

# **Assurance Argument**

## **Marian University - WI**

2/21/2016

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### **Importance Notice:**

**The links in this document appear live;  
however, you will not be able to  
access any evidence file as the  
links are broken.**

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## Introduction

Dear Members of the Comprehensive Evaluation Team:

Welcome to Marian University!

Inspired by the courageous initiatives of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes, this year Marian University will celebrate its 80th year of "...transforming lives for service and leadership in the global community." Our rich history of successfully reaching out to the most vulnerable populations to effect positive generational change, our successes, challenges and opportunities for improvement have all been comprehensively documented in our Assurance Argument in preparation for our reaffirmation of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission. We thank the members of the evaluation team for your service to us and our students in this endeavor.



I also thank the hundreds of faculty, staff, administrators and trustees who have worked as colleagues, in the spirit of mutual respect, to tell the story of Marian's journey toward continuous improvement. Because of their efforts, the Marian University community learned a tremendous amount about itself as we reflected not only on our successes, but also on barriers to our success. While we learned from our self-assessment, we also engaged in the hard work of implementing difficult decisions to improve our effectiveness and sustainability. Many systematic and consistent systems have been adopted as a result of our learning, which gives us great confidence as we face turbulent times in higher education. As a result, we are experiencing a significant re-birth of confidence both internally and externally. For example, donors have rewarded our efforts with significant gifts in the very early phases of the largest capital campaign to be implemented by Marian in nearly twenty years.

We acknowledge, like any complex organization that is committed to excellence, that we will always have more to do to deliver on the promise of our mission. We embrace these challenges with enthusiasm!

We look forward to meeting the evaluation team on March 21 & 22, and we pray for your safe travels.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Fale  
Interim President

## 1 - Mission

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

### 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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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

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The mission of Marian University was first formalized in 1941, and has been periodically reviewed, discussed, and evaluated by the faculty, staff, students, board of trustees, and the broader regional community. In 1989, the institution studied the core values explicitly and implicitly expressed in the mission statement, and in 2000, formally approved Marian University's Core Values. Together, the mission and core values guide all decision making.

During the 2012-13 academic year, Marian University conducted a campus-wide review of the mission and core values. During the 2014-15 academic year, the campus community engaged in the revision of Marian University's vision statement to assure that Marian's vision, mission, and core values continue to align and serve appropriately to guide institutional decision making.

#### **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.**

In accordance with the Marian University [Bylaws](#), the current mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees (BoT) in February 2013 and by the Class A members of the [Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes](#) (CSA) in March 2013.

Led by the Mission Integration Committee (MIC), a clearly developed [process](#) involving the entire campus community guided the most recent mission statement revision. The review and revision process was initiated by a [message](#) from the Office of the President to the campus community, encouraging all internal constituents to participate. A variety of methods was used to garner input during the mission statement revision process, including MyMarian (intranet) discussion board; Mission Café sessions; and discussions at Faculty, Staff, and Student Senate meetings. The mission statement went through several renditions in the process. The Marian University mission statement is as follows:

*Marian University is a Catholic applied liberal arts community that welcomes diverse spiritual traditions. Sponsored by the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes, Marian University engages students in the education of the whole person. We embrace justice and compassion and transform lives for professional service and leadership in the global community.*

The core values are inherent in the mission statement and describe Marian's commitment to carrying out its mission. The core values have served the university well since their initial articulation in 1989 and formal [approval](#) in May 2000. Marian University's Core Values are as follows:

*Community - Respecting our diversity as individuals, we encourage, challenge and nurture one another, joining together to accomplish our shared mission and vision.*

*Learning - We engage in a collaborative lifelong process of seeking truth and appropriating knowledge and values to transform the individual, our communities and the world.*

*Service - Through active service and ministry, we support one another and seek to meet the needs of the larger community.*

*Social Justice - We work to create individual and societal change which supports the value, dignity and opportunity of every person.*

*Spiritual Traditions - Valuing Marian's Catholic religious heritage, we respect each individual's freedom to explore a diversity of spiritual beliefs.*

## **2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.**

Academic programs and student support services at Marian University are fundamentally shaped by the population served. Marian is committed to serving traditionally under-served populations in the region, including working families, and low-income and first-generation students.

