 68% of our education and general budget was spent on core mission. Our peer institutions in the Council for Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) average 58.59%.

Affordability is a key part of Truman’s mission. To that end, application to Truman is free. Tuition at Truman is comparatively low: this year, Missouri residents pay $7,096 for up to 17 credit hours each semester. Over 95% of students receive some sort of financial aid. The focus of Truman’s last capital campaign and the focus of the current capital campaign are student scholarships and academic program support. These show commitment to core mission rather than facility enhancement or ancillary programs.

A relatively recent example of clear prioritization for funding comes from the Vision Initiative grants. After the Vision was approved in 2012, the Office of Academic Affairs offered grants to faculty who developed projects to enhance the mission of the University. One example of a funded project included a program in Business called the Career Access Passport, to help students transition seamlessly from college to their career. Another project centered on updating the curriculum in Biology to ensure that current methods were taught and used. The Vision grants provided tangible support for focus on the mission. More information on how budgeting and planning processes support the mission is available in Criterion 5.C.1

Truman has experienced an important turnover in administrative personnel since the last accreditation visit. Since that time, six different individuals have served in the role of Vice President of Academic Affairs or Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs. Three different individuals have served as President or Interim President. Though this kind of change is not uncommon in higher education,
Truman had previously enjoyed presidents and VPAs who maintained their positions for a decade or more. Throughout these changes, focus on the mission has stayed consistent. However, the strategies used to achieve the mission have naturally been less consistent, and the timeline for some projects have been interrupted. For example, though program reviews are meant to occur every five years, turnover in Academic Affairs has slowed this process such that some disciplines have gone six or seven years between reviews. Fortunately, President Paino, our current president has been with the University since he was hired as VPAA in July 2008, and maintains a consistent vision for the University.

Sources

- ACADEMICAFFAIRS_Dept Mission Statements_Aug-2014
- ADMISSIONS_Brand Summary_2014
- ADMISSIONS_Enrollment Profile Data_2013-Fall
- ASSESSMENTCOMMITTEE_Institutional Assessment Plan_2013-12-12
- CAE_Overview of Tutoring Services_2012-Fall
- PRESIDENTSOFFICE_Strategic Plans for Last Ten Years_2011-08-06
- PROV_Draft Vision and Mission_2013-09-21
- PROVOST_SPAW Agendas_2011-2013
- REGISTRAR_Descriptive Documentation of Graduate Certificates_2010-June
- REGISTRAR_Student-Services_catalog_description_2013
- REGISTRAR_Student-Services_catalog_description_2013 (page number 7)
- UGC_Reports from LSP Modes and Essential Skills Reviews_2014
1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

Argument

The Mission is Publicly Available

Truman’s mission statement, vision, core values, and strategic plans are reviewed, developed, and vetted by the University community regularly. Final versions of these statements and documents are approved by the Truman Board of Governors. They are publicly available on the University’s website, only two clicks from the main introductory page. Strategic plans are completed roughly every five years and are also available on the website.

There are many ways in which mission-driven activities are discussed on campus. President Paino holds a minimum of two town meetings per year to update the entire community on developments at the University and within the state. These meetings are also used to highlight initiatives or progress related to strategic planning goals. The University also holds an all-university Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshop (SPAW) over two days before each fall semester. University goals from the strategic plan are reviewed and amended and progress reports are reviewed. For the past decade, the University has held a conference day annually in January or February which is similar to the SPAW in that it is a forum for the entire community to engage in dialogue, training, and information sharing related to Truman’s strategic goals.

The Mission is Clear about Institutional Emphases

The formal mission statement contains two powerful adjectives: "exemplary" and "affordable". Combining adjectives with "public" and "liberal arts and sciences" goes a long way toward defining Truman. These are the values that drive our institution. High-quality education for students is unquestionably Truman’s primary emphasis. Select graduate programs that build on liberal arts and sciences undergraduate programs are also included. The mission statement, vision, and core values all align toward these priorities.

The University mission statement and vision statement are both very explicit about the institution’s obligations to the community. The public nature of the institution is noted early in the statement. The broader mission documents also state that Truman will “offer services to the community, the region, and the state in the areas of research and public service that are natural outgrowths of the academic mission of the University, and strive to ensure that the University serves as a cultural resource for the broader community of which it is an integral part.” Examples of how these obligations are fulfilled
Neither the mission statement nor the vision document is explicit about the University's role in the advancement of knowledge. However, this is strongly tied to offering an exemplary education. Truman has adopted a Teacher-Scholar model. This model clarifies how good teaching and scholarship are inextricably linked: "The Truman teacher/scholar understands subject matter deeply enough to structure, select, and organize it for effective communication to students. While the primary focus for the faculty is on teaching, it is well understood that great teaching is seamlessly connected to scholarship and the continued quest for new knowledge. This quest includes applying new knowledge, synthesizing concepts, and investigating how students learn. To maintain a viable learning community, faculty members must also be engaged in their discipline and in the greater community. Such engagement reflects the faculty member’s commitment to the University as a comprehensive learning community. Due to the integrated nature of learning, knowledge growth, and application, the boundaries of teaching, scholarship, and service are often blurred. For example, faculty may experiment with service-learning projects that combine active classroom learning with direct applications in the local community; they may incorporate their own research or scholarship in the courses they teach; or they may draw upon service experiences to inspire their teaching or scholarly activity. Truman State University encourages its faculty members to pursue such innovative approaches to learning.

University Stakeholders

As a public institution, Truman’s primary external constituency is the people of the state of Missouri. The mission creates an institution that is student-centered, and provides well-prepared students a relatively traditional residential experience. However, the mission documents also address our obligation to being a supportive place to live and work. Finally, the community and region are listed as important constituencies. Theme 3 of Truman’s current strategic plan also emphasizes building relationships with internal and external constituencies. Collectively, these documents make our mission and goals explicit to all constituencies.

Sources

- PROV_Draft Vision and Mission_2013-09-21
- PROVOST_SPAW Agendas_2011-2013
1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

The brief University mission statement itself does not explicitly discuss diversity, but the vision and the strategic plan both address the celebration of human differences. For example, the vision document states that “Truman graduates will be citizen-leaders committed to service; globally competitive; able to thrive in the complexities of an advanced, technical and multicultural world” and “Truman will act to preserve our democracy by educating ‘the whole mass of people’ by:

- Ensuring access to an increasingly diverse student population while maintaining its commitment to academic excellence through recruitment and mentorship of students capable of succeeding in an academically challenging environment; and
- Expanding its reach to students who aspire to complete a Truman education, yet arrive through non-traditional paths."

The current Board of Governors Code of Policies embraces diversity in admissions and hiring:

*In compliance with federal law and applicable Missouri statutes, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, age, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission to or employment in its education programs or activities.*

*The University complies with the regulations implementing Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; and other state and federal laws and regulations.*

The Multicultural Affairs Center (MAC) offers extensive programming designed to help multiculturalism flourish on campus. These activities are coordinated with both student life and academic departments and are offered to Truman and local communities. The mission of the MAC is to enhance the Truman community through strengthening diversity and enriching the college careers of underrepresented students by having them:

- Become confident in their academic abilities.
- Form valuable relationships with students, faculty, staff and administration.
- Successfully complete their undergraduate experience.
- Return as successful alumni to encourage and motivate current students.

The MAC also helps coordinate Montage, a diversity program run by students for students. The program is a centerpiece of new student orientation.
Truman hosts two of the U.S. government’s TRIO programs. The first is Upward Bound, which has been active at Truman for over 40 years. Approximately 90% of the Truman State University Upward Bound graduates attend college and approximately 50% of these students continue to college graduation. The second TRIO program at Truman is the Ronald E. McNair Program which Truman has hosted since 1992. Truman’s McNair program has seen great successes, with 133 students having completed masters programs and 33 students who have completed their Ph.D. In addition to the TRIO programs, the Scholastic Enhancement Experience Program is offered to selected and underrepresented first-year students. The Scholastic Enhancement Experience provides these incoming students with the opportunity to learn about the campus and available resources. The goal is to help students develop confidence and independence as well as to encourage building a community with peers and professional staff.

In 2013, Truman administered a campus climate survey to staff and faculty. Fifty-one percent of respondents reported being satisfied with interaction among racial and ethnic groups, though these results were confusing given that 32% of respondents chose neutral/not applicable. 32% of respondents reported having either witnessed or experienced bias/harassment/discrimination while at Truman based on religious beliefs, the highest of any questioned categories. Witnessing or experiencing racial discrimination was reported by 15%, while gender discrimination was reported by 23%. The survey will be repeated in 2015. According to the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) faculty survey, 25% of Truman faculty reported experiencing stress due to subtle discrimination. While this is clearly higher than we would wish, it is also lower than the 36% reporting at comparison institutions. Further, only 7% of faculty report that there is a lot of racial tension on campus, relative to the 14% reported by comparison institutions.

Truman also has many other ways of supporting diverse perspectives. For example, the Global Issues Colloquium is a regular series of speakers on international issues. Truman participates in the Interfaith Challenge, which includes community service and dialogue on religious views, and an interfaith room is housed in Kirk Building. The Women’s Resource Center offers support and resources for appreciating gendered experiences. A Safe Zone program is designed to create a safe space for persons who are LGBTQ to talk to a supportive individual to address their own questions/challenges, but also to address any feelings of discrimination or threat they may encounter. The most notable type of diversity in the local community is economic, and many programs help students engage with those who are economically disadvantaged.

Students also show commitment to diversity and multiculturalism through a variety of student organizations. The African Students Organization, the Association of Black Collegians, Club for Italian Appreciation and Outreach, German Club, International Club, Hablantes Unidos, HALO, Japanese Language Exchange Group, Namaste Nepal, National Association of Black Accountants, Spanish Club, Students for Middle East Peace, T. I. A. (Truman in Africa), and Vietnamese Student Association all promote cultural exchange and positive relations among ethnic groups. The Baptist Student Union, Campus Christian Fellowship, Campus Crusade for Christ, Catholic Newman Center, Ekklesia, Momentum Ministry, Muslim Student Organization, T2:12, and University Hillel help encourage freedom of religious expressions. Tru-Women in Computer Science, Women in Chemistry, Women in Physics, and the Women’s Resource Center promote the understanding of gender issues. PRISM supports students acceptance of diversity and LGBTQ culture. Students Supporting the Exceptional Community provides support for individuals with physical disabilities. Though these organizations are among the most visible, many others incorporate celebration of diversity into their mission and activities.

For more information about how diverse perspectives are incorporated into the curriculum, please also see Criterion 3.B.
Sources

- REGISTRAR_Student-Services_catalog_description_2013
- REGISTRAR_TYPES of Student Support Services_2013-12-12
1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

Argument

Truman’s Vision states that the University “will demonstrate its public liberal arts and sciences mission by developing educated citizens needed to protect our democracy and offer creative solutions to state, national and global problems.” As a public university, our primary service is to provide educated citizens who will participate fully in our democracy. Approximately 75% of students are Missouri residents, honoring our role as a state-supported institution. As noted previously, support for the academic mission is the University’s highest budget priority. For fiscal years 2009-2011, 68% of our education and general budget was spent on our core mission.

Teaching civic engagement is a current priority of the institution. Truman participates in Campus Compact to facilitate student experiences in building the community. In fall 2013, President Paino made civic engagement one of his planning themes and empowered a task force with investigating how we might strengthen our curriculum and services related to responsible citizenship. The task force made several recommendations, including a possible service-learning curricular requirement. Expanding civic engagement requirements within the existing Truman Leaders program was another suggestion. A standing committee on civic engagement has now been formed to pursue and monitor these efforts.

Responses to the 2014 NSSE showed less service learning and volunteerism than comparable institutions. This was a change from the 2012 results showing that Truman seniors are significantly more likely to engage in service learning than students at peer COPLAC institutions. In the Transformative Experiences Questionnaire, 23% of Truman students report participating in a transformative service learning experience at least once in their career. Respondents to the EBI Leadership Assessment survey 97% of students reported volunteering their time to worthy causes at least some of the time. According to state definitions of service-learning, 1454 Truman students participated in service learning in AY 2013 – 2014. These numbers underestimate actual service learning because each course can only count as one type of high impact experience in the state definitions, even if it involves multiple categories. Furthermore, many internships involve service to the community, and 723 Truman students participated in credit-bearing internships, practica, and student teaching in 2013-2014. Several of these internships are in human services. Other internships involve service in government, or governmental holdings such as the Truman Presidential Library.

One more detailed example of our service learning experiences comes from nursing. The Transcultural Nursing Experience in the Philippines is a 3 week cultural immersion experience for nursing students who have completed their junior level nursing courses. For one week, students
participate in obstetrical and nursery clinicals in the government hospital, Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center, in Manila. The remainder of the cultural immersion occurs in Iloilo City, located on one of the Visayan islands. In Iloilo, the students enroll in a cross-cultural exchange program at West Visayas State University. During the cultural immersion, the students interview clients in a variety of health care settings, such as mothers and children in a public health prenatal & child clinic, residents of a leprosarium, the family members of home health visits, and commercial sex workers at a social hygiene clinic. For some experiences, Truman students are paired with Filipino nursing students.

According to the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 37 students graduating in 2014 planned to make service such as the Peace Corps their primary careers. Truman ranks in the top 25 of medium-size schools in the nation producing the most Peace Corps volunteers. In 2013, Washington Monthly magazine recognized Truman for simultaneously ranking in the top 30 institutions in terms of Peace Corps volunteers and those who serve in ROTC. They stated that "Truman State is unusually successful in not just graduating students but also preparing them to make lasting contributions to society." Employers who rated alumni said that 91% were good or excellent in “contributing as a citizen of the community.”

Truman has many programs that fulfill the mission to “offer services to the community, the region, and the state in the areas of research and public service that are natural outgrowths of the academic mission of the University.” For example, the **Regional Professional Development Center** utilizes the expertise in the Education department and works with K-12 teachers to build the capacity of educators and schools to maximize student performance through high quality professional development. The **Center for Applied Statistical Consulting** is overseen by Statistics faculty, and provides free or low-cost statistical and survey consulting to both the University and the community constituencies. The **Speech and Hearing Clinic** serves the community with low-cost services, while providing students in Communication Disorders experience and observation of real-world practice. The **VITA program** involves accounting students providing free tax consulting to members of the community.

A more detailed example of a program that draws on University resources in collaboration to serve the community is the Small Business Technology & Development Center. The SBTDN is part of a nationwide network and is supported by Truman's School of Business. The center provides counseling in areas such as business plan development, financial management, market feasibility, international trade, etc. Each year, the Missouri SBTDN network counsels more than 3,000 clients. Most services are offered at no charge to clients.

The physical facilities of the University are also an important resource for the community. The Student Union Building and other campus facilities are available for reservation for public events when not in use by the University. The University Farm provides garden plots to community members and the University Observatory has frequent open houses and programs for the public.

Situated in a rural, economically challenged area of Missouri, Truman is an important cultural resource for the surrounding community. The award-winning student newspaper, The Index, is made available to the community. Local residents can receive access to Pickler Memorial Library free of charge. The University Gallery hosts both invited juried exhibits and works of local artists, and maintains regular hours open to the public. Most **concerts**, recitals, plays, and **invited talks** are open to the public, resulting in enriching activities nearly every evening of the regular academic term. The majority of these events have no admission fees. The public can purchase tickets to events like the **Kohlenberg Lyceum Series** and **Student Activities Board concerts** after a brief period when students can claim tickets.

The **SERVE center** facilitates student participation in the community, and organizes activities like the
**Big Event.** In 2014, 1,264 Truman students participated in community service for the Big Event. A further 250 participated in the service portion of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day challenge. In 2010, 2011, and 2012, Truman was placed on the President’s Higher Education Service Learning Honor Roll. In 2014, Truman also started the Bulldogs in Action program, which incorporates service into the first-year experience.

Many student organizations also support the local community. Alpha Phi Omega, Alpha Sigma Gamma, Blue Key, Campus PALS, Cardinal Key, Circle K International, Habitat for Humanity, Rotaract Club, Tau Lambda Sigma, and Up 'til Dawn all have service as their reason for organization. Several other organizations have targeted service. For example, GlobeMed supports a birthing center in Haiti. Truman’s fraternities and sororities all have a service component, as do many of our academic honor societies and clubs.

Finally, Truman State University takes our responsibility to the higher education community seriously. Our active participation in the Council for Public Liberal Arts College, in the Council for Undergraduate Research, and in the American Association for Colleges and Universities illustrate this commitment. Another way in which we fulfill this responsibility is through the University Press, which publishes high-quality work, contributing to the scholarly community.

**Sources**

- REGISTRAR_Student-Services_catalog_description_2013
1.5 - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

Truman’s mission is to provide a high-quality, affordable liberal arts and sciences education, and understanding of the mission priorities pervades the University. The mission is highly visible to stakeholders; and students, faculty, and staff understand the core values. The University vision and strategic plan turn the mission into action.

The political, cultural, and economic diversity make our community a rich learning environment. Truman’s location in a rural Midwestern community makes maintaining ethnic diversity among students, faculty, and staff an ongoing challenge. Truman meets this challenge of ethnic diversity with strong international education and study abroad programs, as well as careful attention to cultural diversity in the curriculum.

As a public liberal arts school, Truman’s obligation to the public good is central to the University’s identity. Understanding how to promote student’s civic engagement is one of our current core initiatives: not only does the liberal arts help students develop marketable skills, it provides the foundational skills for engaged citizenship. Students are highly engaged with service learning and community service. Where appropriate, the University also makes services available to the community, region, and state.

Sources

*There are no sources.*
2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

Argument

Truman State University strives for integrity in all matters. The Board of Governors maintains a Code of Policies that establishes ethical processes for the Board and for critical University functions. Further, Truman has established policies on integrity in the Faculty Handbook, Staff Handbook, and Student Code of Conduct. Compliance with HIPAA, EEO, FERPA, ADA, and other federal laws are maintained and published online. These policies are updated regularly. For example, the Student Code of Conduct, which is part of the Board Code of Policies, is reviewed at least every five years. The entirety of the code is currently under review by the Board of Governors.

To ensure implementation of many of these policies, Truman maintains a governance structure that includes an elected Faculty Senate, Undergraduate Council and Graduate Council are standing committees of Senate. The Faculty Senate and its committees promote integrity by following a constitution and set of bylaws. The Faculty Senate maintains an agenda, and regularly meets and publishes its minutes. These are available publicly on the University website.

Integrity is facilitated when constituencies have a strong campus voice. In addition to Faculty Senate, Truman also has an active Staff Council and Student Government. Most committees have a mix of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, allowing operations to be transparent to all. Students, staff, faculty, and alumni are all regularly surveyed through the assessment program to gather input in a formal way. Truman Today, the campus newsletter, helps keep the campus community informed of issues and events. President Paino maintains regular contact with the campus community through email, town hall meetings, and “Coffee with the President” events.

Truman has restructured the University’s academic units in the last ten years. Previously, we had a divisional structure: eight Division Heads each had oversight of all faculty members within their Divisions. Though this was an economical use of resources, the span of control for some Division Heads was very wide. The current structure is more traditional for higher education, and includes Department Chairs who report to Deans. The Deans report to the Provost. This system is more transparent to the higher education community and allows more individuals to build administrative skills as Department Chairs. It also aids in the integrity of system, with each Department Chair responsible for a more reasonable number of faculty.

Truman also has a well-functioning Institutional Review Board to ensure integrity in research. More information on the IRB is available under Criterion 2.B.
The Human Resources department at Truman promotes honesty in dealing with personnel. One illustration of this kink of integrity occurs when HR ensures that advertisements for staff positions are fair and in keeping with EEO policies. Hiring procedures have been frequently revised. One of the most recent revisions was made in response to national reforms for immigration. Human Resources also provides new staff orientation, oversees benefits, and coordinates the wellness program. Formal grievance procedures are posted on the Human Resources website.

Sexual Assault policies and procedures are one area where higher education institutions nationwide are struggling to maintain policies and procedures with integrity. Truman has worked hard to show sensitivity to complainants and respondents. In light of new guidelines from the Office of Civil Rights, Truman’s Board of Governors approved changes to the relevant sections of the Student Code of Conduct in August, 2014. The new policy adopts more sensitive language, makes clearer reference to Title IX expectations, and expands recognition of the ways in which gender-based misconduct can be perpetrated or facilitated in online media. The new process also involves investigative administrators, Truman employees who have special training and expertise in gender-based misconduct. Process advisors assist the complainant or respondent throughout the process.

Data is a critical asset of the University, and all members of the University community have a responsibility to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of any data that is created, accessed, modified, transmitted, stored or used by the University, irrespective of the medium on which the data resides and regardless of the format (such as electronic, paper or other physical form). All campus units are responsible for implementing appropriate managerial, operational, physical, and technical controls for access to, use of, transmission of, and disposal of University data. Truman's Information Technology Services has constantly evolving safeguards for campus data. For example, ITS has an information security website and a poster series to help campus constituencies become aware of relevant issues. Among the policies ITS maintains are an Information Technology Security Policy, Data Sharing Policy and a Critical Incident Response Policy. At its October 2014 meeting, the Board of Governors approved an information technology network security upgrade needed to ensure that electronic traffic flowing both to and from the University is conducted in a secure and reliable manner.