As reflected in the student [demographic profile](#) (2014-2015 data): the median income of undergraduate students is \$56,412; greater than 50% of students are of low-moderate income; 46% of undergraduate students receive Pell Grants, and 55.7% of students are first generation. In addition, Marian has sustained a seven-year trend of greater than 10% enrollment of students from under-served minority populations. Of students (total enrollment) who indicated a religious affiliation, 50.1% are non-Catholic.

Marian University draws the majority of its student population from within a 75 mile radius of the Fond du Lac campus, as reflected in student [geographic data](#). In fall 2015, 73% of total enrollment came from within this radius, a percentage reflecting a decrease in enrollment from within a 75 mile radius since 2012 in all categories. This shift may be the result of institutional decisions to offer more online courses and additional student athletes, which are more geographically diverse.

Taken together, these data provide evidence that the university welcomes a primarily regional population of students, with a profile consistent with Marian's mission as demonstrated by the Vision in Action statement, which states, *Marian University preserves mission-driven financial security while enhancing a reputation for providing affordable education, even for persons of modest means*. The enrollment profile also demonstrates the need for a high level of personalized support from the institution in order to assure both student retention and persistence to degree completion.

**Academic Programs:** Marian University's mission and core values are grounded in the Catholic intellectual tradition elucidated in Pope John Paul II's *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. The Marian University community endeavors to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for all. The university's primary purpose is transforming the lives of students to support their current and future professional service and leadership. The mission commits the institution to providing for the education of the whole person within the Catholic tradition. In support of this mission, Marian University has four academic schools: Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and Nursing and Health Professions. These schools offer bachelor level programs in the arts, humanities, sciences and professions (52), undergraduate certificate programs (4), post-baccalaureate certificate programs (4), master's level programs (4), and a doctoral program (1). Undergraduate students who demonstrate advanced academic achievement and performance are also eligible for the Marian University Honors Program. To better meet the needs of all students, Marian's academic programs are delivered in multiple modes, including accelerated degree programs, fully online programs, and programs offered at satellite campuses to accommodate working-adult and graduate students.

The Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC) of Marian's General Education Program for all undergraduate students is evidence of the focus on applied liberal arts in the education of the whole person. In addition to the required 3 credits in Philosophy and 6 credits in Theology—important features of a Catholic university—students are required to engage in various studies across the curriculum, including studies of natural science and mathematics, humanities and the arts, social science, and applied liberal arts. Student Learning Outcomes for the LACC General Education Program were developed to reflect Marian University's core values. In 2007, these outcomes were adopted by Faculty Senate as institutional learning outcomes for all undergraduate programs.

The applied liberal arts nature of Marian University is reflected through its commitment to personal and professional services as an essential aspect of higher education, both in unique course offerings and in service learning opportunities, for example:

- BUA 221/222 Model United Nations—a team of students prepares for and attends conferences at which they communicate, negotiate, and write resolutions, proposing solutions to global problems from a particular country's point of view. Marian University's teams have consistently performed at the highest level in this international program.
- THE 205 Peacemaking: Multicultural, Interfaith Dimensions—the basic philosophical, religious, spiritual, and practical dimensions of peacemaking are explored through a service learning project.

- NRS 301 Medical Missions (Nicaragua)—students learn about introductory concepts of culture, health practices, and health education from a personal and global perspective through medical mission work with an underserved population in Nicaragua.

Graduate students also engage in service learning opportunities, for example, graduate nursing students' practicum experiences in course work in the nurse practitioner track (600 clock hours) or nurse educator track (450 clock hours), and graduate education students' practicum experiences (minimum 150 clock hours per practicum) within various program concentrations. Business graduate students engage in service learning as they complete a team consulting project with a non-profit organization, focusing on organizational assessment and improvement.

**Student Support Services.** Support is structured to accommodate key points in students' progression at Marian. Academic Affairs, Student Engagement, and Enrollment Management coordinate to provide students the help they need to navigate admission, enrollment, financial aid, and the first year of studies. The [TRIO Student Support Services](#) program, as well as the [TRIO Upward Bound Math and Science](#) program, support prospective and current students with identified challenges to pursuit of the undergraduate degree. In addition, Marian has a highly effective [Working Families program](#), funded by a matching grant from an anonymous donor. Working students with families who qualify for this program receive support for childcare and housing expenses as well as tuition costs. Additionally, students whose high school academics may not have provided adequate preparation for college-level work can apply for admission into the [EXCEL program](#), which supplies focused first-year support.