To promote fiscal integrity, Truman maintains a Fiscal Misconduct Policy. Multiple safeguards are in place for most financial transactions. For example, funding for faculty travel requires advance approval. Before funds are disbursed, expense reports are submitted online, receipts are submitted, then funds are approved by the relevant Department Chair, Dean, and the Office of Academic Affairs. The annual budget is approved by the Board of Governors and subsequently published. Truman's annual budget development cycle, appropriations process, and timeline follow established procedures, and conform to best practices. A committee of the Board of Governors, the Budget and Capital Projects Committee, oversees these financial matters.

Truman ensures its ongoing commitment to students by managing debt appropriately. Major renovations to residence halls have created the need for bonds, but Truman’s outstanding debt has gone down from $61.1 million in 2011 to $57 million in 2013. Moody’s has rated Truman’s credit A1. To ensure that Truman is able to fulfill commitments to students, personnel, and the community, the Board of Governors Code of Policies establishes the targets for financial reserves as 20% of annual operating costs for the Education and General Fund and 44% of annual operating costs for the Auxiliary Fund. Truman annually utilizes an external firm to audit its finances, which is overseen by the Finance and Auditing Committee, a committee of the Board of Governors.

Truman also strives for integrity in auxiliary functions. For example, Truman students each pay on average $8167 per year for room and board in a residence hall. Keeping these figures lower than most
competitors ensures that we realize our mission of making education affordable for students who choose to have a residential experience. Truman follows all state and federal policies with regards to auxiliary functions. Truman publishes a vendor manual which allows all bidders to be aware of Truman’s relevant policies and procedures before and during contracts. Our 2010 choice of University Bookstore vendor is a good example of how we apply these processes. A committee was formed with representation from the Business Office, faculty, ITS, and Student Affairs. An RFP was published on Truman’s website and advertised to interested parties. Presentations were made by prospective vendors. After committee deliberations, Follett was selected to replace the previous vendor.

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- STUDENTAFFAIRS_Student Conduct Code_2012-04-14
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2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

Argument

Truman State University publishes a student catalog that includes policies regarding all relevant aspects of undergraduate and graduate education. The catalog is publicly available on the University website. Among the types of information are the following:

- Programs Available
- Liberal Studies Program (General Education) Requirements
- Costs
- Admissions Policies
- Faculty and Staff credentials
- Academic Policies & Processes Information

The catalog is updated annually. To ensure that the catalog is available in a timely manner, the Registrar emails Department Chairs in the fall with specific deadlines, and provides monthly reminders. For example, initial changes are due to Department Chairs and Deans by November 1, and to the Registrar by November 6. The first catalog proof distribution is available in mid-January. March 6 is the deadline for any proposals to be considered by Undergraduate Council, and March 19 is the deadline for proposals that are reviewed by the Graduate Council. All curriculum changes are reviewed again by departments before changes are finalized.

To aid student understanding of curricular options, individual departments also publish brochures that detail the requirements of their programs. Faculty advisors and advisors in the Center for Academic Excellence also play a key role in helping students understand details of the curriculum. For this reason, returning students need advisor approval before registering for courses.

Course syllabi are available through departments. The syllabi outline learning goals, requirements associated with enrollment in courses. Syllabi detail expectations related to student behavior and performance within the course. Faculty are regularly reminded to include key policies in their syllabi, including attendance, academic honesty, and accommodations for disabilities. In compliance with Missouri Senate Bill 389, Truman makes available a set of student ratings for each faculty member for each course. These are available online in the secure system.

In 2014, Truman’s Faculty Senate adopted a definition of credit hour very similar to the federal government’s guidelines. Previously, this policy had been implicit, and applied broadly. However, in an attempt to make policies abundantly clear to students and faculty, the policy was formalized. The policy is written broadly to allow it to apply to all courses, including online and laboratory courses.

The grade appeals process is made explicit to students in the catalog. Students must initiate the process with the instructor. If the issue is not resolved, the student files a grade appeals form. The process then goes to the Department Chair, next to the Dean, then to the office of Academic Affairs. At each stage, personnel independently review the circumstances and information from previous reviewers. At the end of the process, the VPAA instructs the Registrar to alter the grade if the appeal
The University manages a compliance website, consumerinformation.truman.edu, in order to make consumers aware of the following aspects of University policy and procedure:

- General Institutional Operation
- Accreditation of Programs with the University and the University's Accreditation with HLC
- Tuition and Fees: including information on the requirements and procedures for withdrawal from the University and both campus and federal aid refund policies
- General Completion and Graduation Rates
- Annual Security Reports
- Completion and Graduation Rates for Student Athletes
- Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support

A net price calculator is featured prominently on Truman’s website, and includes all tuition, housing, fee, and aid estimates. It also helps students estimate personal and travel expenses, so they have a realistic expectation of all their financial obligations. Additionally, Truman maintains public information as required by the state of Missouri.

Truman State University strives for integrity and clarity in marketing efforts across all platforms. Truman Admissions Office staff members routinely monitor social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to ensure that the information presented about Truman is accurate. Development of printed and digital Admissions materials may involve myriad offices, but is primarily a collaboration between Admissions, Public Relations, Publications and Information Technology Services. Content is diligently drafted, edited and produced through consultation with the respective campus departments, especially with regard to academic programs and requirements, to ensure accuracy, relevance and thorough representation of all information pertinent to students and the general public.

In 2013-2014, Truman completely redesigned the University website. With the help of Stamats, a consulting company, the information needs of various constituencies were assessed. Stamats assisted Truman in following best practice in consumer information. Now, http://truman.edu serves primarily external audiences, while truview.truman.edu serves primarily internal audiences. The change was intended to help prospective students, alumni, community members, current students, faculty, and staff find the information they need more easily. This change is still in progress, and information is still being migrated. ITS staff are working on improving searchability within both sites, but this may be a lengthy process.

Truman also maintains regular contact with alumni and friends to ensure that stakeholders have access to relevant information about the University. The Truman Review and the Alumni Connection newsletter keep alumni aware of current initiatives and happenings on campus. Alumni are also surveyed through the Alumni Survey, and their employers are contacted with an Employer Survey.

Sources

There are no sources.
2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Argument

Board of Governors Priorities

Each member of the Truman Board of Governors is appointed by the Governor of the State of Missouri and confirmed by the Missouri Senate. There are six voting members of the Board, two out-of-state non-voting members, and one non-voting student member. The six voting members collectively have 31 years of experience on the Board, representing an enduring commitment to Truman.

The work of the Board of Governors includes focus on preserving and enhancing Truman's mission. Chapter 2 of the Board of Governors Code of Policies is entitled Mission of the University. Section 2.030 identifies the current Truman State University Strategic Plan, 2011-2015 as being approved by the Board of Governors on August 6, 2011. This aligns the priorities of the Board with the priorities of the entire institution.

The organization of the Board assists in its functioning. There are currently four standing subcommittees and one special subcommittee. Members of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee discuss items from Student Affairs and Academics that require a Board vote. These include changes to the Student Conduct Code; items involving large expenditures affecting academic or student affairs; awards and recognition's of significance; major academic and/or student affairs initiatives or changes; significant changes in structure, policies or protocols of Student Affairs and Academics. The Honorary Degrees Committee recognizes individuals for outstanding achievement in a field and demonstrated commitment to Truman State University’s mission and values. The Budget and Capital Projects Committee discusses and makes recommendations to the full Board of Governors regarding budgets, purchases, and contracts. Items brought to this committee include annual operating budgets, annual salary policies, student tuition & fee rates, residence hall rates, state funding requests for operations, state funding requests for capital improvements, action items regarding construction projects and major equipment purchases, long-range capital improvements, and contracts for services including architects & engineers. The Finance and Auditing committee assists the Board in matters relating to the audit function by serving as a working contact point between the full Board of Governors and the University auditors retained by the Board. The Code of Policies Committee is a special subcommittee appointed to determine which Board Policies need to be updated, and to propose improvements. After their review, the Board Policies Committee will disband.
The Board of Governors Code of Policies clarifies priorities for specific areas. For example, for physical facilities, the Code of Policies states that “University buildings and grounds are intended for use by faculty, staff, and students for educational, administrative, and recreational purposes, and such uses have the highest priority. Other persons and groups may use University facilities on a space available basis in accordance with the policies and procedures, including possible rental fees, established by the President and his or her designees.” These policies are carried out through scheduling procedures. For example, the Student Union Building reserves space with an initial lottery that gives priority to academics then to student organizations. External audiences may apply for use of space after the lottery procedure is complete.

The Board shows good practice by letting processes develop over time and being responsive to the campus. A recent example of this occurred when campus constituencies pushed for creating a tobacco-free campus. Though the Board agreed, they delayed implementation until smoking cessation programs could be implemented. Additionally, in 2012, Truman’s Board of Governors discussed changes to the nondiscrimination clause. They added sexual orientation to the nondiscrimination policy. Faculty groups and student groups are now also advocating more protection for gender identity.

**Considering Internal and External Constituencies**

The Board meets six times each year, and meetings include a public and a closed session. The public session typically includes reports from a variety of individuals and committees; examples include the Office of Advancement and the Truman Foundation, Student Government, Finance and Auditing Committee, External Audit, Budget and Capital Projects Committee, Construction Projects, Contracts, Academic and Student Affairs Committee, and Board Policy Review. Agendas for the full Board and for Committees are made publicly available.

Most records of the Board of Governors and the University are open, and are subject to the state of Missouri’s sunshine laws. Board policy specifies the following as exclusions:

1. Legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving the University. However, any vote by the Board of Governors relating to litigation involving the University will be made public upon final disposition of the matter voted upon, provided however, in matters involving the exercise of the power of eminent domain, the vote of the Board of Governors will be announced or become public immediately following the action on the motion to authorize institution of such a legal action. Legal work product will be considered a closed record.
2. Leasing, purchase or sale of real estate by the University where public knowledge of the transaction might adversely affect the legal consideration thereof. However, any vote by the Board of Governors or public record approving a contract relating to the leasing, purchase or sale of real estate by the University will be made public upon execution of the lease, purchase or sale of the real estate.
3. Hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting an employee of the University. However, any vote on a final decision, when taken by the Board of Governors to hire, fire, promote or discipline an employee of the University will be made available to the public within seventy-two hours of the close of the meeting where such action occurs; provided, however, 1) that any employee so affected will be entitled to prompt notice before such decision is made available to the public and 2) that information will not be released in violation of an employee's rights of privacy.
4. Nonjudicial mental or physical health proceedings involving identifiable persons, including medical, psychiatric, psychological, or alcoholism or drug dependency diagnosis or treatment.
5. Scholastic probation, expulsion, or graduation of identifiable individuals, including records of
individual test or examination scores. However, personally identifiable student records maintained by the University shall be open for inspection by the students, parents, guardians or other custodians of students in accordance with federal law.

6. Preparation, including any discussions or work product, on behalf of the Board of Governors or its representatives for negotiations with employee groups.

7. Software codes for electronic data processing and documentation thereof.

8. Specifications for competitive bidding, until either the specifications are officially approved or the specifications are published for bid.

9. Sealed bids and related documents, until the earlier of either when the bids are opened, or all bids are accepted or all bids are rejected.

10. Individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings or records pertaining to employees or applicants for employment, except that this exemption shall not apply to the names, positions, salaries and lengths of service of officers and employees of the University once they are employed as such.

11. Records which are protected from disclosure by law.

12. Meetings and public records relating to scientific and technological innovations in which the University has a proprietary interest.

Avoiding Undue Influence

The Board of Governors Code of Policies define processes that preserve independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution. Board members work on behalf of the state, but not directly for the state. The Chair of the Board is chosen by Board members rather than by government officials. Chapter 3 of the Board of Governors policy book includes the following item to ensure that Governors avoid financial conflict of interest:

Each member of the Board shall complete and shall submit annually to the Secretary of the Board on or before February 1 of each year, the “Truman State University Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form,” for the purpose of disclosing to the Board and to the public the Board member’s financial interests. Each member of the Board shall file with the Secretary of the Board a copy of the required filing which they make with the State of Missouri Ethics Commission entitled “Personal Financial Disclosure Statement.

Chapter 9 of the Board of Governors policy book also includes statements on Ethics and Conflicts of Interest. The Code of Policies makes it clear that day-to-day management of the institution is completed by the Truman administration. Academic matters are overseen by the Truman faculty, as evidenced by the proceedings of Faculty Senate. Duties regarding the curriculum and day-to-day management of the institution are compiled in Chapter III (Authority and Governance) of the Faculty Handbook.

Sources

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- FACULTYSENATE_Meeting Minutes_fy2014
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- PRESIDENTSOFFICE.Board of Governors Policy Book_2013-01-01
- PRESIDENTSOFFICE_Description of Orientation for New Board Members_2013-08-02
- PRESIDENTSOFFICE_Strategic Plans for Last Ten Years_2011-08-06
- STUDENTAFFAIRS.Student Conduct Code_2012-04-14
The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

**Argument**

Truman State University articulates commitment to freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning through numerous institutional documents, including Vision documents, Board of Governors Code of Policies, the Student Conduct Code, and grievance policies. The Faculty Handbook also has detailed sections on Academic Freedom:

The University endorses the statement on Academic Freedom as it applies to state universities, which is embodied in Academic Freedom and Tenure (1940 Statement of Principles), drafted by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors. The statement follows: '(a) Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the results, subject to adequate performance of their other academic duties, but research for pecuniary return shall be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution. (b) Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter that has no relation to their subject. (c) College and University teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.'

Most policies recognize freedom of expression explicitly. For example, the Student Conduct Code states “The University recognizes the significance of students' rights. Those rights include freedom of expression, autonomy, procedural protection, and the respect for personal integrity of all members of the community and their property.” Similarly, the Acceptable Use of Electronic Information Resources Policy states “freedom of expression and an open environment to pursue scholarly inquiry and to share information are encouraged and supported at Truman State University. These values lie at the core of our academic community, and apply to the use of electronic information resources.”

The University Harassment Policy also recognizes its role in maintaining freedom of expression.

To foster educational development and promote true academic freedom, the University requires an environment in which no person is intimidated, exploited, or coerced. These goals cannot be attained where harassment exists. Truman’s harassment policy is designed to promote behavior that supports personal and social development in an environment that fosters academic performance and intellectual growth.

A local chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is formed by Truman faculty. The chapter has relatively few members, but regularly hosts meetings and discussions. Promoting academic freedom is one of the association's core values.
One example of process in protecting free speech is through the posting policy. Members of the University community are permitted to place postings on public bulletin boards. Minimal restrictions are in place, however. Only one copy of each posting is allowed per bulletin board. A copy must be presented to the Center for Student Involvement prior to posting. Materials promoting the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substance may not be posted on campus. Profanity, obscenity, and the promotion of illegal acts are also prohibited. As an illustration of how this policy is implemented, there was some controversy over postings by the Women’s Resource Center. Their materials offered items of a sexual nature that some people found offensive. The postings did not violate the policy, and were permitted as free speech.

The U.S. Constitution protects free speech, and Truman also takes our obligation to honor Constitution Day seriously. Each year, we host events celebrating the U.S. Constitution, and discussing its implications for modern academic life: including the implications of free speech for civil academic discourse. For example, in 2014, Truman celebrated Constitution Day by inviting Danielle Allen, professor at the Institute for Advanced Study, who lectured on "Equality as the Foundation for Liberty: Reading the Declaration and Constitution Together.”

Maintaining tenure for faculty is another valuable tool in protecting academic freedom. With XX% of faculty tenured and a further XX% tenure-track, Truman promotes an environment where academic freedom is pervasive. The Faculty Handbook explains policies regarding tenure and academic freedom.

Truman also welcomes diverse perspectives through outside speakers. Many student groups provide the impetus for bringing in speakers, as well as certain departments, and the Funds Allotment Council disperses funds to supplement these speakers. Some of the groups supported in Fall 2014 included programs on global health issues, mental health awareness, Hispanic issues, Middle East politics, wildlife preservation, Vietnamese culture, a motivational speaker on living with disabilities, and gender identity.

Student media also provides many opportunities for expression of free speech. The Index is an award-winning student newspaper. It is published weekly and copies are free to the community. KTRM is the student radio station. Detours is a biannual travel magazine. TMN-TV broadcasts once weekly, with rebroadcasts on the local cable channels. Each media outlet is run by students, and students are the primary audience. While each has a faculty advisor, these mentors advise rather than control the media.

Sources

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- STUDENTAFFAIRS_Student Conduct Code_2012-04-14
2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

Support Services for Research and Scholarship Integrity

The University has published policies regarding guidelines for research led by faculty, staff and students. The President of the University has ultimate authority over research and scholarship integrity for students, staff, and faculty. The Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs work together to enforce academic integrity policies on campus.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a key mechanism for oversight and support to researchers. Truman’s IRB adheres to these principles:

A. Whereas, the participation of humans in research and training projects may raise fundamental ethical and civil rights questions, no distinctions in the monitoring of projects will be drawn between funded and unfunded projects, sponsored and unsponsored projects, or between projects carried out by students, faculty, or other University employees, on campus or off campus.

B. All activities involving humans as subjects must provide for the safety, health, and welfare of every individual. Rights, including the right of privacy, must not be unduly infringed upon.

C. The direct or potential benefits to the subject, and/or the importance of the knowledge gained, must outweigh the inherent risks to the individual.

D. Participation in projects must be voluntary and informed consent must be obtained from all subjects, unless this requirement is waived by the Institutional Review Board.

E. An individual does not abdicate any rights by consenting to be a research subject. A subject has the right to withdraw from a research project at any time or may refuse to participate without loss of benefits to which the subject would otherwise be entitled.

F. Safeguarding information about an individual that has been obtained in the course of an investigation is a primary obligation of the investigator.

Members of the IRB meet roughly twice a month during the academic year. Their website provides many resources on ethics in research. The site also provides forms and requirements specific to Truman’s review process.

The Faculty Handbook outlines expectations related to faculty conduct, including ethical teaching
As citizens, faculty responsibility extends beyond the “service” duties of particular committees: faculty must be leaders for championing the liberal arts and sciences values and activities that are the core of the University. Any healthy university is experimental and evolving, from its research and curriculum to its community values and structures; the Truman community pays particular attention to constant reflection on improvement. As faculty, the curriculum is the initial arena; however, as professionals, faculty also have a responsibility to evaluate their performance, individually and collectively. It is the faculty’s responsibility to evaluate themselves and the institution. As citizens of the Truman academic community, the disciplines, the wider professoriate, and the public community, faculty are responsible not only for acting as teachers and scholars, but also for sustaining higher education and ensuring the conditions that make learning and wisdom possible; faculty are the stewards of public resources, and constitute the character of the University. Faculty are to treat all members of the University community with respect, with particular attention to the professional ethics of faculty interactions: faculty respectfully nurture the diverse potential of colleagues, even as they challenge themselves toward excellence.

A Faculty Handbook committee has been created to help ensure that policies are clear and current.

The Academic Professional Development director and committee provide regular programs for faculty, several of which directly address issues of integrity. For example, two of the programs presented in Fall 2014 were "Linking, Embedding & Streaming: What's Legal? What's Not?" and "What Does Copyright Ownership Mean to Me?" The registrar annually sends out reminders about FERPA policy and what that means for faculty and staff. Each department has a liaison in the library who is able to help understand copyright and other relevant laws. As a specific example, instructors new to online teaching may face obstacles to understand the responsible use of information that is outside of their experience. Therefore, before faculty teach online courses, they must themselves complete an online course. This course is offered by the Teaching and Learning Technology Center staff. It includes both technological advice, and very specific information about ethical use of information resources and copyright law. As a final example, ITS frequently sends out reminders about copyright and use of resources.

**Guidance for Students to Use Information Resources Ethically**

Using information wisely is a crucial component of a liberal education, and Truman provides students with many opportunities to learn and practice these skills. As part of the first year experience, students attend a 50-minute library session that addresses basic library skills and ethical use of resources. Library 111 is a course offered for further instruction. All speak explicitly about ethical use of resources. Writing as Critical Thinking (ENG 190) is a required course in the LSP. The course description states that students will learn to “understand the importance of intellectual and academic honesty, including accurate, critical, and clear quotation and citation of the work of others.” According the Graduating Senior Questionnaire, 79% of graduating seniors report that the general education program was effective in helping them recognize unethical use of technology, including copyright and privacy issues.

Guidance in ethical use of resources is discussed in many courses throughout the curriculum, and programs build this guidance into the required coursework. For example, Communication majors discuss ethics in most of their courses and currently their capstone class is entitled Communication Ethics. Psychology majors study research ethics and information use explicitly within the research methods sequence (PSYC 266 and PSYC 466). Students in Chemistry are encouraged to take CHEM
360: Scientific Publishing, which covers issues of copyright, plagiarism, and professional issues in technical journalism, as well as the impact of misconduct in science on the integrity of scientific publishing. Students in the Master of Arts in Education program cover state standards for ethical use of information in all of their courses. Students in the Master of English program cover ethical use of information in nearly every course, but emphasize it in ENG 620: Compositional Theory and Pedagogy. These examples illustrate the larger phenomenon in which research is emphasized throughout a Truman education.

Truman is currently using TurnItIn.com as a resource for helping faculty and students understand intellectual property and avoid plagiarism. Copyright guidance is also available to all students on the University website. The Acceptable Use of Electronic Information Resources Policy makes Truman’s policy clear to students, staff, and faculty alike. Where appropriate, specific University policies also address ethical use of resources. For example, unauthorized use of copyrighted information is not permitted in posted materials. Students and student organizations must submit a copy of materials to be posted, and copyright infringement is one of the things the Center for Student Involvement discourages. Printing services carefully review materials to be printed, and aids in requesting copyright permission when appropriate.

Policies on Academic Honesty

The Student Conduct Code outlines expectations related to integrity within all aspects of the academic environment. The code is regularly updated and was last approved by the Board of Governors on August 2, 2014. Truman’s Office of Citizenship and Community Standards administers the Student Conduct Code, and offers resources to students and faculty on promoting academic honesty. The Office of Academic Affairs and Office of Student Affairs work together to enforce academic integrity policies on campus.

When a student is accused of academic dishonesty, another student or an instructor may make a report to the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. Statistics on reports of conduct code violations are published on the Student Affairs website. In AY 2013-2014, 27 charges pertaining to academic misconduct under the Student Code of Conduct were alleged. Of those charges, 17 were dismissed with a warning because the infraction was minor and the student was a first-time offender. Eight students were found “not responsible,” and two students were found “responsible” for an academic misconduct/dishonesty. Of the two students found “responsible,” one violation was based on cheating and the other was based on plagiarism.

A conduct form is provided on the University website to facilitate the reporting process. The relevant Department Chair and Dean also sign the form, which is then sent to the VPAA office. The instructor administers any sanctions relevant to the course, and the Department Chair, Dean, and VPAA may also impose sanctions including suspension and removal from the University. The VPAA may also notify the Office of Student Affairs. The student receives a warning letter informing them of the notification of academic misconduct, their rights and responsibilities in the process, and what they risk if they are dishonest in the future. If there is more than one notation of academic misconduct in the student’s file or the initial violation is very serious, a conduct hearing will occur. Students may appeal findings to the Department Chair, the Dean, and the VPAA.

Academic honesty is one component of a larger sense of integrity that Truman hopes to instill in students. One of our publicly stated desired characteristics of graduates is that they will “act ethically, responsibly, and with reflective judgment.” Most student do act ethically most of the time. For example, according to the EBI Student Leadership Assessment, over 89% of students "Follow the rules/regulations of the campus community" more than "moderately." This also fits with our current
campus theme of civic engagement. Many programs also have honor or integrity as explicit program outcomes. For example, the Military Science program teaches seven Core Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Each value is explained on a student’s first day, and the values are regularly reinforced at training events. The values are also printed on many of the products, such as the dog tags. Instructors share six vignettes of actual situations in which values were questioned. Students are encouraged to employ these behaviors in their personal and professional lives.

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- REGISTRAR_FERPA Policies_2014-January
- STUDENTAFFAIRS_Student Conduct Code_2012-04-14
2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

The Truman Board Code of Policies, Faculty Handbook, Staff Handbook, and Student Code of Conduct each lay out policies for integrity in educational practice. Policies are regularly reviewed and implemented through effective procedures.

In keeping with the spirit of the “Show Me” state, Truman State University values transparency. Policies, procedures, processes are all publicly available. The catalog is up to date and contains the information students need to be successful. Consumer information is communicated on a central website and includes student outcome data.

Members of the Board of Governors work on behalf of the State of Missouri, but not for the State of Missouri. Board members are well-qualified, and each brings relevant skills as well as knowledge of trends in higher education and the history of Truman as an institution. The Board holds public meetings, and reviews policies and procedures. However, the operations of the Faculty Senate show that the Faculty have clear control over curricular issues.

As a liberal arts and sciences institution, Truman faculty, staff, and students recognize the importance of academic freedom in intellectual endeavors. Published policies make this importance plain. A large percentage of tenured faculty create an environment where academic freedom flourishes.

Truman enhances academic freedom by underlining the need for academic integrity. Truman’s Institutional Review Board is a key mechanism for the responsible use of human subjects research. Guidance for students in the ethical use of information is woven through the curriculum. Academic honesty is required by the Student Conduct Code.

Sources

There are no sources.
3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

Currency of Programs

Truman State University strives to provide students with high quality education. During program reviews, faculty collectively consider whether programs are up to date and in line with best practice. (See Criterion 4A for more information on program review and 4B for more information on Student Learning Outcomes).

The 2008 University Strategic Plan defines the desired characteristics of Truman graduates.

"Truman graduates are creative, socially responsible leaders and engaged world citizens. They are responsible, informed, and compassionate. Upon graduation, they will have the tools and characteristics that will enable them to be active, successful participants in their worlds.

They will be known to:

- Ask questions and passionately seek knowledge;
- Strive for personal integrity and professional excellence;
- Demonstrate courageous, visionary, and service-oriented leadership;
- Act ethically, responsibly, and with reflective judgment;
- Appreciate ambiguity and thrive in unfamiliar, rapidly changing situations;
- Understand and articulate well-reasoned arguments;
- Welcome and value new and diverse perspectives;
- Live emotionally and physically healthy lives; and
- Give generously of their time, talents, and financial resources to causes in which they believe."

Though difficult to measure, these are goals that guide the creation of more specific learning outcomes.
Most undergraduate programs require that all students take a senior test in the discipline prior to graduation. Student performance on these exams is one of the tools used to decide whether the curriculum is helping students achieve the stated outcomes. Over 70% of Truman seniors score at or above the 50% percentile on nationally-normed tests, demonstrating that student performance is, in fact, at or above that of other institutions of higher education.

Alumni and employers are also surveyed about how well the curriculum accomplishes its goals. In the most recent Alumni survey, over 76.3% felt that their academic preparation was better than their current work colleagues’ and 75.8% felt it was better than the students’ in their post-baccalaureate educational programs. Ninety-three percent of the alumni believe that they understand the purpose of liberal arts and sciences, and 97.8% believe that they are able to perform as well or better than their colleagues, who may have earned degrees with a heavy emphasis on their discipline rather than liberal arts. Overall, employers rated Truman graduates as good to excellent, and 100% of employers said that they would hire another Truman graduate if they had an opening.

Another tool in measuring whether student performance is at appropriate levels is considering job placement rates and graduate school admissions. Ninety-two percent of Truman’s recent graduates are either employed or furthering their education by 3 months after graduation. In 2012, 100% of graduates who applied to law school were accepted to at least one program. The Career Center makes these data public on their website. See Criterion 4A for further honors and awards that show the success of Truman students.

Learning Goals across Programs

Student learning outcomes for each program and description of each course are made clear in the course catalog. The catalog is updated annually. In Spring 2013, faculty and staff at Truman spent a great deal of time discussing Lumina’s Degree Qualifications Profile. The program was discussed in open fora, in the Undergraduate Council, the Graduate Council, and the Faculty Senate. It was also discussed at the University Conference. Two of the original authors, Paul Gaston and Peter Ewell, were invited to campus to discuss the program. While the campus did not ultimately adopt the DQP, the campus-wide discussions were frequently about expectations of students at various levels. In other words, faculty considered the goals of their programs in light of these national standards for higher education, verifying that the goals for each level were appropriate.

Information from student surveys also helps gauge whether the curriculum is at the appropriate level. In comparison with COPLAC on the National Survey of Student Engagement, first year-students report more application of theories to practical problems than students at comparable institutions. Seniors typically report more academic challenge, more student-faculty interaction, more enriching educational experiences, and a more supportive campus environment. Further, approximately 72% of graduating seniors report spending more than 10 hours outside classes per week on course-related work. Fifteen percent report spending more than 25 hours per week. Ninety-two percent of graduating seniors report that their major courses are challenging.

Approximately 95% of Truman students are pursuing baccalaureate degrees, and most of the campus discussion focuses on undergraduate education. Graduate council has had extensive discussion on differentiation of undergraduate and graduate level courses. They have defined a graduate course as a course whose contents require of students a high level of cognitive processing such as synthesizing, conceptualizing, critically evaluating, and problem solving. Further, a graduate course requires a significant communication component, and prepares students to act as professionals.

Quality Across Delivery Method
Most courses at Truman are offered in a traditional format, and Truman has only one physical campus. Of courses offered online, most target regularly-enrolled students who are off campus in the summer months. Truman also has one certificate program that is active and fully online. Therefore, questions of quality across delivery method do not apply broadly.

Truman requested a special focused visit by HLC regarding online education in April 2011. Four online programs were approved. In part as response to that visit, President Paino established a Task Force on Online Education. They have developed an Online Strategic Plan. It identifies an online course as “a course wherein more than 75% of the faculty-student interaction and course content delivery is achieved by electronic means.” The plan is not yet fully implemented, but establishes a clear path forward. For example, it creates a website (http://online.truman.edu/students.asp) for students on how to succeed in online courses, including how resources are made available to students with no physical presence on campus.

Most online courses are offered by the same faculty who teach traditional courses, and direct comparisons can be made. Truman’s strong assessment program also makes it easy for faculty and programs to pull from existing data in order to evaluate quality of various offerings. For example, one faculty member in psychology evaluated both grades and senior test scores for his students in online vs. traditional sections of the same course. There was no difference in performance on the appropriate subtest of the Major Field Achievement tests. He also asked students about the rigor of the course, and 94% found the course to be at least as rigorous than the typical traditional course.

Though Truman does not have a significant history of dual credit offerings, we currently offer a calculus course at Kirksville High School using an appropriately-qualified high school teacher who also regularly teaches on-campus courses in the Truman math department. Additionally, Truman offers college algebra and plane trigonometry (MATH 186 and MATH 187) to a variety of high schools throughout Missouri. These offerings use a self-paced, competency-based, computer-assisted delivery model, which is identical to the model used for their on-campus equivalents. In the competency-based program, students are guided through instructional materials by a responsive software package and take exams proctored by their local instructor. While not strictly dual credit by the definitions of the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE), or the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), Truman strives to ensure that best practices for concurrent enrollment activities are still maintained. Course objectives, content, and assessments are identical for both on-campus and high school offerings. MDHE is currently reviewing and revising its dual credit policies, and Truman is actively involved in the conversation.

Truman State University has piloted several programs during the 2012-2013 school year that do not easily fall into any one college credit category as defined by MDHE (i.e. dual enrollment, Dual credit, early college, etc.). In other words, Truman’s dual credit programs are better viewed as hybrids, containing the best of several methods of providing college credit for advanced students. Through discussions with the Truman Dual Credit Director as well as a review of Truman’s responses on the Dual Credit Survey, it was determined that these programs closely follow MDHE policy as far as best practices are concerned. MDHE recommends that they be designated compliant until their programs can be reevaluated, their type determined and defined in collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.”

Sources
There are no sources.

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

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

Argument

Truman’s General Education Program: The Liberal Studies Program

“Education must be a dynamic force in the building and development of a democracy. Our schools must provide the kind of training that will equip young people to make the most of their own capacities and find a place for themselves in our complex world.” —Harry S. Truman

In accord with our mission as Missouri’s only public liberal arts and sciences institution, Truman is committed to a general education program that prepares students to be active participants in a democratic society. As a liberal arts and sciences institution, Truman requires that at least 63 of a student’s total credit hours must meet requirements as LAS (Liberal Arts and Sciences) hours. Our current general education curriculum is called the Liberal Studies Program (LSP), and is required of all degree-seeking undergraduates unless they have previously acquired an Associates degree. The key components of the LSP are Essential Skills, Modes of Inquiry, and Interconnecting Perspectives.

The Essential Skills are appropriately named, because they are entry-level courses required of all students. Writing as Critical Thinking (ENG 190) helps students understand and appreciate the central role writing and critical thinking play in becoming an active student of the liberal arts and sciences. Public Speaking (COMM 170) draws on rhetorical and other communication theory to illuminate the personal responsibility of each citizen speaker, particularly the call to civility through reason. Elementary Functions (MATH 186) (consisting of the algebraic, exponential, and trigonometric functions) is a required course because the skills involved show up so often in subsequent mathematics courses and appear most often in applications in other fields. A Statistics course (STAT 190) is required because a liberally educated person must be capable of being both a producer and a consumer of statistical information with some basic level of competency. Personal Well-Being (HLTH 195/196/198) includes both knowledge goals and activity goals which promote a physically and mentally healthy life. Finally, computer literacy entails understanding and knowledge
of computer usage for processing and communicating information. Information comes in many forms, including text, numbers, pictures, and sound. While students may take CS 120 (Computer Literacy) to fulfill this requirement, they are permitted to gain the knowledge through course-embedded experiences. Faculty Senate has recently considered updating the computer literacy requirement to encompass digital and information literacy.

In addition to the Essential Skills, students must take six Modes of Inquiry, three courses from each of two broad groups. The first group is Qualitative Modes, and includes Aesthetic – Visual and Performing Arts, Aesthetic – Literature, Historical, and Philosophical and Religious. The Quantitative Modes include Mathematical, Scientific – Life Science, Scientific – Physical Science, and Social Science. Each mode is intended to introduce a particular way of understanding the world and of evaluating evidence or quality.

The final category of the LSP is Interconnecting Perspectives. These begin with the Truman Program, which students begin shortly before their first semester. The Truman Program begins one course of the student’s full term courses, and includes orientation to student life and campus citizenship. Another Interconnecting Perspective is Writing-Enhanced coursework. Students must take at least three writing enhanced courses, in any discipline where they are offered, including their major discipline. The Intercultural Interconnecting Perspective requires direct experiences with cultural diversity and cultural interactions. Students can have these experiences embedded in courses or can study abroad. The Foreign Language requirement means that all students have elementary proficiency in one language other than English. Finally, the Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar (JINS) is the capstone of the LSP. Students in JINS explore interdisciplinarity and prepare for life in a complex world in which critical ideas, issues, and decisions require more than a single mode of inquiry or knowledge base.

The Philosophy Behind the LSP

The outcomes for the LSP (Liberal Studies Program) are all publicly available in the college catalog. (See also Criterion 4A for more on how the outcomes are evaluated). Truman periodically reviews the curriculum. For example, in 2006, the Undergraduate Council appointed a Commission on Undergraduate Curriculum for a comprehensive review of the general education program. Their work continued for over three years. In the first phase, they assembled a list of Curriculum Design Principles, noting that a well-constructed curriculum accomplishes all of the following:

- achieves the mission and the learning outcomes
- is achievable by students in four years.
- challenges and engages students.
- goes beyond a list of courses.
- includes consideration of pedagogy.
- is transparent.
- Is coherent and synergistic.
- features vertical integration.
- strikes a happy balance between innovation and tradition.
- has significant faculty support.
- places reasonable demands on faculty, staff, and institutional resources.
- includes a plan for demonstration of student learning, and
- satisfies our obligations to the State of Missouri.

In the first phase report, the Commission on Undergraduate Curriculum reviewed several definitions of the Liberal Arts and Sciences. In the artes-liberales tradition, specific skill and knowledge are
required for all free people. In contrast, the liberal-free traditions include a more individualistic path to knowledge marked by dialectic and discovery. The committee noted that liberal arts approaches have always welcomed diverse perspectives, and therefore drew from both notions of the liberal arts and sciences for the foundations of Truman’s curriculum. The framework for curriculum presented in the Phase 1 report was endorsed by over 80% of faculty.

The University’s Liberal Studies Program (LSP) adopted the following standards from Phi Beta Kappa to help clarify the characteristics of liberal arts and sciences courses and a liberal education:

1. “In acquiring a liberal education, the undergraduate will study primarily subjects which illuminate the human condition, subjects which explore aspects of taste and feeling, of the reasoning process, of the physical and moral worlds, of individual and group responsibility, of the meaning of life as a whole;”
2. that “a liberal education is not primarily vocational;”
3. that “a liberal education seeks to quicken the mind and spirit by encouraging the full development of human capacities;” and
4. that “it is true that often a liberal education may have a definitive market value and may in that sense be considered vocational. It is true also that vocational programs sometimes contain liberal content. Nevertheless, the main lines of cleavage can, in practice, be seen. It is not difficult to distinguish between broad cultivation and technical competence.” (Phi Beta Kappa: The Founding of New Chapters, 1985, pp. 3-4)

The second phase of the curriculum commission’s work involved environmental scanning. General education programs at aspirational peer institutions were reviewed and considered. The final phase of the curriculum commission involved specific recommendations about curricular change. While not all of the suggestions were adopted by governance, several changes followed. For example, previous versions of the general education required seven of eight Modes of Inquiry. The current system requires three Quantitative and three Qualitative Modes.

**Degree Programs Build on Broad Goals of Information Use and Communication**

All Truman programs require students to collect, analyze, and communicate information. The LSP has many of these goals embedded in the general education curriculum, and degree programs build on these skills. For example, the Writing as Critical Thinking Essential Skill requires that students engage in all of the following:

1. use critical thinking to analyze readings as well as other forms of media (such as photographs, sound recordings, or film);
2. recognize and emulate the writing process of experienced writers;
3. meet the needs of readers with varied expectations and backgrounds by using appropriate style and mechanics;
4. use critical thinking, critical reading, reflection, and discussion to compose engaging, well-organized writing;
5. revise their writing using instructor and peer response as well as self-assessment;
6. make progress towards computer literacy; and
7. understand the importance of intellectual and academic honesty, including accurate, critical, and clear quotation and citation of the work of others.

Writing-enhanced courses build on these skills, and every degree program has at least one writing-enhanced course offered within the program. During program review, faculty consider how well students develop these skills. The Writing Across the University Committee also facilitates campus-
wide conversation about quality writing. Assessment data are available for many of these skills. For example, the Portfolio Chapter of the Assessment Almanac routinely shows scores of student writing across programs, and shows the courses from which students submit their best writing.

The current University initiative for curricular mapping will give programs the opportunity to revisit where in the curriculum each skill is practiced. Students currently verify that they engage in collecting and communicating information. For example, 65% of graduating seniors report using library resources to gather research materials and information often or very often. Eighty-six percent reported that they often or very often applied the knowledge and skills gained in one discipline to learning in other discipline. Sixty-five percent applied knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to co-curricular activities. Ninety-two percent reported that courses in the major were often or very often challenging. According to NSSE, students find more academic challenge at Truman than at comparison COPLAC schools. In the Transformative Experiences Questionnaire, 39% of graduating students reported that undergraduate research was a transformative experience for them personally.

Though graduate programs are understandably more focused on the methods of a single discipline, graduate students also engage in collecting and communicating information. Truman’s Graduate Program Objectives are:

1. To graduate master’s degree students who possess appropriate depth of knowledge in specific disciplines.
2. To graduate master’s degree students qualified to enter and succeed in doctoral programs at leading universities.
3. To graduate master’s degree students able to perform in appropriate professional and academic positions.
4. To graduate master’s degree students who exhibit the attributes of a liberally educated person.

Each graduate program has courses that are designed to teach students these processes. For example, in Communication Disorders, students in CMDS 667G: Research Methodology complete an entire research project, including IRB approval, which they present to the campus community. They also practice professional presentations of clinical cases in CMDS 676G; these cases are videotaped and the students write reflection papers on their performance. In CMDS 677G, students discuss and reflect on how they have developed their professional communication skills, and they then discuss their individual progress with a panel of faculty.

**Truman’s Education Celebrates Human Diversity**

Celebration of diversity is one of the goals listed in the mission documents of the University, and is interwoven throughout the curriculum. Truman’s core curriculum has an intercultural requirement that every undergraduate student must satisfy prior to graduation. Data from our graduating senior questionnaire show that 89% of students found the curriculum adequate to “appreciating cultural diversity through studying one’s own or other’s societies.” According to the 2014 National Survey of Student Engagement, Truman first-year students were more likely than students at similar institutions to report that the institution encouraged contact among students from different backgrounds. Reversing a previous trend, seniors were somewhat less likely to report having included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments than seniors at COPLAC peer institutions. On the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, faculty are asked to answer questions about one of the courses they teach. In these responses, 70% respond that the course has "class discussions or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.)"
Furthermore, in an era of dramatically shrinking foreign language instruction in higher education, Truman has maintained language study as a degree requirement. Each major requires elementary proficiency in a foreign language to graduate, and most Bachelor of Arts degrees require intermediate proficiency in a foreign language. The University offers study in more than ten languages, and these emphasize speaking proficiency as well as study of cultural, historical, literary, and social aspects of other nations. Eighty-five percent of graduates rate their foreign language experience as helpful in understanding other cultures. Foreign language student clubs and service learning experiences in communities complement classroom instruction. Some of these opportunities occur in Milan, a small town in our region with a large Spanish-speaking population. One of the living learning communities, Casa Hispanica, emphasizes many of the same aspects within the residence environment.

Several of Truman’s minors also reflect attention to human diversity. For example, the Asian Studies, African/African-American Studies, Celtic Studies, and International Studies minors incorporate the study of ethnic and cultural differences. Women's and Gender studies allows students to understand diversity related to gender identity. The Disabilities Studies minor also addresses diversity in human experience. Cultural Crossroads, Queer Theory, and Race, Class, & Gender are among most popular interdisciplinary courses.