The Center for Academic Support and Excellence (CASE) provides centralized coordination and management of student advising and academic support. When students have difficulty with content in a course, the [University Academic Early Warning System](#) alerts CASE staff to students' need for assistance. The system originated for traditional undergraduate students; however, in 2013, the system expanded to include adult undergraduate and graduate students. The benefits of the Academic Early Warning System can be seen in the increased number of students using [tutoring services](#). Use of these services increased from the 2013-2014 academic year to 2014-2015 in the areas of math, nursing, science, and writing (most frequently accessed by [graduate students](#)), reflecting faculty and staff engagement in assisting students to achieve their learning goals.

Marian University provides quality, values-based engagement experiences in a safe environment for traditional undergraduate students. These experiences include student organizations, student leadership conferences, and service. The Office of [Student Engagement](#) provides opportunities for students to connect and learn outside the classroom. One initiative is the establishment of Living Learning Communities, where students with the same major or with majors in common, such as health professions, reside and work together to attain common learning goals. This model provides opportunities for students to engage in peer study groups, study groups with a learning specialist from the tutoring center, or service learning and community service. The Residence Life staff has begun enhancing the original Living Learning Communities and is now implementing the Community Curricular Model: "[Community Stands Together.](#)"

### **3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.**

Marian University is organized into five divisions: Academic Affairs, Student Engagement, Business and Finance, Enrollment Management, and Advancement. Each division has a [mission statement](#) consistent with the Marian University Mission Statement, as does each of the four [schools](#). All units within the divisions have mission statements that align with the university Mission Statement. Two examples reflecting this alignment are [Academic Affairs](#) and [Student Engagement](#).

Marian University's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the institutional mission. Completed in 2007, the [initial strategic planning work](#) involved broad inclusion of the institution's constituents. Since its inception in 2012, Marian's new strategic plan aligns all institutional innovations with five strategic goals that flow from, and, in turn, support the mission:

1. Raising the Bar: Improve student outcomes;
2. Raising the Bar: Achieve financial stability and begin growth;
3. Raising the Bar: Improve aesthetic appearance of campus;
4. Creating Differentiation: Improve academic quality and experience; and
5. Strengthening Bonds: Build a more vibrant, spiritual and values-centered community.

The preface to the Strategic Plan identifies the mission, vision, and vision in action as key elements informing the plan. The first goal in the strategic plan focuses on improving student outcomes. Objective A.8. specifically addresses enhancing academic programming at all levels—traditional, non-traditional, graduate, undergraduate, and continuing—by evaluating efficacy and sustainability from the perspectives of mission, student learning, core competencies, student interest, market demand, and financial capacity.

Since the revision of the strategic plan in 2012, annual [work plan](#) updates ascertain specific actions, objectives, measures, and expected outcomes. This past year, a [3-year strategic plan](#) re-envisioning for 2015-2018 was completed. This ongoing evaluation addresses core mission work in the present while also focusing on the future.

Additionally, a [vision rewrite](#) was undertaken as a result of broad campus feedback that the essence of the 2012 Vision Statement did not "sound like us." A vision writing committee was appointed by the President in fall 2014; the committee drafted a vision statement and then elicited feedback from faculty, staff, and administration. The new [Vision Statement and Vision Statement in Action](#) were approved by the BoT at the February 18, 2015 meeting.

Beyond the institutional strategic plan, the [Strategic Financial Plan](#) provides evidence that Marian's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the institutional mission. An element of this plan focuses on the improvement of tuition and financial aid modeling to enhance students' ability to access and achieve a quality education, as many students are first-generation and underserved, as noted earlier in this report. Further evidence is noted in the enhanced budget process implemented for the 2016 fiscal year budget. More detail is provided in Criterion 5.C.1.