The University’s success with its study abroad program and its longstanding commitment to international student enrollment on the Kirksville campus speak to the value it places on multicultural experiences. Each year, Truman hosts approximately 350 international students from 40 countries. Over 20% of Truman graduates study abroad. According to the graduating student questionnaire, 66% of graduates report having often or very often interacted with individuals from other cultures while on campus.

Students acknowledge the focus on diversity within the curriculum. In the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 88% of students report that their general education courses in literature were adequate in helping them understand the diversity of human experience and creative expression in literature. Eighty-eight percent also reported that their history courses were useful in understanding the social and aesthetic richness of different cultures.

Truman’s location in the rural Midwest limits the natural opportunities for students to interact with people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The population of Adair county, where Truman is located, is over 94% white. One of the ways that Truman encourages understanding of diversity is through a strong international education program. In Fall 2014, 6.4% of Truman’s population were international students. These students bring a wealth of cultural experience to Truman, and add this experience to both campus and the community. In contrast, Truman's location within the rural Midwest does create opportunities for students to understand diversity in rural vs. urban cultures, as well as economic diversity. Many service-learning options and courses such as JINS 325: Rural America help students take advantage of these kinds of diversity.

Similarly, Truman has a strong study abroad program. NSSE data shows that Truman students are significantly more likely to study abroad than students at other COPLAC institutions. Study Abroad opportunities are plentiful, and students can select from programs in over 50 countries. Further, students can select programs of varying lengths that are offered at different times. They can choose programs led by Truman faculty or by partner programs. A study abroad stipend is offered as part of the University’s top scholarship, the Pershing Scholarship, awarded to incoming freshmen. All of these options make study abroad a popular choice for students to expand their appreciation of human diversity.

Graduate programs also have appreciation for diversity built into the student experience. For example,
MUSIC 530G covers topics in World Music, and discusses cultural context of composition and performance. Further, the format of most choral performances allows for exploration of music from different cultural perspectives. In Accounting, students in ACCT 553G, International Management, discuss how differences in cultures require different approaches to financial management as well as differences in communication style. In the Master of Arts in Education program, attention to diversity required by state standards, and students complete signature assignments on teaching to diverse perspectives. In the Master of Arts in English program, attention to perspective and cultural context is critical to literary interpretation. Thus attention to diversity is woven throughout the curriculum at all levels.

Please also see the information on diversity in Criterion 1C.

**Students and Faculty Contribute to Scholarship.**

The primary mission of Truman State University is student learning, and Truman’s mission encourages students’ pursuit of knowledge. The Office of Student Research helps facilitate some of this student research and creativity. One of the most visible efforts is the annual Student Research Conference. Each spring semester, classes are cancelled for one day for a celebration of student research. In spring 2014, there were 452 student presentations. This work was completed by 459 students and mentored by 133 faculty.

Truman also supports many programs explicitly designed to facilitate student research. The TruScholars program invites students to complete a mentored research project during the summer. The program provides support for research materials, regular information sessions, paid mentors, and student stipends. For students who need research support during the regular year, Grants-In-Aid of Scholarship and Research are available. The McNair program also offers students a summer research internship for under-represented and first-generation college students. Exceptional student work is then published in the McNair Scholarly Journal. Truman is also a major supporter of the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Truman sent 27 students in 2012, 11 in 2013, and 24 in 2014.

In addition to centrally-supported student research, most programs actively incorporate student research into degree requirements. Research opportunities by program (http://osr.truman.edu/research/index.asp) discuss typical experiences in some of the larger programs. Further, much scholarship exists in the co-curriculum. For example, Windfall is a literary magazine published by students. It goes beyond showcasing student literary achievement in print: it also hosts writing workshops and poetry readings. According to the graduating student questionnaire, over 56% of students report using information used in class in the co-curriculum, and over 60% report using information from the co-curriculum in class, indicating that this kind of cross-over scholarship is important.

Truman has a Teacher-Scholar model, in which faculty enhance teaching through scholarship and vice versa. Truman has begun to use software from Digital Measures to better track faculty research and creative work. The systems is not yet fully implemented. The current data suggest that in AY 2013-2014, Truman faculty produced XX books, XX book chapters, XX peer-reviewed journal articles, XX juried shows, and XX conference presentations. Truman faculty and staff have also received several grants. Many of these are directly relevant to teaching and learning. For example, since 2010, Truman has received five grants from the National Science Foundation alone total over $4,000,000 specifically targeted toward enriched experiences for STEM students.
Sources

- UGC_Reports from LSP Modes and Essential Skills Reviews_2014
3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Argument

Truman Faculty

For the Fall 2014 semester, Truman State University had 342 FTE faculty, 318 full-time and 73 part-time instructional staff. Two hundred thirty-two faculty members are tenured, and another 26 are on the tenure track. Forty-four graduate students taught undergraduate courses. In the 2013-2014 COPLAC comparisons, Truman’s 16.3:1 ratio was similar to the COPLAC average of 16.5:1. With X% full professors, the stability of the faculty is exemplary. The average years in service for a Truman faculty member is X years.

According to NSSE, Truman students are more likely to report working with a faculty member on research and on something outside of coursework than are students from other COPLAC institutions. Seventy-seven percent of graduating seniors report communicating with faculty outside of class often or very often. Collectively, these data suggest a strong faculty, able to oversee curriculum development, implementation, and assessment.

In Fall 2013, Truman did an extensive study of faculty teaching load. This allowed a more in-depth look at how faculty allot their time. [Highlights from load survey.] Faculty also help students learn in the co-curriculum. Every student organization at Truman has either a faculty or a staff advisor.

New students are advised by staff in the Center for Academic Excellence. Junior and Senior students have faculty advisors. The timing of students’ transition between advisors depends on the program and the number of students within the program. Some programs have a faculty co-advisor in their first year. Students in most programs are assigned a faculty advisor in their second year. Advising is considered a normal part of faculty load, and advising effectiveness is reviewed as part of the promotion and tenure process.
As previously stated, compared to COPLAC and other comparison institutions, Truman has solid numbers of faculty relative to students. However, the number of faculty is slowly decreasing because of limits in state funding and projected decreases in Truman’s target student demographic. (Please also see Criterion 5 for how these factors present planning obstacles). In an effort to be more efficient, Truman has reduced the number of faculty from 375 full-time faculty in 2000 to 318 full-time faculty in 2014. In recognition of the personal costs to faculty and to the sense of community, most of these cuts have been made through retirement and natural attrition. However, this means that the cuts have neither been equal across departments nor targeted to areas of need. This issue is slowly being addressed by hiring only in critical areas, rather than filling vacated positions as faculty retire. Programs are also looking at curricula, and considering changes that optimize faculty resources. Please also see Criterion 4B for examples of how these changes are tied to program review.

Instructor Credentials

Truman has high standards for credentialing of academic faculty. Of full time faculty, XX% have terminal degrees. The faculty handbook notes “Truman State University is an equal employment opportunity, affirmative action employer. The University seeks to employ highly qualified faculty and staff members with strong credentials in the liberal arts and sciences and with diverse backgrounds and educational experiences. Recruitment of faculty focuses on hiring individuals who reflect rich liberal arts backgrounds, exemplary academic records, evidence of scholarly performance and research, evidence of quality instruction, and a strong desire to teach undergraduate students.”

Only members of the graduate faculty teach graduate courses, direct graduate research, and serve as academic advisors for graduate students. Appointments to the graduate faculty are for a term of five years. Faculty members must have the following qualifications for appointment to the graduate faculty:

- possess a terminal degree or exhibit professional competence that provides a special expertise to teach courses and direct research at the graduate level;
- show evidence of scholarly productivity such as research articles in refereed journals, demonstrated external funding, presentations of juried papers before professional audiences, or demonstrated exhibits of proficiency in such fields as creative arts and music;
- demonstrate interest and participation in scholarly organizations transcending the local campus by attending regular meetings, lectures or conferences of learned societies in his or her discipline, and by maintaining membership in at least one such society;
- show evidence of willingness and ability to direct thesis work and independent study at the graduate level or to serve on thesis committees; and,
- be active in graduate programs through regular involvement and through teaching of graduate courses, participation in thesis committees, and/or direction of research.

All of the courses Truman currently offers, including those with concurrent enrollment (dual-credit or competency-based) characteristics, have a regularly appointed Truman instructor as the faculty member of record. Concurrent enrollment courses using the competency-based model have high school teachers that act as mentors and tutors and software that delivers instructional content under the supervision of a managing Truman faculty member. Truman does not currently participate in credit-bearing consortia. Professional Academic Advisors must also have strong academic credentials, including a master's degree.

Faculty hiring procedures involve careful checking of faculty credentials and abilities. All instructors are required to list degrees and provide transcripts in the initial phases of the job search. Faculty and staff credentials are also made transparent to the community. A faculty listing, with
degrees, is contained within the catalog. Faculty biographies and credentials are also found on the web pages for each department.

**Faculty Evaluation**

Truman has had a faculty evaluation process for many years that focused on faculty goals, improvement, and performance. Since the last HLC accreditation visit, Truman has worked to make the process more uniform across the institution and more clearly codified. The current faculty handbook states “The following categories of faculty engage in an annual formative performance review with their Department chairs: all temporary, including part-time, faculty; pre-tenure tenure eligible faculty; tenured faculty at midpoint to their next promotion review. Regular faculty who have achieved the rank of full professor will have a formative review with their chairs every three years. While the primary purpose of the formative review is to assist the faculty member in continuous improvement, the review also serves as a record of employment for subsequent action related to performance.” A schedule for annual reviews is created by the dean and communicated to the faculty each year.

Further, the faculty handbook states that “The formative reviews conducted at mid-point in the timeline for eligibility to apply for promotion serve a special purpose: to provide a peer evaluation assessing overall performance in the areas of teaching, advising, scholarship, and service, and to identify areas of focus for development and improvement. The peer review process for the mid-point review varies from department to department, but in every case, the goal is to give the faculty member under review a strong sense of whether he or she is on track to have a positive promotion review when the time comes. Each Department chair will provide written guidelines for the mid-point review process noting required materials to be submitted by the faculty member under review, as well as a timeline for completing the process.”

Finally, the handbook notes that “tenure is granted to those eligible faculty who have demonstrated competence in the areas of teaching/advising, scholarship, and service, and who have been reviewed by their faculty peers, their Department Chair, and the Dean, and whose review materials have been approved by the Executive VPAA, the President, and the Board of Governors.” Discipline-specific requirements for the application are available in departmental offices. Disciplines are expected to set specific requirements for the types of evidence to be submitted as well as the format for the submissions, but all faculty are expected to include in their applications evidence of teaching including student course evaluations, examples of course syllabi and assignments - a record of scholarly accomplishment, and a summary of their service for the period under review. Faculty are encouraged to consider developing a teaching portfolio that includes, in addition to the above-mentioned materials, a reflective statement on teaching and teaching philosophy, samples of student work, advising evaluations, results of peer reviews and classroom observations, and letters from peers, administrators who know the faculty member’s work at Truman.

As noted above, student feedback is an important part of faculty evaluation. All instructors are evaluated every semester for every course with over 5 students enrolled. Students are also invited to rate faculty on a common scale, and these results are made available to all enrolled students, with links to course registration.

**Faculty Development**

The faculty evaluation process described above helps assure that faculty are current in their disciplines. There is also good support available to maintain professional standards. The Academic Professional Development Center (APDC) coordinates many of the support structures. In 2010,
Truman temporarily suspended the previous Center for Teaching and Learning, and created the APDC in 2013. The change was largely budgetary, and made an attempt to create the best use of resources. In the interim, the Office of Academic Affairs directly oversaw faculty development programming. Currently, the APDC makes many resources available for faculty, including print resources, online resources, and regularly-occurring speakers and events. The APDC also coordinates new faculty orientation.

Though the APDC is the visible center for faculty development, several other structures support good teaching. One of these is the Writing Across the University Committee. The current committee activities are listed as the following:

- discovering, understanding, and assessing the needs of instructors who are helping their students use writing as a mode of learning;
- assessing the writing being done by students at Truman, both as part of the overall portfolio project and in ways as of yet to be confirmed (standing-based assessment, incoming student assessment, longitudinal ELL assessment, etc.);
- assessing the effectiveness of the current WE model and finding ways to support and enhance WE instruction;
- assessing the effectiveness of the writing element of the current JINS model and finding ways to support and enhance JINS instruction;
- developing a series of workshops to address the established and discoverable concerns of faculty who regularly incorporate writing into their courses;
- and developing a website as a means of support for writing-based instruction on campus, through the provision of a selected but wide-scope bibliography on writing instruction and instruction-through-writing in higher education, through the offer of faculty-developed guides on relevant topics (e.g. "Responding Effectively to Student Writing"), and through the role of the website as a data warehouse for writing-related research done at Truman.

Graduate teaching assistants (GTRAs) have access to the faculty resources described thus far, but they also have additional support and mentoring. For example, GTRAs in English enroll in ENG 698G: Evaluating College English Teaching. In the course students work together to discuss pedagogical issues and are evaluated on their classroom teaching. Students in this course also use prepared vignettes to discuss sexual harassment and other University policies.

Another way of supporting good professional development is to recognize outstanding faculty. Between 2002 and 2011, Truman was able to award the Walker & Doris Allen Fellowship for Faculty Excellence to three faculty each year. The fellowship included a $10,000 award. The University also recognizes an outstanding advisor each year through the William O. Lee Advising Award as well as a research mentor of the year.

Truman has adopted a teacher-scholar model, in which faculty research enhances teaching and vice versa. The faculty handbook clarifies this role of research: “As scholars, faculty are responsible for contributing to knowledge, wisdom, and art: in their professional fields, in the intersections and interstices of the disciplines and new areas of study, and in the scholarship of learning. It is the faculty’s duty not only to transmit cultures and to produce the useful, but also to evaluate and challenge existing habits of thought and practice. It is the faculty’s duty to continue to learn and grow professionally.” Truman has recently begun using Digital Measures software, in part to track faculty scholarship and creativity.

Grants for faculty research are often, but not always available for award. For example, in the 2013-2014 academic year, the Academic Affairs Office created a program to support the academic vision.
Faculty were encouraged to apply for Truman Academic Development Support Grants. Examples included travel to conferences, workshops, and seminars, supplies and materials, equipment, evaluation costs, memberships, translation costs, pre-publication and publication costs, as well as for paying student research assistants. Individual schools and departments also establish competitive grant programs when funds allow.

Money for faculty travel to conferences is typically built in to department budgets. While there is variability in how these funds are distributed, most departments are allocated approximately $1000 per faculty member per year. Faculty who have papers or presentations to conferences are typically funded for these conferences at least once a year. Additional travel may be requested if department funds allow.

Truman has a generous sabbatical program. After completing 7 years of service, faculty may apply for a single semester at 100% pay or two semesters at 80%. Sabbaticals are competitive: for the 2014 academic year, XX% of them were granted. However, sabbaticals were not funded in AY 2011-2012, meaning that more faculty are currently eligible than might otherwise be predicted. In total, 52 full-year and 45 one-semester sabbaticals have been funded since 2005.

Instructor Accessibility

Maintaining contact with students is part of the faculty handbook. The current handbook states the following. “Students should have reasonable opportunity to meet with their faculty outside of class hours. All faculty are expected to maintain office hours. Office hours should be posted at the faculty office and should be on file in the Division Office. The expectation for full-time faculty is ten hours per week during the academic year. Part-time faculty should consult with their dean about keeping office hours.” Course evaluations also include items about instructor availability, and faculty reviews consider this information.

For online courses, office hours are a less helpful way to encourage accessibility for students. The Online Strategic Plan therefore recommends that faculty for online courses have virtual office hours. They are also strongly encouraged to give students information about how quickly email messages or online posts will typically be answered. Training in effective types of communication and on expectations for faculty is part of the required train for instructors of online courses.

Staff Development

Advisors of student organizations are supported through the Center for Student Involvement. Among the types of support available are, Event Management Resources, including information campus-specific policies, a website with important forms for organizations and advisors, frequent emails from CSI, consultative services and advice from the Center for Student Involvement Staff.

During University Conference day, professional development has been made available for staff, faculty and students. Some of the development presentations at the 2014 University Conference targeted specifically to staff were Understanding Your Responsibilities as a Faculty or Staff Member under FERPA; Benefits, Health Care and the Results of the Wellness Screenings; How to Get the Most from Degree Works; Learn More About Sustainability at Truman; Information Security Awareness: Protecting Yourself from Identity Theft; Violent Incident Survivor Session; Learn More About WordPress; Tips and Tricks for Using Exchange Email; and Is a Four-Day Work Week Feasible at Truman, Especially During the Summer?

Staff development is a significant portion of the Student Affairs budget. Conferences, webinars,
books, seminars and speakers comprised 39% of the Student Affairs Operational Budget. The Center for Academic Excellence financially supports travel to professional conferences for academic advisory. CAE weekly staff meeting also frequently involve professional development relevant to advisors. The Business Office offers regular workshops for staff on the student information systems and budget software. The Staff Handbook makes it clear that hours spent in activities and travel which are approved or required for job training or professional development will be considered as hours worked, thus encouraging participation.

Sources

- APDC_Event List_2013-11-13
- APDC_Instructor Resources_2013
- CAE_Overview of Academic Advising_2013-Spring
- CAE_Qual of Academic Advisors_2008-Spring
- HR_Staff Hiring Procedures_2013
3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Argument

Student Support Services

There are several opportunities and services available for Truman students. These are publicized online and in the student handbook. The following offices are among those that report to the Office of Student Affairs:

1. Career Center
2. Center for Student Involvement (CSI)
3. Food Service
4. Student Health Center
5. Disability Services
6. Multicultural Affairs Center (the MAC)
7. Residence Life
8. Id Office
9. Student Recreation Center
10. Women’s Resource Center
11. Student Union Building
12. University Counseling Services

Other offices that are available to support students, include, but are not limited to:

1. Center for Academic Excellence (advising staff)
2. Center for International Education/Study Abroad
3. Edwin C. Carpenter Language Learning Center
4. Financial Aid
5. International Student Affairs Office
6. Office of Student Research
7. Writing Center

One of the challenges presented by having many support services comes from helping students
understand where to go for support. To help with this, Truman publishes **Where to go for Answers at Truman**. Support services also post fliers on bulletin board, maintain Facebook pages, and/or advertise on student media.

Data suggest that students are generally satisfied with the support services offered. In the National Survey of Student Engagement, students report that the University provides support for their overall well-being more than do students at other NSSE institutions. They also report that the institution emphasizes use of learning support. According to the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 89% of students report being satisfied or very satisfied with the services offered by University Counseling Services. Fewer than 15% report never using the writing center, language lab, computer labs, or tutorial services. Nearly 94% of seniors are satisfied with recreational facilities. In contrast, only 38% of students are satisfied with parking availability. This is interesting given there are over 2300 spaces reserved for students, and over 2800 spaces are available outside of business hours. Furthermore, students pay only $115 annually for parking permits, much less than at many institutions.

According to data from the Missouri College Health Behaviors survey, mental health counseling is one of the most needed services for Truman’s population. University Counseling Services (UCS) has five full-time counselors and publishes an annual report on how these services are used. For example, in 2012-2013, UCS saw 550 students in 3536 sessions. The counseling center is both housed with and managed alongside other health services, facilitating integration of care.

An academic example of a student support service comes from the Writing Center. In Academic Year 2013-2014, over one in six students visited the Writing Center for consultation. Specifically, 1109 individuals came in for 2250 consultations. Eighteen percent of these were non-native speakers. On a 1-5 scale, clients typically rate consultants 4.8 or higher on knowledge and friendliness.

Given the national focus on employability of college graduates, Truman's Career Center is an especially important resource for students. The center coordinates print and online resources for current students and alumni. For example, the center has staff members who help students prepare resumes and cover letters. The Career Center hosts several annual events, including a grad school prep week and a Career Expo. During Career Expo, employers come to campus and speak to students about job opportunities. For example, in the Fall 2014 Expo, there were 110 registered organizations and 710 student attendees. Leading up to the Expo, the Career Center hosts workshops and an etiquette dinner to help students prepare for their search. The center also hold an annual Alumni mock interview event, where experienced alumni help train current students in interviewing skills.

**Remediation and Placement Exams**

Because Truman is a highly-selective institution and our mission is to educate highly prepared students, most students come in ready for college-level work. Of course, even well-prepared students have differences in proficiency, so placement exams are offered in Math, and in Spanish, French, German, and Latin. The faculty in Classical and Modern Languages routinely monitor the usefulness of the placement exams. For example, faculty in Spanish have noted that the exams often place heritage speakers at a relatively high level. Yet the subsequent classroom performance of heritage speakers suggests that they would benefit from instruction at a level below where the placement would test them. Because of this, placement tests are used in conjunction with grades in that language, number of courses, and when the courses were taken. Each student receives an individualized recommendation. Students who have experience in Ancient Greek, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, or Russian meet directly with faculty to determine placement, rather than taking placement tests.
In order to place students in the most appropriate mathematics classes, they complete both a placement exam and a self-assessment of math skills. Faculty in the Mathematics department use these measures in addition to transcripts to make a recommendation for placement. Students are free to take the recommendation or to sign up for a class level above the recommendation. They can register for classes below the recommendation provided they do not already have college credit for those courses.

Truman attempts to place students according to their skills, even when their transcripts do not reflect all of those skills. For Public Speaking (COMM 170), students can test out of the introductory course using the Speech Essential Skill Test-Out Procedure. This consists of two parts: a written online communication exam and delivering a persuasive speech. Students who score high enough on the exam are invited to give a speech when they arrive on campus in the fall. The online exam consists of 50 multiple choice questions that test both theory and practice. Similarly, Writing as Critical Thinking (ENG 190) has a challenge option for students who believe their writing skills are beyond the introductory level.

Truman’s CLEP and IB credit policies help ensure that students transfer in appropriate credit while starting at the appropriate level. For most courses, a score of 3 is required for credit in the introductory level. A score of 5 may also earn credit for the 200 level course in that area. The policies are listed on the University website to help students and K-12 educators understand the process and prepare effectively.

Transfer of credit for graduate-level courses is rare. However, many undergraduate students take graduate courses before completion of their undergraduate degree. Prerequisites for graduate courses are listed in the catalog, and advisors work closely with students to help them understand when they are eligible to take graduate courses.

**Academic Advising**

The Center for Academic Excellence provides students with programs and services to enhance learning and in-class performance. It offers academic peer tutoring services (individual, group, online) in a variety of courses, support for group study, and learning strategy workshops. The staff in The Center for Academic Excellence helps students make a smooth academic and social transition to the University, beginning with the first-year experience (Truman Week) and transfer student orientation. Academic Advisors assist all new students with registration and ensure that students find the campus resources they need for success. They also teach courses such as INDV 150: Book and Discussion, which allow their advisees to connect with each other as well as their advisor. In addition, the Center for Academic Excellence co-sponsors many events, including the International Film Festival and student-initiated programs.

Faculty advise the majority of undergraduate students, and advising is considered part of faculty load. Typically, faculty are not assigned advisees until the faculty member's second year at Truman, allowing time for both formal training and for experience with campus procedures. Seventy-nine percent of students report being satisfied with advising in their major.

Advising for graduate students is primarily completed by graduate faculty. For example, in music, Master of Arts students are first assigned to the graduate director and then to a faculty advisor in their area of concentration. As an alternative example, in the Master of Arts in Education program, students have a professional advisor. The advisor has a master's degree herself, and advises students at both the graduate and undergraduate level. In Accounting, much of the course registration advising happens at the undergraduate level, so that students can take full advantage of graduate offerings even though
they are often only on campus for that program for a single year. Students who enter the graduate program in accounting from undergraduate programs other than Truman get special advising from the Director of Graduate Studies in Accounting.

**Instructional Infrastructure**

Truman presented a formal **review** of facilities to the Missouri Department of Higher Education in 2009. Over the past three decades, Truman has pursued a strategy of reuse and renovation of existing structures. This approach has allowed the institution to meet changing academic needs without constructing new facilities. This results in a relatively compact campus which has evolved to meet the institution’s mission as a liberal arts and sciences campus.

Pickler Memorial Library has extensive collections to support student and faculty research; and an acquisitions budget of $1.2 million. Its growing digital collections are accessible through the library’s website. The Library is a member of the MOBIUS library consortium, which allows students and faculty to borrow materials from over one hundred academic, public, and special libraries. Additional resources are available through interlibrary loan.

The Library supports a strong instruction program. In a typical year approximately 3,400 students participate in library instruction sessions. Faculty can bring their classes to the library for instruction in general or discipline-specific resources. Librarians design assignments that integrate various types of resources, emphasizing evaluation and ethical use of information.

Faculty resources include: course reserve services, alerting services for new library materials and journal articles, consultations with reference librarians, and collection development to support the curriculum.

The library building is 142,574 square feet and houses over 500,000 print volumes. It provides a variety of study space with seating for 750 people. In addition to library functions, the building houses the IT Help Desk, the Learning Technologies Department, a large computer lab, and a Wellness area. The library is open 105 hours per week, longer during finals.

The Ruth W. Towne Museum and Visitors Center and the E.M. Violette Museum collection support the teaching mission of the university. Museum artifacts number over 20,000. Special collections, archives, and museum staff work with faculty to review and examine museum collections, organize exhibits, integrate artifacts into teaching, and design assignments and research projects for students.

**Information Technology Infrastructure**

Truman has a 2 gigabit per second connection to the Internet, with 100% wireless coverage across campus. There are over 11,500 wired network ports and 512 wireless access points across campus. The physical foundation of the campus network is an advanced fiber optic system connecting all major campus buildings. The buildings have multiple separate fiber paths and automatic failover capabilities. Each building has dedicated wiring closets with HVAC and UPS protection. The relatively new fiber optic network was installed in 2010. In addition to data, the fiber network distributes cable television services to campus buildings. Additional information about technological infrastructure is available in Criterion 5A.

Ninety-four percent of graduating seniors at Truman report being satisfied with access to computers. There are two primary academic computing labs. The lab in Pickler Memorial Library has 95 stations, 2 printers, and 2 scanners. The Violette Hall lab has 47 stations and two printers. There is also a
multimedia lab which allows editing of video, audio, and graphics files. Some of the computer classrooms are also open to students when they are not in use for classes. A wide range of academic software is available in the computer labs. ITS staff are housed in nearly all of the academic buildings to support ITS infrastructure.

BlackBoard Learn is the supported learning management system on campus. Moodle is also available, but not supported at the level of Blackboard. In spring 2013, there were 1331 active Blackboard courses. Truman also supports technology in the classrooms. Truman currently maintains 18 C-Level SMART Classroom classrooms, each containing a teaching console, a console computer, a data projector, a digital document camera, an enhanced sound system (amp/speakers), an interactive whiteboard/SMARTBoard or SMART Podium, a lecture capture system (usually Panopto CourseCast), and additional whiteboard/writing surfaces. Forty-eight A-Level rooms include console computers, data projectors, and digital document cameras. Fifty B-Level normal rooms include console computers, data projectors, digital document cameras, and enhanced sound systems. Fifteen B-Level computer classrooms include console computers, data projectors, digital document cameras, enhanced sound system (amp/speakers), and a computer station for each student. Additionally, there are 43 specialty academic spaces, with varying technology for specialized academic pursuits.

Performance, Clinical, and Laboratory Spaces

Though maintaining facilities is a challenge with current state funding levels, Truman works to provide modern performance, laboratory, and clinical facilities for students. Ninety-four percent of graduating seniors report being satisfied or very satisfied with laboratories, studio space, and research space.

Magruder Hall was renovated in 2005 and houses the departments of Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The building now includes 151,000 sq. ft. of state-of-the-art science teaching and undergraduate research space. The teaching laboratories each seat 20-24 students and are designed to emphasize peer group interactions; each is equipped with a prep room. Approximately 1000 square feet of teaching laboratory space is available for each pathway course in the sciences. Additionally, instrumentation laboratories are available in both biology and chemistry. Depending on the nature of the research and the discipline, each faculty member also has either an independent or shared research laboratory in Magruder Hall. Research laboratories are equipped with instrumentation specific to each faculty member's research program and a wide array of modern instrumentation for common use (such as ultracentrifuges, ultra-low temperature freezers, darkrooms, and research-grade microscopes). Students involved in research can be given round-the-clock access to all of these areas. Magruder Hall also houses an animal facility, a large greenhouse, a seed storage facility, and three walk-in environmental chambers. Computer facilities are provided in each faculty's office and/or laboratory and there is a 24-seat computer lab that students can use for many hours during the day. In October 2014, Truman opened the Del and Norma Robinson Planetarium and Multimedia Theater in Magruder Hall.

Truman also maintains a 400-acre University Farm. The farm includes classroom and lab space as well as equine and cattle facilities. There are indoor and outdoor riding arenas, and approximately 40 horses. The University Observatory is also located at the University farm.

Most of the performance spaces are located in the Ophelia Parish Fine Arts Center building. These include the 450-seat Performance Hall, the 240-seat courtyard-style James G. Severns Theatre, and Black Box Theatre. There is also a 1395-seat auditorium in Baldwin Hall. The Performance Hall is
supported by a digitally controlled lighting system, a sound system, appropriately sized back stage area, and rehearsal and practice rooms; the James G. Severns Theatre and Black Box theatre are supported by full lighting grids, scene shop, costume shop, acting lab, design lab, dressing rooms, make-up room, and a green room. The University Art Gallery is also housed in the Ophelia Parish Fine Arts Center, and is supported by a work room, a secondary side gallery, and a loading area. The Baldwin Hall Auditorium is supported by an extensive fly system, 46 lighting dimmers, an orchestra pit, large sound system with a 32-channel mixer, 2 large dressing rooms, a green room, and a loading dock area.

Truman also has several outstanding clinical spaces. There is a 10-bed Nursing Simulation Center and another six-bed skills lab in the Pershing Building. The NSC simulates the look and feel of a hospital with its beds, carts, and crib and is equipped with high-tech medical equipment including a MedDispense®, cardiac monitor, bedside computers, and state of the art Alaris® infusion pumps. It is home to several Laerdal® mid-fidelity manikins, including adults, child, infant, and newborn. The manikins can be controlled remotely by faculty to simulate a variety of clinical situations. The two breakout rooms are equipped with cameras, microphones, and monitors to record simulation experiences allowing faculty to play back and debrief students to facilitate student reflection following the simulation. In addition to the NSC lab, there are six computers and two televisions in the computer lab, located at the end of the hall within the nursing department.

Truman also has high-quality pre-professional labs. For example, students working in the Human Performance Laboratory measure oxygen consumption and caloric expenditure using one of two Parvo Medics TrueOne 2400 metabolic carts; measure body composition and bone mineral density using a G.E. Healthcare Prodigy dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry machine; gain clinical experience in identifying cardiac abnormalities using a Quinton Q-Stress System with treadmill; use a Humac Norm Isokinetic device to analyze muscle power output and assess the effect of resistance training on strength; measure human performance on one of many Monarch ergometers including upright and Wingate models; or analyze blood glucose or lactate content using a YSI Analyzer or hand held analyzers.

Please also see Criterion 2E for more information on how integrity in research is supported.

Sources

- BUDGETANDPLANNING_Facilities Assessment_2010
- LIBRARY_Description of Size and Nature of Museum Collections_11-18-2013
- REGISTRAR_CLEP AP and IB Credit Policies_2014
- REGISTRAR_Student-Services_catalog_description_2013
3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

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

Argument

Co-curricular Programs and Enrichment Experiences

Truman’s online recruiting materials state: “At Truman, there's more to college life than attending classes. With nearly 240 student organizations, the campus is always buzzing with a calendar packed full of events and activities. Find the leader in you as you explore connections across a wide range of endeavors in this lively community of learners.” According to the EBI Student Leadership Assessment, 90% of Truman students participate in at least one student organization, and 39% participate in 3 or more student organizations. Further, over half of students hold a leadership position within at least one organization.

The Office of Student Affairs coordinates many of the out-of-class activities available, and encourages students to use the Co-Curricular Planning Map to effectively choose their own experiences. The Center for Student Involvement is the programmatic brand of the Student Union, and coordinates student organization development and services, Greek Life related services, leadership development and recognition programs at Truman State University.

In addition to regular co-curricular programs, Truman offers students activities that allow them to respond to current events. For example, more Truman students come from the St. Louis area than from any other single area. Therefore, when the Michael Brown shooting occurred in Ferguson, Missouri near the beginning of the Fall 2014 semester, students were naturally interested and engaged in the surrounding issues. The Offices of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Residence Citizenship and Community Standards, and Multicultural Affairs coordinated to bring two events to campus. One was a campus discussion event called Starting a Movement: Ferguson Town Hall. The other event involved the speaker Nathan Stephens, who spoke on black males and the law.

As Truman serves primarily a traditional-age student body, campuses residences are very important part of the educational experience. Ninety-two percent of graduating seniors were satisfied with their ability to be involved in student life and co-curricular activities. The mission of the Residence Life Office follows:

As part of Truman State University, Residence Life fosters the development of respect, responsibility, and accountability in our students. Within safe, comfortable, and intellectually engaging living communities, we nurture students to become productive citizens and life-long scholars.

The core values of Residential Life are community, diversity, life skills, scholarship, service, and
wellness. According to the EBI Apartment online survey, 74% of students report "my on-campus living experience has helped me: Interact with residents who are different from me." Similarly 62% of respondents stated that on-campus living helped them "develop a sense of justice and fairness." Sixty-seven percent stated that on campus living helped them better articulate their academic goals and approximately 51% said they could better articulate their career goals. On the EBI Resident Assessment survey, 76% said that their living-learning community allowed them to be more academically successful. Nearly all respondents stated that the living learning community contributed at least somewhat to their ability to develop interpersonal relationships and resolve conflict. On the GSQ, 79% of graduating seniors reported growing intellectually through on-campus residential experiences, and eighty-seven percent reported growing personally and socially.

Campus employment is another important co-curricular activity. In addition to Federal Work-Study and Institutional pay opportunities, Truman also requires that students with scholarships over $2500 per year work 60 hours each regular semester. In AY 2013-2014, students completed 54,064 hours of work-study, and approximately 198,840 scholarship hours. For example, students helped organize data for and proofread this assurance argument. Students also contribute meaningfully in the library, residence halls, departments, etc. According to the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 51% of students reported using skills gained in on-campus work in their courses. Further, in the EBI Student Staff survey, 39% of students endorsed 7 (the highest value) on a 1-7 scale question about whether their work experience enhanced their critical thinking skills. All respondents suggested that their communication skills and problem solving increased at least somewhat as a result of being residence life student staff.

In 2008, Truman hired the Art & Sciences Group, who produced a report about Truman’s marketability. One of their findings is that Truman is perceived by many in the state as being of high academic reputation, but not being fun. Though fun is not directly mentioned in the mission, having an engaged student body is. Therefore, in 2008-2009, a Campus Life, Spirit and Fun Work Group met to consider whether the “no fun” depiction of the co-curriculum was accurate. After soliciting feedback from the student body, they recommended few changes to the co-curriculum, but more publicity of student activities and organizations both within and beyond the University.

Sources

- REGISTRAR_Student-Services_catalog_description_2013
3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

Truman State University has programs representative of our liberal arts and sciences mission. Select pre-professional and graduate programs that serve the state or region are also offered, but these also follow a liberal arts tradition of critical inquiry. Learning goals are articulated in the catalog, and available in the syllabus or materials for each course. Online courses are rare during the academic year, and those that are offered during the summer are taught by the same faculty with the same learning goals as on-campus courses. Truman offers few courses that might be considered concurrent enrollment, and these are diligently overseen by Truman faculty.

Truman’s general education program is the Liberal Studies Program (LSP). The LSP has publicly stated learning outcomes which flow from a combination of artes liberales and and liberal free philosophical traditions. The general education program includes attention to diversity of thought, place, and people. Program outcomes build on the LSP, and all encourage developing broad, transferable skills. Faculty follow a teacher-scholar model which embraces research and creative activity. Students are highly active in research, as evidenced by the number of submissions to the Student Research Conference and other research programs.

Truman has a well-qualified, engaged body of faculty and academic advisors. Though the number of faculty has decreased relative to the 1990’s, the University is close to our desired 16:1 student-faculty ratio. This allows faculty to contribute to curriculum development, oversight and assessment. It also allows time for faculty to implement policies on office hours and otherwise be accessible to students. Professional academic advisors help first-year students navigate the curriculum and co-curricular activities. Both faculty and advisors are routinely evaluated by both students and chairs or supervisors, and are supported in their development with travel money and by the Academic Professional Development Center.

As a residential campus, Truman provides a wide variety of support services to students. Career counseling, mental health counseling, and an on-campus student health facility are just a few examples. Professional academic advisors and faculty use the results of validated placement tests to help students take courses that suit their needs and abilities. Truman not only has good classroom space, but good technological infrastructure, laboratories, performance halls, and clinical spaces to support student learning. Pickler Memorial Library not only provides physical and information resources, but it is one of the primary sources of instruction for students in good use of information resources. Responsible use of information is reinforced in both the LSP and within each program.

Assessment data show that students grow intellectually and socially from Truman’s many co-curricular programs and activities. The co-curricular planning map helps students choose activities that will build necessary skills. The co-curricular record affords students an opportunity for reflection and a way to demonstrate those activities to employers.

Sources
There are no sources.
4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

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

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

Argument

Program Review

Truman State University reviews approximately 20% of our programs each academic year, creating a approximately 5-year review cycle. Programs with specialized accreditation follow the cycle of the accreditor rather than the 5-year cycle. The primary goal of the review is for improvement; thus, the main audience for each review is the department. However, full reviews are reported to the Dean, the Provost, the Faculty Senate and the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE). MDHE reviews programs for continued viability. Each program must also give an abbreviated in-person report to Faculty Senate.

Program reviews are comprehensive: they focus not only on majors, but on departmental contributions to minors, general education, and interdisciplinary endeavors. The fundamental goals of the five-year program review follow:

- Ensure that student learning and quality teaching remain the top priority at Truman;
• Examine the relationship between the program and Truman’s liberal arts and sciences mission, Strategic Plan, and other campus-wide initiatives;  
• Review strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and current or potential areas of concern;  
• Encourage and support innovation and progress; and  
• Document and support the program’s process of annual goal-setting and achievement by inviting a more public and open exchange of ideas, methods, and improvements among program stakeholders: reviewers, faculty, staff, students, and administrators within and beyond Truman.

To meet these goals, departments prepare an intensive self-study document. At minimum, the self-study includes the following components:

1. A statement of the department’s philosophy and goals, focusing on how the department fits into a public liberal arts and sciences university;  
2. A review of activities done in the program since the previous review, especially those done to improve according to the previous document;  
3. Analysis of the program’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and areas of concern;  
4. Analysis of standard data elements provided by ITS and other relevant data;  
5. A review of current activities, particularly those meant to address issues raised by the analysis;  
6. A curriculum road map, matching University and program outcomes to courses in the program;  
7. Discussion of areas to be improved or focused on for the upcoming five years;  
8. Appendices including:
   i. Standard data elements provided by ITS  
   ii. Current CVs of faculty members  
   iii. Elements requested by Faculty Senate

For each review, the department selects at least two additional reviewers. One reviewer is internal to the University but external to the School, and one is external to the University. Reviewers must be approved by the Chair, the Dean, and the Provost.

Interdisciplinary minors are one of the few curricular elements that have not been subject to program review. Because they are not housed in any single program, they are not covered in departmental program reviews. Further, because they do not belong to a department, they often lack the support staff and resources typically available for program review. The Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies and the interdisciplinary committee have been working together to create a reasonable review cycle.

Program reviews are designed to lead to both planning and action. For example, when the Sociology/Anthropology program underwent review in 2007, they were facing an already small faculty, with plans for half of the existing faculty to retire within the next 10 years. The review helped them realize that they would not be able to sustain their existing curriculum, which allowed students to choose among a wide variety of classes. Instead, they developed a curriculum with 5 levels of courses (Introductory, Topical Survey, Theory and Methods, Advanced Exploration, and Senior Seminar). Each level has clear goals and linked assessments. Senior test scores have remained level since the curriculum revision, demonstrating that students are not hurt by the reduction in courses. Overall, the sequence allows better deployment of faculty resources, and has allowed the department to continue to function with a smaller faculty.

Another example of program review leading to action comes from the Master of Arts in English
program. As part of their quinquennial program review, the faculty considered data about student persistence and completion. Though the program is small and trends are hard to verify, the data suggested that the critical point for students was finishing the thesis. This was particularly true for students whose career goals did not include research. While a non-thesis option already existed, it required significantly more coursework than the thesis option, so relatively few student pursued it. The faculty therefore worked on the non-thesis option, streamlining and clarifying the requirements for the non-thesis track.

Components of the general education program are also reviewed approximately every five years. Because they are not programs, these reviews are undertaken by the Undergraduate Council. These reviews ensure coordination across departments for curricular elements that are jointly owned.

Faculty Control of Curriculum

The Faculty has clear control of the curriculum. Undergraduate Council, a standing committee of Faculty Senate, reviews all Course Approval and Curricular Changes to Majors and Minors Forms. The documentation has recently moved online, streamlining the workflow for considering classes. The syllabus for each course is reviewed as a part of course approval. This is not a rubber-stamp process. For example, there have been ongoing and contentious discussions about the requirements for courses with a Liberal Arts and Sciences designation. Additionally, student-initiated and independent study courses require faculty supervision, keeping faculty oversight over all curricular elements.

The vast majority of credit awarded is consistent with the University Credit Hour Definition. One of the very few counterexamples comes from language curricula. If students have significant language skills but do not have any credit for lower level courses, they may earn up to six hours of such credit by successfully completing advanced courses in that language. This demonstration of competency in a higher level class justifies the credit for lower level classes.

Faculty governance has recently been discussing how to best acknowledge experiential learning. This arises, in part, from an administrative push to ensure that every student has at least one transformative experience during their education. A university cannot mandate that students transform, but we can encourage high-impact educational experiences and encourage reflection on those experiences. (This will need to be updated as the task force makes its recommendations).