## Sources

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- CSA\_Congregation of Sisters of St Agnes
- PRES\_Board Minutes 2000 05 excerpt - Core Values
- PRES\_Ex Corde Ecclesiae
- PRES\_Inspiring New Traditions - A Ten Year Vision
- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws
- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws (page number 8)
- PRES\_Mission Review Memo\_20121109
- PRES\_Mission Statement Revision Process
- PRES\_MissionAlignmentDivisions
- PRES\_MissionAlignmentSchools
- PRES\_Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- PRES\_Strategic Plan Refresh 2014-17 2014-15 workplan April status
- PRES\_Strategic Plan\_2008-2013
- PRES\_Strategic Plan\_2012-15
- PRES\_UniversitySchoolProgramAlignmentExemplars
- PRES\_UniversityStudentEngagementAlignment Exemplars
- PRES\_Vision Statement and Vision Statement in Action, 2015
- PRES\_Vision Statement Rewrite Process\_2015
- VPAA\_2015-2016 General Education Program
- VPAA\_BUA221-222 Model United Nations
- VPAA\_Degree and Non-Degree Program Offerings
- VPAA\_Doctorate Enrollment History\_2005-2015
- VPAA\_Ethnicity and Gender Composition
- VPAA\_General Education Program Student Learning Outcomes with Indicators
- VPAA\_Geographic Enrollment by Category
- VPAA\_Honors Program
- VPAA\_Marian University at a Glance
- VPAA\_Mission Consistency and Enrollment Growth
- VPAA\_UndergraduateGraduateEnrollmentHistory\_2005-2015
- VPAA\_USLOs
- VPBF\_Strategic Financial Plan, 2014
- VPSEM\_WFG
- VPSE\_Academic Early Warning System
- VPSE\_Community Stands Together Programming Model
- VPSE\_EXCEL Admission fact sheet
- VPSE\_Service Learning
- VPSE\_Student Engagement
- VPSE\_TRiO SSS
- VPSE\_TRiO UBMS
- VPSE\_Tutoring Services by Type
- VPSE\_Tutoring Services Usage

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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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

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#### **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.**

In alignment with Marian University's [Mission Statement](#), the institution has five accompanying Core Values, a Vision Statement, and a Vision in Action Statement. The Marian University website provides an avenue for both internal and external constituents to access and learn more about the university's mission. The [About Marian](#) page on the university's website connects viewers to the Mission and Values web page that offers short videos about Marian's history, Marian's mission and core values, and CSA's sponsored ministries. The About Marian webpage provides links to Campus Ministry, a statement on Marian's Catholic Identity, and a Prayer Map that delineates specific places of religious and spiritual significance on the Fond du Lac campus. Furthermore, the web page provides access to the university's strategic plan.

The Mission and Core Values are articulated in core documents accessible to all constituents of the university. These include:

- 2015-2016 [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) Academic Bulletins
- [2015-2016 Student Handbook](#)
- [2016 Marian University Employee Handbook](#)
- [2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601](#)

The Mission Statement and Core Values are posted in every classroom, office, and meeting room on the main campus and at the Appleton and West Allis sites. In addition, a simple Christian cross, handmade by an artist in Nicaragua, accompanies most classroom displays of the Mission Statement to highlight connection to the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes (CSA) and its ministry in Nicaragua.

#### **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.**

As noted in 1.A.1, the Mission Statement (2013) and Vision Statement (2015) were recently revised through a collaborative review process. Public documents provide the most current versions of these statements. Marian University Core Values and Vision in Action Statements further explain the institution's emphasis on teaching, learning, and scholarship: "*Marian University supports students as they engage in a rigorous education that fosters research and scholarship for the sake of learning and career development.*"

The 2015-2016 [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) Academic Bulletins provide detailed information regarding education at Marian University and is the primary source for explanations regarding the relationship between mission and policies governing recruitment, eligibility, admission, retention, and student support services. The 2015-2016 Student Handbook explains Marian's framework for the Catholic intellectual tradition, which promotes "a spirit of dialogue, questioning, and unity within and outside the classroom." The 2015-2016 Student Handbook presents Marian's "[Human Dignity Statement](#)," which explains in detail the meaning of the "dignity, value and opportunity of every person," as stated in the Core Values. The 2015-2016 Student Handbook also provides students with information regarding the service focus of the mission, which aligns with the charism of CSA to "serve those whose human dignity or faith life is threatened." Students are directed to information about [student clubs and organizations](#) that lead and participate in many service projects.

The 2011-2012 Faculty Handbook further explains the emphasis on teaching, learning, and scholarship reflected in expectations for faculty work. The [promotion and tenure review](#) process is based on the understanding that "*the primary purpose of the promotion and tenure process is to strengthen the academic quality of Marian University as a learning community.*" The promotion policy's primary quality indicator for advancement in rank is the demonstration and maintenance of excellence in teaching, which reflects Marian's mission of engaging "*students in the education of the whole person.*" Scholarship includes, in addition to empirical study, the study of teaching and learning in the disciplines and producing creative works. Learning through service, particularly in clinical or field settings, is a recognized indicator of faculty quality.