Internship is one form of experiential learning for which we already have policies and procedures to ensure quality. Students must apply well in advance of the internship, must have completed 60 credit hours of coursework, and must meet G.P.A. eligibility requirements. Students must complete a minimum of 45 hours on site per credit hour awarded, up to a maximum of 12 credit hours. Interns are mentored by both an on-site supervisor and a faculty supervisor. As part of the internship, students complete regular reflection assignments.

Institutional Control of Transferred Credit & Faculty Qualifications

As per Federal and State guidelines, information on transferring credit is made available to students at http://registrar.truman.edu/transfer/current_students.asp. Truman has formal Transfer and Articulation Agreements with other institutions: Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa & Centerville, Iowa; The Metropolitan Community Colleges, Kansas City, Missouri; Moberly Area Community College, Moberly, Missouri; and St. Charles Community College, Cottleville, Missouri. Each was carefully crafted to maintain quality in the curriculum while facilitating student mobility. We also have an articulation agreement with A. T. Still University for the Still Scholars early
admission program; however, this agreement is solely for students transferring from Truman to the school of osteopathic medicine. Agreements are formed based on student requests and frequency of transfer, and requests from other institutions based on their student needs.

Requests for transfer of credit earned at institutions with which Truman does not have articulation agreements are evaluated in the Registrar's Office. For students transferring credit to or from other institutions in Missouri, there is a Missouri Transfer Library website showing which courses transfer easily. In general, courses are evaluated by the Registrar and typically involve syllabus review. When a course is deemed not equivalent to a specific course at Truman, the Registrar's Office regularly communicates with department chairs and deans. Truman also has a 28-hour residency requirement, specifying that the last 28 hours of credit towards a degree must be taken at Truman. Furthermore, at least 45 credit hours of the bachelor’s degree must be completed at Truman.

One way to illustrate that the faculty have control over transcripted credit is to provide examples of requests that are not granted. Though Truman attempts to award credit to students who have met the appropriate criteria, there are some classes for which transfer credit is almost never granted. The Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar (JINS) course was designed to be the capstone of our general education program. It emphasizes understanding the nature of interdisciplinary thinking and incorporates writing as a tool for understanding. Because few other universities have a course that meets the same goals, credit is rarely transferred for JINS.

Truman faculty are well-qualified to promote student learning and fulfill the University mission. Approximately 85% of faculty members hold terminal degrees. X% of courses are taught by full time faculty. The tenure load at Truman is high, with approximately X% tenure-track assistant professors, X% tenured associate professors, and X% full professors. See also Criterion 3B, which discusses faculty qualifications and review.

Truman currently offers only one course that meets the Missouri Department of Higher Education definition for dual credit classes – a calculus course offered at Kirksville High School. Several high school students – chiefly from the local community – enroll alongside degree-seeking students in on-campus (dual enrollment) courses. A variation of the dual enrollment approach where students are not physically in the same classroom, is Truman’s offerings of MATH 156 (College Algebra) and MATH 157 (Plane Trigonometry). These are competency-based courses, in which students complete online assignments and pass proctored exams. Students on campus can participate in optional tutoring, and students in high schools may receive support from on-site high school teachers. Both sets of students report to a proctored environment for assessment of competencies. In both cases, the course is overseen by a Truman faculty member.

### Specialized Accreditation

Seven Truman programs have been accredited by the appropriate accrediting body, including:

- [AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business](https://www.aacsb.edu/)
- [American Chemical Society](https://www.acs.org/)
- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](https://www.asha.org/)
- [Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education](https://www.caate-pc.org/)
- [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education](https://www.ccne.accreditation.org/)
- [Council for The Accreditation of Educator Preparation](https://www.cacep.org/)
- [National Association of Schools of Music](https://www.nasm.org/)
- [National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education](https://www.ncate.org/)
Review of Student Outcomes

In general, students are satisfied with the quality of their education. According to NSSE, Truman students rate their education as good to excellent, significantly higher than the ratings of students at other COPLAC institutions. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, fewer than 1% of students rate their experience as poor, while 47% rate their education as good and 42% rate it as excellent. Of graduating students, 68% plan to pursue a further degree, also indicating that they value their education.

As a public institution, Truman pays special attention to the success of our graduates. Each year, the Career Center publishes a report tracking students, gathering information from students at the graduation fair and through a six month follow-up. In FY 2013, the placement rate for recent graduates was 99%. Fifty-four percent were employed and 45% were pursuing graduate study. Since the last accreditation review. Truman had its first student accepted as a Rhodes Scholar. Truman also has several students each year who work with the Peace Corps upon graduation.

Tracking student loan default rates is another way to address student success. Default rates are currently under 3%, among the lowest in the nation. Employment rates are XX%, and XX% students pursue graduate education. Clearly, students leave Truman with the skills to find gainful employment.

College Ranking systems such as U.S. News & World Report frequently recognize Truman for quality and value. U. S. News & World Report has recognized Truman as the number one Public University in the Midwest Regional category for 18 years in a row. In 2014, Truman was ranked as one of the top 10 colleges for value by “The Best Value Colleges: The 150 Best-Buy Schools and What It Takes to Get In.” Also in 2014, Truman was ranked number 23 in the Master's University category of the Washington Monthly College Rankings. Though no ranking system is perfect, Truman focuses on quality education for students, and is happy to find that reflected in many of the ratings.

Sources

- ATHLETICTRAINING_CAATE Table of Contents and Appendices_A-H 2013
- CAREERCENTER_Employment and Grad School Rates for Graduates_2012-06-30
- CHEMISTRY_ACS Accreditation Report_2010-05-25
- COMMDISORDERS_ASHA Accreditation_2012
- REGISTRARS_Transfer and Articulation Agreements_2012
- SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & ACCOUNTING_AACSB_Accreditation Report_2013-08-01
- UGC_Curriculum Task Force Report_2009-April
- UGC_UGC Minutes for the Past Year_2014

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

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

Argument

Student Learning Outcomes

Truman State University has a long history of high-quality institutional assessment. Specific goals for graduates are outlined in our strategic plan. Student Learning Outcomes for each element of general education are listed in the catalog. Course-level objectives are reviewed as part of our course approval process. Programs include curriculum mapping as part of program review, and President Paino has made an overall curriculum map one of his current university-wide initiatives.

Learning outcomes are also stated for many co-curricular programs. Students are encouraged to use the Out-of-Class Planning map to choose activities that foster skills they need. They can also track and report on these experiences with the Co-curricular Record. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, nearly 90% of students felt they had grown intellectually as a result of the co-curriculum, and 91% reported they had grown personally and socially from co-curricular experiences.

Review of student progress toward learning outcomes is embedded into five-year program reviews, and reviews of the general education program. Every year before the beginning of the fall term, Truman holds a Strategic Planning and Assessment workshop. Data from university-wide assessment instruments are shared and discussed. Often, plans for action on those data are devised. Time is also set aside for departments to meet together in order to discuss patterns in the data relevant to them and to discipline-specific student learning outcomes.

Assessment Data and Use

Our assessment plan includes both direct and indirect measures of the above learning outcomes. We also utilize both local and nationally-normed measures to better understand how students are meeting the outcomes. Our major assessment instruments include a local First-Year Survey, the NSSE & FSSE, the Collegiate Learning Assessment, student-led focus groups, the ECAR technology survey, the Missouri College Health Behaviors Survey, the National College Health Survey, EBI resident assessments, a local Graduating Student Questionnaire, senior tests in most majors, an Alumni Survey, and an Employer Survey. Data are made available to the public through an annual Assessment Almanac.

One of the most important elements of our assessment program is the Truman portfolio. Unlike
portfolio requirements at many institutions, the submissions are not usually tied to specific courses or generated for the portfolio itself. Instead, students choose items from among their existing work that best fit the portfolio prompts. Portfolio completion is a requirement for every graduate, resulting in a wealth of rich data about student accomplishment. Prompts related to Critical Thinking and Interdisciplinary Thinking have been included for over 20 years. Other prompts rotate according to the needs of the university. Prompts on Intercultural Thinking, Civic Engagement, Creative Thinking, Historical Analysis, Scientific Reasoning, and Aesthetic Analysis have all been used in the past 10 years.

One of the early successes of the portfolio led to the acknowledgement that many students were not engaging in interdisciplinary thinking. After a Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar (JINS) course was added to the general education program, scores went up noticeably. Scores on interdisciplinary thinking continued to go up for about 15 years as faculty refined courses. Submissions from JINS courses still score higher than submissions chosen from other courses, even from most interdisciplinary minors. The focus on interdisciplinarity is corroborated by the Graduating Senior Questionnaire, in which 85% of students reported using information from one course in another course. However, both portfolio and GSQ scores overall have now begun to level out. Though high, these scores still fall short of faculty goals. This has led to conversations about how to incorporate interdisciplinary thinking into the curriculum earlier in a student's career.

To recognize the diversity of learning outcomes represented in different programs, department-level assessment varies widely. Each year, the Assessment Almanac highlights one undergraduate discipline to elucidate department-specific practices. For example, Physics was highlighted in the 2012 Assessment Almanac. Faculty have structured the curriculum such that basic skills are covered in the first two years then reinforced in advanced classes during the last two years of a typical student’s progress. They implemented a sophomore level assessment to ensure that students are ready to move up to higher level courses. Each student discusses their own results with an advisor. This both helps the student navigate the program more successfully and gives information to faculty about which concepts are least understood by specific cohorts of students. The Assessment Almanac has also recently begun highlighting one graduate discipline's assessment practices.

Another specific example of closing the assessment loop comes from Health Sciences. Data from student surveys suggested that Truman students exercise and eating habits were often unhealthy. HLTH 195, Lifetime Health and Fitness, was required as part of the general education program, but students were often unsatisfied with the variety of activities offered. Faculty pursued a grant from the National Center for Academic Transformation and used the funds to create an alternative hybrid course. HLTH 198 now has most of the course content online, with an on-campus exercise lab. Students in both the traditional course, HLTH 195, and the new course, HLTH 198 were given a common final exam. After extensive analyses, faculty concluded the course objectives are met at least as well, and sometimes better, with the hybrid course than with the original course.

A more general example of using data to improve student learning comes from the NSSE. These surveys have repeatedly demonstrated that Truman students are more likely than students from similar institutions to report working in groups and asking other students questions. Truman students also rate the quality of relationships with other students higher. Therefore, Truman has been moving toward more peer mentoring, including mentoring within programs, in the Center for Academic Excellence, and in the Multicultural Affairs Center.

Many programs use MFAT - Major Field Achievement Tests from ETS or ACAT (Area Concentration Achievement Tests) as senior tests. Where appropriate, these tests are linked to licensure and certification. Most senior tests are nationally normed, allowing programs to compare
student performance to an appropriate cohort. The percent of students who scored above the 50th percentile on these tests was 77.1% in FY 2013. The percent of students scoring at or above the 80th percentile on their senior tests was 42.2% in FY 2013.

When no nationally normed senior test is available, disciplines can choose an alternative assessment. For example, the Philosophy and Religion (PHRE) department concluded that available tests do not appropriately cover the range of both philosophy and religion required in their program. Further, they thought a multiple choice test was not a good fit to assess the careful writing and analytical skills they want their graduates to possess. Therefore, instead of a senior test, they use a thesis defense system. At least three faculty members score each presentation on a rubric. Readers external to the university are frequently invited, ensuring accountability.

Data from senior tests are only one of the kinds of assessment data made available to departments during program review. When a program review begins, ITS automatically pulls the following data elements from the past five years for the program.

**Senior Test Scores**

- % scoring above the 50th percentile
- % scoring above the 80th percentile

**Graduate Test Scores** (when applicable)

**Portfolio Information** (% distribution)

- Critical Thinking
- Interdisciplinary Thinking

**High Impact Experiences**

- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Student-Faculty Research/Creative Activity
- Service Learning
- Internships/Practica/Student Teaching
- Focused Field Experiences
- Study Abroad (including summer)

**Grading**

- Average GPA awarded undergraduate
- Average GPA of the students who took courses in the department awarded for undergraduate course work outside the department
- D, F, W Rate
Number and % of W grades by course level

Number and % of D grades by course level

Number and % of F grades by course level

**Student Perceptions (GSQ Data)**

How satisfied were you with this major? (1-Very Dissatisfied, 2-Dissatisfied, 3-Satisfied, 4-Very Satisfied)

How satisfied were you with the accessibility of instructors in your major? (1-Very Dissatisfied, 2-Dissatisfied, 3-Satisfied, 4-Very Satisfied)

How satisfied were you with the academic advising by faculty advisor in your major? (1-Very Dissatisfied, 2-Dissatisfied, 3-Satisfied, 4-Very Satisfied)

How satisfied were you with the opportunities to interact with faculty outside of class? (1-Very Dissatisfied, 2-Dissatisfied, 3-Satisfied, 4-Very Satisfied)

How many faculty members do you know well enough to obtain a letter of recommendation? (None, One, Two, Three, More than Three)

How satisfied were you with the availability of courses offered in your major? (1-Very Dissatisfied, 2-Dissatisfied, 3-Satisfied, 4-Very Satisfied)

Other assessment data are provided for the program at their request.

One of the ways Truman keeps emphasis on student outcomes is by surveying Alumni and their employers. An alumni survey has been given since at least 1996. The alumni survey has been revised many times to reflect changing definitions of success. For example, while employment and further education are certainly important, we also wish to learn whether alumni are civically engaged, able to think critically, and happy. The Alumni Survey is currently under another round of revisions. Several departments also have a separate alumni survey to address program-specific goals.

Truman faculty members sometimes complain that we have more assessment data than we use. However, sometimes multiple instruments are necessary to provide the impetus for change. For example, the Truman portfolio shows that only approximately 67% of students meet faculty goals for critical thinking. However, because students choose their own work, some faculty thought poor performance could be explained by students making poor choices about which work to include. The CLA also showed that students’ critical thinking skills were often slightly below what would be predicted by their initial ability. Again, faculty can question CLA methodology. The NSSE asks students to rate their own critical thinking abilities. Students rate their abilities at approximately the same level as other COPLAC institutions, which is at a lower level than faculty desire. The self-report nature of the survey, however, makes faculty question its validity. The fact that all three measures suggest that our students are about average for their ability is much harder to dismiss. Because of this convergence of data, Truman has begun a university-wide Critical Thinking initiative, adopting a critical thinking framework and a rubric. Individual departments now have plans for teaching the rubric to students at multiple points within each program.

To keep emphasis on assessment data rather than on assessment process, Truman has recently begun
creating “Purple Papers.” These are white papers (turned purple with our school colors) on broad learning goals. Truman’s participation in HLC’s Assessment Academy led to task forces creating Purple Papers on Critical Thinking, Wellness, Leadership, and Transformative Experiences. We have also created a Purple Paper on Problem-Solving. Each Purple Paper pulls data from multiple assessment instruments, and often references best practices in higher education.

The “Purple Paper” on Physical and Emotional Well-being illustrates this process. Members of the Well-being Task Force were able to review existing data from the American College Health Association Survey (ACHA), the Missouri College Health Behaviors Survey (MCHBS), Truman’s interview project, and several surveys from Educational Benchmarking Institute (EBI) in order to create the Purple Paper. They reported data such as the following section on student stress:

**Stress is common but not much higher than reported levels of college student stress across the nation; however, it appears to have a higher impact on academic performance at Truman than at other schools:**

a. 75% of students stated stress levels have increased since coming to Truman. (EBI, 2010)

b. 54% of students responded “Academics” have “been traumatic or very difficult to handle”. (ACHA, Spring 2011)

c. The highest factor negatively impacting students’ academic performance, as reported by students, was stress (34.3%). Additionally, 23.0% identified anxiety as a negative impact on their academic performance. (ACHA, Spring 2011).

d. Top stress sources according to MCHBS survey 2011:

- 79% Academics
- 51% Finances
- 47% Time management
- 44% Future plans

e. Stress impacts academics considerably or a great deal for 25% of Truman students vs. 16% nationally. (MCHBS)

f. Overall stress and academic stress have a significant positive correlation (.539). (Student Interview Project 2011)

g. Academic stress has a significant negative relationship with academic control (-.291.) (Student Interview Project 2011)

h. Academic stressors falling in moderate stress or higher categories according to the Student Interview Project 2011 include:

- Multiple back to back assignments and tests in different classes (91.2%)
- Amount of work required in classes (73.7%)
- Keeping a high enough GPA for scholarships or graduate school (68.4%)
- Group projects (64%)
- Studying for tests (60.5%)
- Getting into required/desired classes (58.8%)

i. Stress impacts personal life considerably or a great deal for 28% of Truman students vs. 21%
nationally. (MCHBS)

j. 18.7% felt overwhelming anxiety in the last 2 weeks. (ACHA, Spring 2011)

k. Stress coping strategies include 62% smiled/laughed, 55% talked with a friend, 55% napped, 53% made lists, 51% exercised. (MCHBS)

Collectively, these data present a compelling picture of stress negatively impacting students’ ability to thrive in campus learning situations. To help students deal more productively with stress, there is now a Wellness Zone in the library. Students are drawn in to the Wellness Zone by the massage chairs, but training in nutrition and in stress-reduction techniques are also available. The University has also offered Mental Health First Aid courses and has tried coordinating services through the Wellness Pact. Data show that each of these programs have utility.

One of the advantages of Truman's long experience in assessment is our ability to look at trends over time. Any individual can pull data from the Assessment Almanac to view these trends. For the sake of brevity, most of the data included in this assurance argument are pulled from the most recent measure available and represent the whole institution. However, for internal purposes, data are frequently presented across time and disaggregated by program. For example, the following chart was part of a larger document used for the 2014 Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshop. It shows self-reported transformative experiences across three years and by department. This is very useful in ongoing discussions about building experiential learning into the required curriculum.

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Aligning with Best Practices in Assessment Process

Though the Provost is ultimately responsible for ensuring the success of Truman’s assessment program, faculty members are largely in control of assessment process. The Provost’s Advisory Committee on Assessment is chaired by a faculty member, and there is one faculty representative from each School. Faculty members are also deeply involved in collecting and analyzing assessment data, even at the institutional level. The director of the portfolio project is a full-time faculty member, and each year over 60 faculty members gather together during the summer to score portfolio submissions. In addition to providing high-quality data, these scoring sessions create the opportunity for faculty to have in-depth discussions about learning outcomes, current student achievement, and classroom activities and assignments that foster progress toward learning goals.

Truman employed a full-time assessment coordinator until 2008. When the person in that position left the university, budget constraints led to the elimination of the position. Though the support of that professional was invaluable, one of the strengths of Truman’s assessment program has always been that it is decentralized. The Office of Assessment and Testing coordinates data collection for many university-wide assessments, but no single administrator or committee is solely responsible for assessment; rather, everyone is responsible for assessment. Assessment data are used for evaluation of

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**HSE**

**AGSC**

**BIOL**

**CHEM**

**CS**

**MATH**

**PHYS**

**SAM**

**COMM**

**ECON**

**HIST**

**JUST**

**PHRE**

**POL**

**PSYC**

**SOAN**

**SCS**

**IDSM**

**All**
both the curriculum and co-curriculum. This helps ensure that many faculty and staff develop expertise in assessment, and are able to gather and analyze data that they themselves will use.

Truman has worked hard to stay current with best practices in higher education assessment. In 2009, the Provost temporarily suspended the assessment committee to completely reevaluate our assessment plan and structure, and many of the Assessment Task Force’s recommendations have been implemented. In addition, many of the rubrics used to assess the Truman Portfolio overlap considerably with AAC&U’s VALUE rubrics. The director of Truman's Assessment and Testing Office frequently attends conferences and webinars. Truman participated in the President’s Alliance for Excellence in Student Learning and Accountability. From 2005-2008, Truman collaborated to develop an assessment of Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning under the leadership of the Center for Assessment and Research at James Madison University. We also recruited students to participate in AHELO’s (Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes) feasibility study; AHELO is an international effort to understand what students know and can do on completion of an undergraduate degree. Truman participated in the Wabash 2010 study, until the study ended in August 2012. We also participated in the Higher Learning Commission’s Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning. Our approach to assessment research is consistent with the Asilomar Convention’s principles in that we create assessments with respect for the dignity and privacy of learners, that we focus on using assessment as a tool for improvement rather than for punishment, and that we practice openness by sharing our processes and results publicly.

Representatives from Truman routinely attend and present on assessment-related issues at the Indianapolis Assessment Institute and at the annual meeting of the Higher Learning Commission. Our assessment website was recognized for its transparency by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment in 2012. Currently, Truman is helping lead an initiative on civic engagement in COPLAC (Council of Public Liberal Arts College) schools, and is providing expertise for a state-wide initiative on critical thinking and quantitative literacy.

Sources

- ASSESSMENT_Task Force Recomendations_2009_10-22
- ASSESSMENTCOMMITTEE_Institutional Assessment Plan_2013-12-12
4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Argument

Retention and Persistence Goals and Measurement

In the 1997-2007 Master Plan, Truman State University set aspirational goals of 90% retention rates and 75% graduation rates for undergraduates. By implementing the plan, we have nearly reached those goals. The retention rate for the 2011 freshman class was 89%, the highest for state institutions in Missouri. The six-year graduation rate for the Fall 2006 freshman class was 73.6%. Though the University is very concerned with retention and graduation, raising these substantially from this point will be very difficult.

Missouri includes undergraduate retention and graduation rates in the performance funding formula, making it necessary for the campus to keep focus on these indicators. In order to meet the freshman-to-sophomore retention goal, Truman must retain students at the 66th percentile of peer schools. For Fall 2009, this rate was 80.6%. Similarly, the 66th percentile for graduation rates at peer institutions was 59% for the cohort of students entering in 2004. Truman met both goals. Retention and graduation rates are also a required part of five-year program reviews, and are routinely discussed at annual Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshops.

At the graduate level, retention and completion rates goals are set by program. However, overall completion rates are high. For full-time degree-seeking students, two-year completion rates for AY 2008 – 2010 were 87.6%, 91.0% and 92.8%. Three-year graduation rates were 89.8%, 96.2%, and 95.2%.

The most recent strategic plan includes several elements that are directly relevant to retention and persistence. Goal 1.3 is Target support services and programming to enhance student success and well-being. This is justified by citing data that “suggest that health and recreational services, academic support, and opportunities to connect in meaningful ways with peers are critical to recruiting and retaining students (Upcraft, Gardner, Barefoot & Associates, 2005).” One particularly vulnerable
group of students is those who earn a semester GPA of 1.0 or less. Historically, only about 1 in 10 of these students earns a Truman degree. To increase the success of these students, an Academic Innovation Program (AIP) is being piloted. Before the student returns to campus after a failing semester, they must complete a short online course: the course makes certain that students are aware of campus resources. Students must also meet with the Dean of the appropriate school within the first week of returning to campus, and must meet with their academic advisor approximately weekly. The program was piloted in Spring 2014, thus full data are not available on the success of the intervention. However, in the first semester, all students completed the online course, suggesting that the resources are reaching their intended targets.

Another goal in the strategic plan is 2.2 \textit{Build our overall enrollment with an appropriate mix of ethnic, economic and geographic diversity in undergraduate and graduate enrollment, consistent with our highly selective admissions category.} Truman recognizes that the demographics of college-bound students in the United States are changing, and the institution must be sensitive to these changes to be successful. Some institutions are addressing this issue by becoming more accessible to transfer students. Truman’s website offers guidance specific to potential transfer students. In 2013, the Assessment Committee made understanding the \textit{experiences of current transfer students} a priority. Using both existing and new data, they found that transfer students are happy with their decision to transfer, but have differing opinions on the quality of orientation and advising. While transfer students as a group average somewhat lower scores on senior tests and portfolio submissions, once incoming ability is factored out, these differences disappear. This suggests that transfer students are achieving at the same high levels that similar students are achieving. Truman also recently hosted a transfer summit for STEM students, focused on the challenges of opportunities of students who transfer with majors in the sciences, which are often heavily sequenced. The overall goal was to help potential transfer students choose courses effectively to facilitate the transition.

Another effort to increase understanding of retention and persistence is the \textbf{Student Withdrawal Survey}. Before a student is permitted to withdraw from the University, they must respond to questions about why they chose to leave. They are asked directly about engagement and how changes in on- and off-campus environments contributed to their decisions. To this point, there have not been clear patterns in reasons for leaving. The survey is currently under revision in order to gain additional information.

\textbf{Programs to Increase Retention and Persistence}

Truman also encourages retention and completion by giving students and advisors timely information about student progress. The \textbf{Any-Time-Any-Student Warning System} is in place so that faculty can easily notify advisors when a student is not attending class or not completing classwork. Students in 100 and 200 level courses also receive \textbf{Early Progress reports}, which are copied to advisors. Faculty Senate is currently discussing some of the early reporting systems, in part to ensure that faculty understand how to use them appropriately. Software in DegreeWorks provides planning tools for students and comment tools for advisors. Most programs have a suggested plan for a three-year baccalaureate, allowing students the flexibility to earn the degree in less time. The Students of Concern team is charged with supporting students in obtaining personal and academic success at Truman and with maintaining a safe and productive educational environment for the Truman Community.

Truman has several programs in place to give students skills for success in college. The \textbf{Center for Academic Excellence} coordinates study skill courses, advising, and tutoring. It also coordinates academic skills courses, including INDV 100 – Skills for Academic Success and INDV 115 – Strategies for Success. The Writing Center provides sessions with writing coaches. The \textbf{Disability
Services Office has a wide variety of services. The McNair program provides additional advising, research experience, GRE prep courses, and help with graduate school applications to students who are ethnic minorities or first-generation college students. Truman also participates in Upward Bound and the SEE program, which help high school students prepare for college.

Another example of using retention and persistence data for improvement comes through Truman’s Living and Learning Communities. Communities are built around student interests. For example the Romance Languages House is a partial immersion community located in Missouri Hall. Residents in this community focus on language and culture in the French and Spanish speaking world. Residence Hall staff collaborate with faculty from Modern Languages to offer a meaningful living-learning community.

A final example of improving retention and persistence comes from the Truman Week experience, an orientation for new first-year students. First-time students begin one of their classes a couple of days before the beginning of the regular semester. Expectations for college are set, and students learn about how and where to get various forms of help on campus. Most students begin building a relationship with a faculty member who will instruct them throughout the regular semester. These experiences are designed to help students succeed their first semester, and to build a strong foundation for their entire college experience. A Truman Week task force is currently looking at best practices, hoping to improve the experience further.

Processes for Reporting Retention and Persistence

Truman uses IPEDS standards for most reporting, except where other measures are required by the state of Missouri. Since 2012, we have been developing a performance dashboard. The dashboard tracks performance funding indicators, as well as indicators from the strategic plan. The student-level characteristics include improvement in higher order thinking skills; increased numbers of students in transformative learning experiences; increased leadership development opportunities; improved senior exam scores; and improved employment; graduate; and professional school placement rates. Indicators of Financial Stability and Growth include increases in total revenue over total expenses; affordability; endowment growth; diversification of revenue stream; increased energy efficiency; sustainable and balanced enrollment; increase in retention; and low student loan default rate. Finally, Community and Collaboration indicators include increased number of University partnerships; increased number of students involved in co-curricular activities and volunteerism; improved staff; faculty; and student well-being; improved job satisfaction for faculty and staff; increase in alumni relations activities; and expanded public profile.

Sources

- CAE_Desc of Any-Time Any-Student Warning System_2007-06-14
- CAE_TW Learning Outcomes_2013-Summer
- REGISTRAR_Student-Services_catalog_description_2013
4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

Truman State University has several mechanisms for ensuring that the credit awarded comes from high quality educational experiences. Programs are reviewed approximately every five years, and include emphasis on curriculum review and use of assessment. Results are used internally for improvement and are sent to the Missouri Department of Higher Education. Transfer credit requests are reviewed both by the registrar and faculty in the relevant discipline. Seven programs at Truman have specialized accreditation.

Truman’s robust assessment program also contributes to the high quality of students’ learning. Direct and indirect, local and nationally-normed measures are all used to paint a rich picture of students’ progress toward the stated learning outcomes. The Truman portfolio is one of our most valued measures, and allows an in-depth understanding of students’ critical thinking, interdisciplinary thinking, and other skills. Every program also administers a senior test: most of these senior tests measure discipline-specific knowledge through a nationally-normed exam, allowing benchmarking. There are several large and small-scale examples of how assessment data are used to improve learning. Truman recently completed HLC’s Assessment Academy for our Quality Improvement project, and demonstrated good practice in assessment.

Truman's retention and completion rates are already high, but we are always striving to improve. Truman has been working on a dashboard that shows progress toward retention, completion, and student achievement goals. Missouri’s performance funding system provides good motivation to pay attention to these factors. Truman also publishes persistence, completion, and job placement rates on Truman’s website.

Sources

There are no sources.
5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Argument

University Resources

Fiscal Resources: Through a period of significant decreases in state funding, Truman has maintained planning and budget procedures that protect student learning as the primary goal of the institution. Financial, material, and human resources are all leveraged to achieve Truman’s mission. Our most recent audits have all been unqualified, showing good management of fiscal resources. Truman hires an external auditor each year. In Fiscal Years 2012 through 2014, Rubin Brown, Certified Public Accountants of St. Louis, served this role. The audit shows a total net position of $256,170,418.

STATE APPROPRIATIONS

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Truman operates on a July 1- June 30 fiscal calendar and utilizes two primary operating budgets, Education and General (E&G) and Auxiliary. The E&G budget covers academic programs and support services. In the planned budget fiscal year (FY) 2015, Truman’s E&G budget totals $94,658,000. Of this, $19,577,813 is planned for academic scholarships, student experiences, and athletic grants in aid, making the adjusted E&G budget $75,080,187. Tuition and fees comprise the largest portion of this budget at 52.7% while state appropriations provide 44.9%. The Auxiliary budget for FY 2015 totals $24,198,500. All funds for the Auxiliary budget are generated through user fees as state support is not provided for auxiliary functions or parking facilities.

Truman also maintains a Restricted Funds budget, funded from outside grants and other sources that are restricted in nature. For FY 2015, this budget totals an estimated $7.25 million. The largest components are federal financial aid such as Pell and Work-Study. Examples of other sources were National Science Foundation grants and funds for Upward Bound and the Regional Professional Development Center.

Truman has launched two capital campaigns in the last ten years to support the University Foundation. The Foundation exists under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, as a tax-exempt, charitable foundation. The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The first capital campaign, Bright Minds Bright Futures, raised more than $30.6 million by its successful completion in 2011. The current campaign, Pursue, will continue through 2016 and has a goal of $40 million. As of the most recent audit, the Foundation's total net position is 42,777,367.

Physical Resources: Truman State University owns 43 buildings totaling close to 2,000,000 square
feet. Seven of the buildings are largely devoted to classrooms and faculty offices: McClain Hall, Baldwin Hall, Ophelia Parrish Hall, Magruder Hall, Violette Hall, Pershing/Health Sciences Building, and Barnett Hall. The resources of Pickler Memorial Library and the physical and technological resources in classrooms are described in Criterion 3D.

Since Truman's 2005 reaccreditation, the state of Missouri has supported one capital improvement project. As part of a state program to improve health education, $14,850,000 was made available for renovations to Pershing Building. The building was renovated and expanded to provide better space for Health and Exercise Science, Nursing, and Communication Disorders.

Since 2005, Truman has renovated six existing residence halls and apartment complexes and built a new one. West Campus Suites was opened in 2006 and includes mostly modern suite-style rooms. It can house 416 students. The building is more appealing to students because it features air conditioning, an in-hall convenience store, computer workstations, laundry and kitchenettes on every floor, and a well-equipped multi-purpose room. Renovations also modernized the other buildings; among other things, they provide better climate control for students. The total amount spent for residence hall renovation is $98,000,000.

To ensure that Truman has the resources of physical space, there have also been several locally funded projects. The largest of these was the Barnett Hall renovation, which modernized offices, classrooms, and lab space for the Communication, Military Science, Justice Systems, and Society and Environment departments. Psychology is also now in the renovated space. The university also spent $2,325,000 creating the Ruth W. Towne Museum and Visitor Center, though much of this was supported by a large donation.

Truman works to use debt wisely. Our Moody's credit rating is A1. At the beginning of FY 2015, we held $57,597,111 in debt. All of the debt was tied to renovation projects. $1,302,111 was related to the Student Recreation Center and was prepaid in 2010 through the Recreation Center reserves and internal borrowing from E&G reserves. Recreation Center funds are now paid to reserves.

The Composite Financial Index (CFI) for FY 2012 was 2.8. While this number is well within the acceptable range, it is somewhat lower than the previous years. This reflected a decline in state support and an internal payment of a bond issued for the Student Recreation Center. Significant savings were realized with the refinancing of bonds in 2013. However, for FY 2013 Truman's CFI was 3.1.

One of Truman’s priorities is keeping tuition affordable. Board policy requires that tuition not exceed 35% of institutional revenue, though specific fees are excluded from this calculation. In FY 2015, tuition and required fees were not increased for undergraduate Missouri residents and were increased for non-resident undergraduates and graduates by 1.5%. As in the past several years, these tuition hikes were under the standard rate of inflation. Rates charged for room and board increased by an average of 2.5%.

Truman outsources its investment of funds. University assets are managed through PFM Asset Management LLS, and Commerce Bank manages Foundation investments. University funds received through donations are invested through the Foundation in a portfolio of stocks and bonds. Investments are monitored by the Board Finance and Audit committee. The Foundation has a separate investment committee to monitor these holdings. The University Investment Policy dictates how funds are managed.

Technological Resources and Infrastructure: Truman’s Information Technology Services (ITS)
annual report provides details on Truman’s technology resources. At the beginning of the 2014-2015 academic year, ITS employed 27 professional staff and approximately 75 student staff. Organizational units include Learning Technology Services, Infrastructure Services, Web Integration Services, and Administrative Computing.

Truman’s campus has 100% wireless coverage, with 33 physical servers and 92 virtual servers. ITS supports 1099 public and general use workstations, 1493 faculty and staff workstations, and 382 printers. To coordinate use of web applications, Truman uses a portal called TruView. The portal is currently run via Luminus by Ellucian but will be changing to Liferay. The TruView Portal is used to aggregate self-service applications targeted for student services, faculty services, and employee functions. These applications allow the University to deliver many services to these groups via online transactions. Whenever possible, processes are designed to be delivered through the TruView portal. For example, Truman uses Blackboard as our learning management system which students and faculty can access through TruView.

A 100 megabits-per-second wired network connection is provided to desktop computers. The majority of the wireless network is 802.11g (54 megabits-per-second connections) and is in the process of being upgraded to 802.11n (450 megabits-per-second connections) currently. Two internet service providers (ISPs) provide internet connectivity over separate pathways. One ISP terminates in Kansas City and the other ISP terminates in St. Louis. Many of our services will automatically failover to the other ISP circuit in the event of any failure as each circuit has a 1 gigabit-per-second capacity. The total Internet bandwidth capacity is 2 gigabits-per-second.

ITS works hard to make their support services accessible and understood, and they detail support options on their website and in publications distributed to relevant constituencies. Technology support is available for faculty, staff, and students through the HelpDesk. In FY 2012, ITS processed 8249 requests. The average hold time for completed calls was 9 seconds. They also loaned technology equipment 1904 times. Support for instructional technology is managed through Learning Technology Services. And ITS has a desktop support person assigned to each academic building.

According to the 2012 Educause Center for Applied Research survey, Truman spends 3.6% of the budget on central ITS resources compared to a 5% average for participating institutions. The operational budget for ITS is primarily devoted to maintenance of software (65.5%), internet (11.9%) and hardware (10.5%). The physical foundation of the campus network is an advanced fiber optic system connecting all major campus buildings. The buildings have multiple separate fiber paths and automatic failover capabilities. Each building has dedicated wiring closets with HVAC and UPS protection. The fiber optic network was installed four years ago. It currently provides a 1 gigabit fiber backbone connection to all major buildings with automatic failover in the event of any link failures (faster backbone speeds are possible with network switch upgrades). The fiber network has considerable capacity for future growth (additional unused strands), and the majority of the fiber optic network is located in dedicated pathways that are physically separate from other campus utility services. In addition to data, the fiber network distributes cable television services to campus buildings. More information about computer classrooms is available in Criterion 3D.

When possible, ITS supports technology to automate workflow. The application that is used most often for streamlining processes is Form Builder. This application allows each department to create their own web form for gathering data and electronically routing the information to either a database or an email account. Another example is the web-based Event Management System. This system was developed to allow departments to create events and manage registrations for these events, completely automating this process. Truman’s ITS also supports enterprise applications for workflow management. Truman has recently implemented the Kuali eDoc Lite Workflow System. This system

IT
allows for the automation of processes that require routing and signatures. The Office of Academic Affairs has identified those processes that could be automated via such a workflow system, and we are converting these processes based on their relative priority. Truman has also been using DegreeWorks for the past several years, which allows students and advisors easy access to transcript and planning tools, reducing the amount of paper required while increasing information resources for students. Finally, Truman is currently working on web time-entry for hourly employees.

**Human Resources:** Truman’s model of education requires meaningful relationships between students and faculty. To accomplish this, Truman must invest in faculty. In FY 2014, 59% of the E&G budget was in salary and fringe benefits. For FY 2015, this percentage is 60%. Despite this, salaries for individual faculty remain low. According to the 2013-2014 AAUP faculty salary survey, Truman ranks at the 11th percentile for masters-level institutions. The survey does not take into account our area’s low cost of living and Truman’s strong benefits program. Further, respondents to HERI’s faculty survey show that 49% percent report overall satisfaction with the compensation package. This is not substantially different from the 51% of faculty who report satisfaction with compensation at comparison institutions. However, the relatively low amounts are still a concern for hiring and retaining quality faculty. Therefore, in 2013, Truman did a salary survey, using data from Colleges and Universities Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR). Starting salaries for new faculty were adjusted first. The amount of promotion raises were also increased slightly, with plans to increase them again as funds permit.

Faculty and Staff training, qualifications, and development are discussed in Criterion 3C.

**Resource Allocation**

Budget planning involves the appropriate personnel to ensure broad representation. Truman’s budgeting process is primarily bottom-up, with departments and units submitting budgets first. Departmental budget requests are reviewed at the school level, then by Academic Affairs. The university budget committee includes the same members as the President’s Advisory Council. The Faculty Senate budget committee is consulted and is involved in the decision for raises and promotions. For example, the Faculty Senate budget committee approved a higher raise focusing on faculty who make under $30,000. The director of human resources, the comptroller, and the head of physical plant are involved in union negotiations for Physical Plant employees. As a public institution with a clear undergraduate mission, there is no pressure for elective expenditures on equipment or activities unrelated to instruction.

Planning for expenditures is based on centrality of mission in the request. State funding requests for FY 2016 prioritize educational quality and affordability: to this end, most of the funds requested are for continuing current programs. Decision items in the request included increased funding for STEM academic programs, critical maintenance and repair, and academic programs related to mental health.

Because of withholdings and decreases in state appropriations, budget cuts have become painfully familiar. Furthermore, state withholdings vary significantly across year, making planning difficult. According to the 2014 HERI survey, 94% of responding Truman faculty reported experiencing stress due to institutional budget cuts. This is higher than the 76% of faculty reporting such stress at comparable institutions. How these cuts are addressed depends on whether the cut is permanent. If temporary (the state withholds funds but hopes to release the funds later), fixed costs such as scholarships, utilities, salaries, insurance, maintenance contracts and safety-related equipment purchases are calculated. Then the cuts are allocated to broad functional areas: Academic Affairs, Student Services, Administration and Finance, and Athletics. Decisions regarding specific budget reductions are then made within those units. If the state releases the funds, the money is released back...
to the originating budgets. If the cut is permanent, then the President and the President’s Advisory Committee discuss the cut and determine a plan of action. The President discusses the situation with Deans, and the Deans discuss it with the Department Chairs to gather more input on how to address the cut within their budgets.

Truman maintains a long-range capital improvement plan to prioritize needs for renovation and new construction. Funding for capital projects is currently planned through FY 2019. In FY 2016 capital appropriations request, the top priority was renovation to Baldwin and McClain Halls. Baldwin is 76 years old, and McClain is 38 years old. Much of the requested funds would go to improving HVAC systems and bringing them up to current building standards. Additional funds would go toward building up the connection between the two buildings, providing additional office space. The second priority request was a continuation of funds to renovate Pershing/Health Sciences Building. The third priority was for an emergency electrical backup system.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

Board of Governors Oversight

The board is composed of 10 members appointed by the governor of Missouri and qualified under the provisions of Sections 174.600 through 174.630, Revised Statutes of Missouri. Seven of the ten governors are voting members, and three are nonvoting members. Of the three nonvoting members, two are out-of-state members and one is a student at Truman State University. All but the student member are appointed for six year terms. The student member of the Board is appointed for a two-year term.

Full meetings of the Board of Governors occur six times each year. Meeting agendas and minutes are public on the university website. Meetings include updates from the University President, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Office of Student Affairs, as well as financial and budget updates.

Truman Board members undergo an orientation process when they are appointed. During this orientation, they meet with key campus administrators. They also discuss Truman’s mission and goals and review Board policy. This helps ensure smooth transitions within the Board.

Members bring valuable experience and expertise to the Board. For example, the current Board chair, Susan Plassmeyer is a Truman graduate who currently works in higher education for Washington University. Governor Plassmeyer holds the distinction of being the first student representative to the governing board of the University following the enactment of legislation in 1984 permitting student representation. Governor Sarah Burkemper serves as Board Treasurer and is a certified public accountant and a certified financial planner with her own practice. Credentials of each Board member are listed on the Truman website: About Truman.

More information on the operations of the Board of Governors is available in Criterion 2A and 2B.

Processes for Collaboration and Community

There are multiple opportunities for collaboration toward effective policies and processes at Truman State University. The organizational chart of the institution helps clarify the primary responsibilities of each administrator and the primary lines of communication. Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and
Student Government each have a strong presence on campus. Along with the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs, each body has processes in place to ensure collaboration among representatives and with the Board of Governors.