The [About Marian](#) webpage presents detailed information regarding the relationship among the mission and vision, the current strategic plan, and the assessment of student learning outcomes. Links to the Campus Ministry webpage provide students and members of the public with information regarding the education ministry central to the founding of Marian University, connecting a broad audience to the spiritual and social development of students through religious and spiritual activities, such as faith sharing, Bible study, retreats, and service. A long-standing activity of Campus Ministry is the [Spring Break Mission trip](#). The mission trips are strongly grounded in Catholic social teaching, scriptures, and Marian University's mission and values of service and social justice.

The university annually recognizes individuals and groups who demonstrate significant commitment to mission and service. Recipients of various awards are visible to the

entire community, as their names are added to the plaques located in the main hallway of the Administration Building. External constituents also recognize students' commitment to service. For example, the Marian University Student Nurses Association has earned the Service Award from the Wisconsin Student Nurses Association for the past four years, demonstrating this organization's extensive number of service activities. In 2009, Marian University was recognized by the [President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll](#) for its community service.

### **3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.**

The Mission, Core Values, Vision, and Vision in Action documents clearly articulate Marian University's scope and intended constituents. According to the Mission Statement, "*Marian University engages students in the education of the whole person...embrace[s] justice and compassion and transform[s] lives for professional service and leadership in the global community.*" The Core Values of community, learning, service, social justice, and spiritual traditions expand on the Mission Statement. The Vision Statement states that Marian University focuses on "*developing potential and enriching lives through teaching and learning, united in service for a just and humane world.*" The Vision in Action Statement specifies that Marian University "*provides higher education experience for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students nurturing the capacity to thrive in all areas of life and supports students as they engage in a rigorous education.*"

Based on the aforementioned evidence, Marian University demonstrates that it has articulated its mission publicly.

## **Sources**

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- PRES\_About Marian
- PRES\_Board governance committee structure
- PRES\_Campus Ministry Spring Mission Trip
- PRES\_CEO Board Eval Board Minutes\_2012
- PRES\_Conflict of Interest
- PRES\_Conflict of Interest- BoT
- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws
- PRES\_Mission Core Values Vision Vision in Action Statements
- PRES\_Orientation Agenda\_20141029
- PRES\_President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll 2009
- PRES\_Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 7)
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 34)
- VPAA\_2015-16 Graduate Academic Bulletin
- VPAA\_2015-16 Graduate Academic Bulletin (page number 3)
- VPAA\_2015-16 Graduate Academic Bulletin (page number 6)

- VPAA\_2015-16 Undergraduate Academic Bulletin
- VPAA\_2015-16 Undergraduate Academic Bulletin (page number 4)
- VPAA\_2015-16 Undergraduate Academic Bulletin (page number 7)
- VPBF\_Marian University Employee Handbook
- VPBF\_Marian University Employee Handbook (page number 7)
- VPSE\_Student Engagement
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16 (page number 10)
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16 (page number 28)

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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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

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#### 1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

As a Catholic applied liberal arts university, Marian University provides a distinct and necessary type of education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one that is cognizant of the multicultural world in which we live. Marian sees its role within this multicultural world as revering the human dignity of all and working to change systems that continue to oppress anyone due to socioeconomic status, gender, race, religion, language, or nationality. The mission and identified core values of Marian University explicitly support diversity of its constituents.

*Marian University...welcomes diverse spiritual traditions...engages students in the education of the whole person. We embrace justice and compassion and transform lives for professional service and leadership in the global community.*

Three of the university's core values reflect a balance between the respect for diversity, promoting social change, diversity of spiritual traditions, and the promotion of service in the global community.

*Community - Respecting our diversity as individuals, we encourage, challenge and nurture one another, joining together to accomplish our shared mission and vision.*

*Social Justice - We work to create individual and societal change which supports the value, dignity and opportunity of every person.*

*Spiritual Traditions - Valuing Marian's Catholic religious heritage, we respect each individual's freedom to explore a diversity of spiritual beliefs.*

As noted in the [2008-2013 Strategic Plan](#) and continuing in the [Strategic Plan 2015-2018](#), the university has attended to its role in a multicultural society by strengthening students' knowledge, skills, and abilities as they relate to the diversity of cultures and traditions in the global community.

#### 2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate to its mission and the constituencies served.

Marian University has a number of academic offerings and student services referencing human diversity. For example, students enroll in both undergraduate and graduate level [courses](#), across various disciplines, to develop skills and awareness of issues necessary to living in a multicultural society. The [Cultural, Media, and Gender \(CMG\) Studies](#) program and the Religious Education minor are examples of academic programs that enhance students' understanding of diversity. All courses apply critical cultural inquiry, integration of critical thinking, theory, and socially responsible engagement to investigation of cultural products, social institutions and practices, and ideological perspectives. Attention is given to identifying, analyzing, and responding to injustice.

Across all degree levels offered at Marian University, the [enrollment profile](#) over the past 10 years reflects an increasing number of students from diverse backgrounds. Enrollment of students identifying themselves as ethnic minorities went from a low of 6.5% in 2007 to a high of 14.6% in 2014, an 8.1% increase. For the past seven years, Marian has sustained greater than 10% enrollment of ethnic minorities. The population of international students, which also adds diversity to the student body, has gone from 0.5% in 2005 to 2.3% in 2015. The gender mix of students at Marian University has stayed constant over the past 10 years, with male students averaging 28% of the student population.

Despite formal institutional commitment to supporting and increasing diversity, the extent of [racial diversity](#) noted in our students and, especially, our faculty and staff, remains limited. While student diversity more closely aligns with the 2014 census data for the State of Wisconsin in general, faculty and staff data does not. Faculty and staff are still more than 93% White, non-Hispanic, which is significantly higher than that of both the region and Wisconsin as a whole. American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black (non-Hispanic), and Hispanic populations are significantly under-represented in our faculty and staff relative to regional and state demographics.

A particular challenge has been retention. The strategic plan issued a challenge, as evidenced in Goal A.2.a., to *Increase minority student retention and graduation rates*. The addition of the [TRIO Student Support Services program](#) in 2010 represents an ongoing effort to enhance retention and degree completion for undergraduate students. Student Support Services (SSS) is funded by the U.S. Department of Education to help traditional undergraduate students develop skills and motivation necessary to pursue and earn a bachelor's degree. The goal of SSS is to increase participants' college retention and graduation rates. SSS offers individual guidance, tutoring, workshops, financial coaching, career and academic preparation, additional opportunities for scholarships and grants, cultural events, and campus connections. Students selected to participate in SSS have an academic need and are first-generation college students (neither parent completed a bachelor's degree); have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability (that may affect their role as a student); or are from a family earning a limited income (determined by taxable income level and family size). All services are free to students selected to participate. The transforming [outcomes](#) achieved in the first five years of the program played a large part in Marian University being funded for another five years, 2015-2020.

In addition to coursework, traditional undergraduate students have many opportunities for cultural awareness and study through immersion experiences and mission trips. Students

demonstrate justice and compassion for others, as evidenced by the many Student Senate approved clubs and organizations active in [philanthropic work](#). Students donate their time to service activities, such as Habitat for Humanity, Strike out Cancer, and Pink Out, and to fund raising for such organizations. Another example is the Marian University Student Nurses Association, which has been hosting its largest charitable event for 13 years--Presents for Peds (Pediatrics). Undergraduate nursing students gather new toys and monetary donations. In December 2015 they donated over 750 toys to Children's Hospital in Milwaukee, WI, and Fox Valley, and to St. Agnes Hospital in Fond du Lac, WI.

The [Social Justice Committee](#) (SJC) of which staff, faculty, and students are members, contributes significantly to understanding diverse groups. The SJC is an integral part of the university and local community and serves to promote and demonstrate the core value of social justice; to educate and enhance awareness in our community about human rights, global issues, peace, the environment, and the basic human needs of the voiceless and under-represented. The SJC's monthly [speaker series](#) is one example of the committee fulfilling its mission. During academic year 2014/15, the SJC hosted 18 speaker events. Tracking of attendance at these events was inconsistent prior to fall 2015; however, during spring 2015, two events had strong participation: the Human Trafficking event had 130 participants and the Ebony Vision: Black History event exceeded 200 participants.