Student Senate is Truman’s primary body of student government. The voting membership of the Student Senate includes five senior senators, fifteen senators, a graduate senator, and four incoming senators. The student representative to the Board of Governors and organizational leaders also attend Senate meetings. Student Senate lists the following goals in their organizational documents:

- ACTIVELY participate in the fulfillment of the University’s mission as an exemplary Public Liberal Arts and Sciences University,
- REPRESENT the views of the Student Association in the formulation of University policy through legislation and membership on University committees,
- FACILITATE communication and mutual understanding between the Student Association, faculty, staff, and administration, and
- PROMOTE a cohesive vision for the future of the University.

Student Senate has five standing committees. The Academic Affairs committee is responsible for issues related directly to courses, instructors, and curriculum policy. The External Affairs committee helps to foster relationships with the city of Kirksville and acts as a liaison to the greater Midwest. The Student Affairs committee handles student-related concerns not covered in academic affairs. The Campus Diversity committee addresses issues of race, culture, gender, and ethnicity on Truman’s campus. The Environmental Affairs committee works toward a more environmentally viable Truman campus. Ad hoc committees are created as needed.

Staff Council bylaws state that “The Staff Council at Truman State University works to represent staff issues, to foster cooperation and communication, to support the student-learning mission of the University, and to provide staff with opportunities to contribute and participate in that mission. The Staff Council recognizes that people are our most valuable resource and to this end the Council strives to:

- Represent staff issues collectively and report directly to the President of the University;
- Provide opportunities for collaboration between staff and students, faculty, administrators, and other members of the University community;
- Facilitate staff representation and participation in university planning and decision making that affects Truman as a whole; and
- Recognize the value of staff contributions and the diverse range of experience and expertise that each staff member brings to the University.”

Staff council has 23 elected voting members. Voting members must be full-time staff without faculty status. Service on Staff Council is counted toward the employee’s workload. There are also three ex-officio members representing Student Senate, Faculty Senate, and the Director of Human Resources.

Faculty Senate bylaws ensure that all instructional staff are represented. According to these bylaws, the Senate has authority to:

(a) consider any questions which concern more than one division or which are of University-wide significance;

(b) receive, discuss and disseminate information concerning any such questions;
(c) conduct studies, make recommendations and adopt resolutions concerning any such questions;

(d) request information through appropriate channels from any component of the University.

Faculty Senate is comprised of one representative from each academic department. An exception to this comes from the School of Business, which chose to have one representative for the entire School. There is also one voting representative for the faculty-status librarians at Pickler Memorial Library. The President of the University or his designee is also a voting member. Nonvoting members include the Provost, two Student Senate representatives, the Chair of Undergraduate Council, the Chair of Graduate Council, the Dean of Student Affairs, the Registrar, the Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, and one department chair (elected by department chairs). Departmental representatives are elected from their respective faculties. Meetings follow Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedures. Meeting minutes are made available to faculty and staff on the Academic Affairs website.

In addition to having governance bodies to represent concerns of various constituencies, many other policies and procedures facilitate collaborative decision-making. For example, nearly all standing committees of the Office of Academic Affairs have student representatives. President Paino communicates with campus through regular email updates and has “Coffee with the President” monthly during the academic year to ensure that there is ample opportunity to share concerns and updates. The Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshop before each fall semester helps provide opportunities for clear and meaningful communication. For example, according to the 2014 HERI survey, 84% of faculty respondents report that the administration is open with its policies, and 82% suggest that administrators consider faculty views when making policy. These percentages are higher than the 70% and 72% reported by faculty at comparison institutions.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

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

Argument

Planning Processes

Truman has a robust planning process. We are currently operating under a 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. We also have a Vision Document and statement of Core Values which provide additional structure to the Strategic Plan. The planning process for the next strategic plan will begin soon.

The strategic planning process occurs roughly every five years. The current Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Governors on August 6, 2011. Since the last reaccreditation, we have implemented the Master Plan Update 2003-2007 and the Strategic Plan 2008-2010. Each plan builds on the last, recognizing Truman’s achievements and ongoing challenges. Every plan focuses on ways to achieve Truman’s mission of providing an affordable, high-quality liberal arts education.

To create the most recent strategic plan, President Paino appointed a strategic planning committee comprised of ten individuals. The committee was co-chaired by the Dean of Social and Cultural Studies and the Dean of Student Affairs. The Office of Advancement, Admissions, Libraries & Museums and ITS were represented along with an additional dean and several faculty. The committee was active from January 2010 through June 2011. The committee sought input from many channels, including a survey, a website for public comment, several campus fora, meeting with governance, and input through existing University structures.

The 2011-2015 strategic plan is deliberately succinct. The goal was to create a document that all faculty and staff could gain familiarity with and a concise set of goals which could inform day-to-day activities. Because the plan is brief, the themes can be presented in their entirety:

Theme One: Preparing Students for Tomorrow and Beyond

We will provide engaging, effective and adaptive learning environments with multiple opportunities for transformation, ensuring that graduates are globally competitive and prepared to make significant contributions to their communities and our world.

1.1 Ensure that all students have classroom and experiential learning opportunities so that each
graduate possesses the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to become effective world citizens.

1.2 Increase the proportion of graduating students who report having transformative learning experiences.

1.3 Target support services and programming to enhance student success and well-being.

1.4 Enhance achievement of student learning outcomes by supporting increased use of pedagogical approaches fostering deep learning, student engagement, and application of knowledge to solve real world problems.

1.5 Attract and retain students based on our strong curricular and co-curricular programs, as well as affordability.

**Theme 2: Securing Financial Stability and Growth**

We will ensure a sound financial future through two interrelated approaches. First and foremost, we will develop creative approaches to conscientious stewardship of the diminishing resources entrusted to us. Second, we will generate additional sources of revenue in order to secure the University mission.

2.1 Diversify funding sources and ensure the revenue necessary to deliver high quality programs and services and to provide student financial assistance by enhancing private sector support.

2.2 Build our overall enrollment with an appropriate mix of diversity in undergraduate and graduate enrollment, consistent with our highly selective admissions category.

2.3 Support the efforts of the Truman Institute to increase institutional revenue, such that the Institute provides a net annual financial contribution in the amount of $500,000 to University revenue by 2015.

2.4 Make campus more sustainable by reducing consumption of resources.

2.5 Increase organizational effectiveness and enhance student learning through innovative and appropriate use of technologies.

**Theme 3: Building Community and Collaboration**

We will foster institutional commitment through shared purposes, sustained by a supportive and caring Truman community, and strengthened through collaborative partnerships with those beyond the campus.

3.1 Expand the number of off-campus partnerships that contribute to student learning.

3.2 Increase the opportunities for students, faculty and staff to network with alumni.

3.3 Increase opportunities for interaction among students and the local community through events and activities on and off campus.

3.4 Promote a sense of community, enhance the quality of life, and increase satisfaction among faculty, staff and students by creating opportunities for collaboration and interaction.
3.5 Expand the public profile of Truman by strengthening our image and communicating our unique learning opportunities across the state, nation, and world.

The plan has, in fact, been used to guide many changes on campus. For example, though the Institute for Academic Outreach (formerly known as the Truman Institute) was conceived in early 2009 as an initiative to address a range of University needs, its role was emphasized by the Strategic plan. The Institute helps foster development of programs and partnerships to generate revenue and support Truman’s mission. These initiatives include developing mutually beneficial partnerships, expanding Truman’s reach to students residing in off-site locations such as St. Louis and Kansas City, developing new on-campus programs to bolster recruitment efforts, and fostering and supporting new modes of course delivery. One specific example of a new initiative is the "Zombie Scholars Academy." This week-long educational summer camp teaches high school students about disaster preparedness, orienteering, first aid, neurobiology, and literature. It builds on the expertise of Truman faculty and staff to attract motivated students to visit Truman.

Another example of implementing the strategic plan is seen in the legacy initiative for senior faculty. As of Fall 2014, XX% of faculty are eligible to retire within the next 5 years. If a large number of faculty decide to retire in a short period of time, Truman will lose a wealth of institutional knowledge. We also risk losing our shared understanding of our mission and values if we do not actively plan a way to communicate these to new faculty. Therefore, the Office of Academic Affairs is working on a program for senior faculty and faculty emeriti to create new programs or processes that preserve the institutional understanding of our mission.

Planning occurs throughout the university. For example, Student Affairs also creates plans that help students maximize their co-curricular experiences. The Co-curricular Planning Map helps students think about the skills and knowledge they gain from different activities. The Office of Student Affairs uses the map both as an aid to students and as part of their internal planning, ensuring that students have access to the kinds of activities which will fit their needs.

Truman maintains a facilities master plan that guides expenditures on physical facilities. Priority is given to space that is used in ways that directly support the mission. In addition to requests for capital improvement funds, Truman also conducts facility assessments and facility reviews. More information on planning for physical resources is discussed in Criterion 5A.

Environmental Scanning and Planning

The first phase of Truman’s most recent strategic planning process was environmental scanning. Throughout the process, the Strategic Planning and Advisory committee held multiple focus groups with both internal and external constituencies. Once the initial planning themes were drafted, a constituency survey was sent to alumni, employers, parents, area residents, governmental representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. The results showed good support for the planning themes, and helped the committee prioritize the themes.

Truman’s planning processes make good use of available information about emerging factors such as demographic shifts. For example, the Strategic Enrollment Management committee is charged with the overarching development of long-term enrollment and retention goals and planning. For example, the following image was presented at the most recent Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshop to illustrate that we have been focusing on addressing some of our core issues over the years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Projections</td>
<td>Gender Imbalance</td>
<td>Expanded Student Debt</td>
<td>Continuously Unstable State Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing College Decision Trends</td>
<td>Decreased State Funding/ Budget Cuts</td>
<td>Debt Aversion</td>
<td>Diversity Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Competition</td>
<td>Increased Student Financial Need</td>
<td>Performance Funding</td>
<td>State, National, and International Competitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Recession</td>
<td>Growing Sense of Entitlement</td>
<td>51 Mile Average</td>
<td>Vocational/Work Force Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural location</td>
<td>Ranking Pressure</td>
<td>Technology Needs</td>
<td>Erosion of Public Confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the trends above are common in higher education but may be even more salient to Truman. For example, nationally, male students are less likely to enroll, less likely to be engaged while in college, and less likely to graduate than women. Locally, Truman’s current incoming class in Fall 2014 was 60% female. Recruiting and retaining male students is important, but increasingly challenging. Unlike many liberal arts and sciences universities, students in our applicant pool are not always applying primarily to smaller colleges. Rather, we compete for students against large public institutions who have Division 1 athletic teams with strong appeal to men.

Another example of larger trends in higher education disproportionately affecting Truman comes through location. With shifting demographic and economic trends, more students prefer to attend a university within 51 miles of their home. The population base within 51 miles of Truman is sparse, and Truman’s academic reputation must be high enough to overcome strong preferences for place.

When appropriate, Truman hires external bodies to help us evaluate our position with regard to larger trends. For example, in 2006, Truman hired the **Art & Science Group**. Throughout 2007, they gathered data from current students and faculty, accepted applicants, and inquirers. Their findings helped Truman establish that the current pricing and merit aid structure was appropriate. Their biggest conclusion is that outsiders do not see Truman as “fun”, based largely on the small, rural town in which the campus is situated. To address this perception of lack of fun, the Office of Student Affairs spearheaded a **Fun and Spirit committee**, which made several recommendations to increase the visibility of Truman's traditions.

A more recent example of using outside resources to guide planning is seen in the hiring of Stamats, a higher education marketing company based in Des Moines, Iowa. Stamats reviewed both qualitative and quantitative research about Truman’s existing brand identity, including assessment and student outcome data. They developed a **brand book**, which summarizes Truman’s intended message. One of the most obvious changes linked to their assistance is the redesign of Truman’s web materials.
Evidence-Based Resource Allocation

One of the most obvious links between assessment data and budgeting is performance funding. Two of the current performance indicators are direct measures of student learning. Assessment data are frequently used in planning. For example, the graduating student questionnaire indicates that students frequently choose Truman because of the cost and the academic reputation. Fewer than 3% of students report having chosen Truman because of its location. These data help Truman maintain focus on keeping Truman affordable.

Evidence-based decision making pervades the budgeting process. A usage survey from the library illustrates this type of budgeting. The library shifted their resources to improve online access and longer hours of operation. Budgets are made with all available data. For example, in Missouri, the governor typically withholds at least 3% of the appropriations as a contingency, and may choose to withhold more. Truman’s budgeting process accounts for this by holding 5% in reserve. Budgeting must also depend on enrollment, which is forecasted based on the number of current students, the number of applications, and the number of students who put down housing deposits.

In order to gather information on the best distribution of technology resources, ITS made use of the Educause Center for Applied Research Survey (ECAR). The ECAR results for Truman were then integrated into the ITS strategic plan. For example, the survey results showed that students are interested in using their mobile devices for academic purposes more often, and one of ITS’ goals is to provide support for instructors and students to make this possible.

Planning often leads to specific training and preparation. For example, in 2014, The Department of Public Safety worked with the local sheriff, ambulance service, and city police to conduct active shooter exercises. Emergency vehicles were incorporated into realistic simulations. This kind of active planning helps the university prepare to deal responsibly with tragic events.

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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

Argument

Documented Performance in Operations

To document the most important activities of the university, Truman is working on a performance dashboard. This is described in Criterion 4C and covers assessment data such as student performance on senior tests. It also covers financial data including percent of the budget that is spent on teaching activities. As Missouri’s performance funding is linked to these measures, Truman has additional motivation to track all the relevant factors.

Working to Improve Sustainability

Truman has many ways of ensuring that we will be able to continue to educate students into the future. For example, we have financial exigency plans and succession plans in the event of an emergency. To work efficiently, Truman has been consistently moving away from manual and paper-based operations toward automated procedures. For example, users of purchasing cards (Pcards) must undergo training before a card is issued. The training used to be face-to-face, requiring significant time from a trainer. Now, the training has been moved to an online Blackboard course. Applicants review the materials and watch online videos. Before they may complete the application, they must have a perfect score on the online quiz. Similarly, equipment requisitions and travel reimbursements have been moved online, with approvals sent automatically to the appropriate department.

The business office works continuously to have clear up-to-date policies and procedures for smooth operation of the office. Examples of recently updated policies include the Policy for Awards, Gifts, and Prizes, and the Moving Expense Reimbursement Policy. These procedures are proposed by the Business Office, the reviewed by the President’s Advisory Council. PAC members often take the policies back to their units for input before the procedures are finalized.

Environmentally sustainability is not only good for the environment, it also provides an example of how Truman is constantly striving to create sustainable policies, procedures, and programs. The first project of the President’s Sustainability Action Committee (PSAC) was the carbon-neutral Presidential Installation of Troy Paino on October 10, 2010. In order to make the event carbon-neutral the committee asked guests to fill out their personal travel information. These data were then calculated into a total amount of carbon emissions and then an equivalent amount of carbon credits were purchased to offset the emissions. Fifteen megawatts of Renewable Energy Credits were purchased in total. This event is thought to be the first of its kind in the country.

In January 2011, members of PSAC created a sustainability pledge for the Truman community. The pledge consists of a list of eight simple ways people can improve their lifestyle behaviors to be more sustainable. At the end of the pledge is an area entitled “my personal sustainability pledge;” here,
signatories can design their own ways to be more sustainable. The sustainability pledge was designed to help Truman students, faculty, and staff understand what they can do on a small scale in order to be more sustainable. Presently, there are between 600 and 700 signatories of the pledge. In 2013 solar panel arrays were installed on five Truman buildings to help offset electrical costs. In 2013 and 2014 electrical meters were installed on 18 buildings to measure each building's electrical usage and establish a benchmark for energy usage. A utility dashboard has been created to monitor Truman's consumption of resources. In 2014 Truman was recognized as a Tree Campus USA campus. Truman's Annual Sustainability Reports highlight each year's accomplishments and future focus.

Truman State University is a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). AASHE is a professional, membership-based association of colleges and universities that are working to create a sustainable future. AASHE’s mission is to “empower higher education to lead the sustainability transformation.” Being a member of AASHE allows for professional development in sustainability at the university. AASHE also provides a means of networking and support for Truman. Members of AASHE receive a discount for the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS). STARS is a voluntary, self-reporting framework for recognizing and gauging universities sustainability performance. Once enrolled with STARS, institutions tally up credits for four different categories of sustainability: Academics; Engagement; Operations; and Planning & Administration. Under each section there are different “credit titles,” and each of these is checked through the STARS program. Depending on the percent of people reached through that program, corresponding points are awarded. Institutions submitting their data for a STARS rating have one year following the date of registration to complete the submission process. Truman’s President’s Sustainability Action Committee began its STARS rating process in 2010 and was awarded a STARS Bronze rating. The committee finds this data very valuable for understanding what is happening environmentally on campus and ways to enhance this at the university. Truman's goal is to attain a STARS Silver rating by the end of 2015.

Truman celebrates National Campus Sustainability day to help educate the community and to celebrate progress toward sustainability. On October 22, 2014, Truman celebrated campus sustainability day by inviting Marcin Jakubowski, TED Talk Senior Fellow, to speak on "Towards the Open Source Economy."

**Improvement and Efficiency**

Truman also works to improve day-to-day operations of the university. For example, Truman has implemented an online waitlist procedure for course registration. When there are limited seats in popular courses, students can apply for the waitlist, and register for the class if other students drop. This both makes the process more transparent to students and creates less paperwork for faculty and staff who process overrides. Another example is the bidding process for JINS. **Junior Interdisciplinary Seminars** are meant to be taken by juniors, as the capstone experience of the general education program. However, previous systems privileged students with more credit hours, so some students would wait to take a more attractive section as a senior. The current process allows students to bid on desired courses, creating a better fit between students’ interests and their ability to take a particular section of the course.

Efforts to improve workflow efficiency is seen in the TruPositions portal. Supervisors seeking student workers post job descriptions and requirements on TruPositions, and students then apply through the system. This system is used for work-study, institutional, and scholarship jobs. The portal makes it easier both for students to find good work experiences and for supervisors to find qualified workers.

A different kind of example of efficiency comes from Truman’s Office of Admissions. Not only does
the office work to attract a well-prepared student body, but also to make the best use of advertising materials and the time of office workers. The effectiveness of this is shown in Truman’s 41% yield rate, which is notably higher than the 32% yield rate for other COPLAC institutions.

Truman works to create policies that allow for both transparency and efficient work. For example, with climate change creating unusual weather patterns, Truman recognizes the need for a formal procedure on emergency closures including inclement weather closures. The procedure seeks to balance the integrity of the published schedule with the need of safety for students, faculty, and staff. The procedures also help to clarify under what conditions classes will be cancelled and university offices will be closed. Further, the procedures clarify how any changes to the schedule will be communicated so that members of the university community know where to look for current information.

Many additional examples of attempts to improve are given throughout this assurance argument. For example, our current campus initiative to improve student’s civic engagement is discussed in Criterion 1D. Recent changes to sexual assault procedures are described in Criterion 2A. Use of Digital Measures to better understand faculty activity and achievement is discussed in Criterion 3B. Our new University-wide critical thinking initiative is described in 4B. The efforts to create a legacy program for senior faculty are discussed in 5C. The desire for focus on quality pervades the university.

**Sources**

*There are no sources.*
5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

Though Truman State University faces many of the financial challenges common to public higher education, we have the physical and human resources necessary to provide the high quality education we promise to students. We have a well-qualified faculty, most of whom are tenured, with a low student-to-faculty ratio. Computer classrooms, laboratories, and clinical spaces are up-to-date. Well-prepared staff support the learning environment, and assessment data suggest that students are satisfied with their services. The budget privileges mission-related activities, ensuring that resource allocation follows University priorities.

Collaboration is part of Truman’s culture. Student Senate, Staff Council, and Faculty Senate work with administration to achieve the university’s stated goals. The Board of Governors provides oversight and keeps the Board Code of Policies current. However, it is the administration that maintains operations on campus and the faculty who control the curriculum. Having many constituencies represented on decision-making bodies contributes to high levels of cooperation. Events like “Coffee with the President” and the Strategic Planning and Assessment Workshop provide both informal and formal opportunities for people to work together.

Truman’s most recent strategic plan established three themes: Preparing Students for Tomorrow and Beyond, Securing Financial Stability and Growth and Building Community and Collaboration. The process of planning began with environmental scanning, and input from across campus was gathered through surveys and open fora. Students, staff, faculty, parents, alumni, donors, employers, and state officials were all included. Truman enhanced the strategic plan by creating a Vision statement. Ongoing planning sometimes involves hiring consultants to help gain a larger perspective on issues such as demographic trends and interests of students.

Truman’s vision statement concludes, “Truman renews its commitment to assessment to demonstrate effectiveness, support continuous improvement, and encourage innovation and adaptation.” While Truman’s students, staff, and faculty all take pride in our University, we recognize that we must continue to improve. One example of this is a recent university-wide critical thinking initiative. Not only do we help students develop skills to weigh and utilize evidence, this kind of thinking pervades the university.

Sources

There are no sources.