Marian University is a member of the [Higher Education Diversity Initiative Team](#) (HEDIT), whose mission is to *lead, inspire, educate and challenge our institutions and the greater Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin community in promoting diversity and inclusiveness*. HEDIT members include Marian University, Moraine Park Technical College, Ripon College, and University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac. HEDIT has sponsored an [annual conference](#) since 2009 for Fond du Lac and the surrounding communities. The October 2015 conference, "Empowering the Disempowered," addressed a variety of topics, including disabilities seen and unseen, current topics and events in the LGBTQIA community, and Fond du Lac race relations.

In 2007, Marian University initiated conversations with the non-profit [United for Diversity](#) (UFD) to assume organization of the community event, known as the International Fair, that had been hosted by the university. Marian University was instrumental in inaugurating CELEBRATE commUNITY with UFD. In 2008, the first CELEBRATE commUNITY event was held. UFD has continued to organize the event since that time with members of the Marian University faculty, staff, and students participating. HEDIT also assists UFD with the event.

Finally, the annual [Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Prayer Breakfast](#), in existence since 1999 and hosted by Marian University for the last 10 years, is a public event where attendees celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Attendance records for this event have not been consistently maintained; however, for those events where participants were counted, attendance was over 100.

Based on the aforementioned evidence, Marian University demonstrates that it understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

## Sources

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- PRES\_Campus Ministry Spring Mission Trip
- PRES\_HEDIT 2008-2009 Initial Charge Report
- PRES\_HEDIT Conferences
- PRES\_Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- PRES\_Strategic Plan\_2008-2013
- UFD\_United for Diversity
- VPA\_MLK Community Prayer Breakfast
- VPAA\_Courses with a Diversity Focus
- VPAA\_Cultural, Media, and Gender Studies
- VPAA\_Ethnicity and Gender Composition
- VPAA\_Race-Ethnic Diversity
- VPAA\_Social Justice Committee Annual Report 2014-2015
- VPAA\_Social Justice Committee Events
- VPSE\_Student Philanthropic Evidence
- VPSE\_TRiO SSS
- VPSE\_TRIO SSS 2013-14 APR

## 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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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

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#### **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.**

Since its founding as Marian College in 1936, Marian University has embraced its role in service to the citizens of Fond du Lac County, the state of Wisconsin and beyond, through its educational offerings. Originally established to train teachers, Marian University has never lost its focus on excellence in education and service to the community by preparing graduates to transform lives for professional service and leadership in the global community.

Marian University's [strategic plan](#) demonstrates its commitment to act and make decisions that serve not only the institution but also the broader society. Goal A of the strategic plan focuses on improving student outcomes. Several objectives for this goal reflect Marian University's public obligation:

Objective A.3 *Increase graduation rates*

Objective A.4 *Increase post-graduation employment and graduate school rates within six months of graduation, and*

Objective A.8 *Enhance academic programming at all levels (traditional, non-traditional, graduate, undergraduate, and continuing) by evaluating their efficacy and sustainability from the perspectives of student learning, market demand, student interest, mission, core competencies, and financial capacity.*

Goal E of the strategic plan focuses on building a more vibrant, spiritual and values-centered community. The objectives set to meet this goal as it relates to commitment to the public good are:

Objective E.1 *Enhance spiritual and faith life to build a more vibrant community.*

Objective E.3 *Create residential living-learning communities(LLCs) that support community-based learning and values-based action*

The strategic plan focuses on internal efforts to meet these goals and objectives; the impact on the public is an increased level of education in the community and graduates who meet the needs of employers.

**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.**

Marian University, a [sponsored ministry](#) of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes, has no financial obligation to the Congregation or any other external organization except for the payment of a [reasonable fee](#) for services provided by Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes Sponsored Ministries (CSASM). Its educational responsibility is the primary purpose of the institution.

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

Marian University is firmly rooted in Catholic social teaching, namely showing concern for the dignity of all people, taking care of the poor and vulnerable, and walking in solidarity with people of various backgrounds. While much of this has already been evidenced within Criterion 1, related to enrollment profiles and academic programs, members of the Marian University community are invited to contribute in ways they are able. Advancement not only serves to facilitate fund development activities for the university, but also engages with the broader community in a variety of ways. Some long-standing examples include the [Business and Industry Awards](#) event and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Prayer Breakfast. The Office of Advancement led a community outreach to invite other non-profits to collaborate on a Giving Tuesday event. The response was positive, with 10 Fond du Lac area non-profits partnering in the event. The goal is to continue the [Giving Tuesday](#) partnership and to increase the number of non-profits participating in the event.

Students, faculty, and staff also reach out to meet the needs of the community through individual service and [service learning](#) hours. They record those hours through Noble Hour (tracking software). In the [last five years](#), 118 courses have included service learning activities totaling 35,628 hours, demonstrating evidence of the university's commitment. During the 2014-2015 academic year alone, the Marian community [contributed](#) approximately \$95,000 in economic impact to the Fond du Lac area in service learning hours alone. These totals do not include courses that require clinical, practicum, or teaching hours. The total amount of economic impact for all individual service and service learning recorded reached over \$215,000, a significant contribution to Marian University's communities of interest.

Responding to the needs of the local area community, Marian University's [Working Families Grant Program](#) (WFG) serves students and the community in a unique way, positively impacting Fond du Lac and surrounding communities through [reinvesting](#) donor sponsored

funding and providing volunteer service as well as access to high quality graduates. Since the program's inception in 2002, a cumulative total of over \$3.25 million has been redistributed to local area rental agencies, mortgage lenders, grocers, and child care providers. In fact, all donor sponsored funding is spent regionally, and an additional \$774,224 is projected to be reinvested through June, 2019 to support program recipients' rent, food, and child care needs, continuing to stimulate the local economy.

Marian University also engages with external constituents in events open to the public. For example, the annual [Academic Symposium](#) reaches out to the broader community. At its inception, the Academic Symposium was a two-day event held during the fall semester. Beginning in 2011, the symposium was moved to the spring semester. In 2012, the symposium was expanded by adding "pre-symposium" events that tied in with the theme of the year's symposium. Since 2014, two pre-symposium events, one in November and one in February, preceded the main symposium occurring in March or April. Various media publicize the event to the external community. Members of the university community contribute as presenters, moderators, and participants. The 2016 Academic Symposium topic is "Clash of Extremes: Is Our World Big Enough for All of Us?"

Marian University's top priority is quality education. The examples represent a small sample of the scope of the university's engagement with the public. The university maintains ongoing, active relationships with the local community, corporate and educational leaders, and professional and civic organizations, reflecting the institution's commitment to serving the public. The purpose of these relationships is to increase the quality of the institution's academic programs through either counsel regarding curricular offerings; placement opportunities for clinical, practicums, service learning experiences, internships or permanent employment; or acquisition of financial resources in support of Marian University's mission, core values, vision, and strategic plan. Never does the nature of these relationships compromise the primary mission of the university--to engage students in the education of the whole person; rather, these relationships more frequently enhance Marian's ability to fulfill its academic mission.

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## 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Marian University is driven by its clearly articulated mission, core values, vision and vision in action. Together, these powerful statements guide decision-making in all facets of the daily operation of the institution. The meaning of the mission and its relationship to core values is examined by faculty, staff and students. Revisions, including the revision of 2013, articulate the contemporary meaning of the mission while sustaining Marian University's historical identity and tradition as expressed in the core values. This reflective process has allowed Marian to frame a clear vision for its work while still striving for improvement in the outcomes of that work. A high value is placed on the dignity and rights of the individual, on social justice, and on encouraging and assisting all to achieve their full potential.

While the evidence demonstrates that Marian is successful in meeting Criterion One, the future holds challenges in this area. These include:

- Focusing on increasing faculty, staff and student diversity by attracting a representative cohort of qualified applicants and candidates who will engage in carrying out Marian's mission.
- Enhancing strategic planning to further the goal of becoming a leader in multicultural and diversity initiatives.
- Creating, using, and sustaining an inclusive process of regular review/evaluation of Marian's Mission, Core Values, Vision, Vision in Action, and Catholic Identity statements.
- Securing adequate financial resource, including a greater proportion of non-tuition based revenue, to support and advance the university's mission to serve a high percentage of students less able to support the rising costs of higher education.
- Determining the role of online, accelerated, and satellite delivery of academic programs in fulfilling Marian's mission. As the Marian community continues to evaluate the future of higher education, its members continue to be mindful of engaging with students and alumni, developing strong community relations in satellite locations, and including the larger campus in university activities and traditions essential to Marian's mission and core values.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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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

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**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.**

Marian University is a sponsored ministry of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes (CSA). Its purpose is to serve as an institution of higher education in accord with the teachings, laws, and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and to "develop [in students] a love of knowledge and a dedication to Judeo-Christian ideals, regardless of race, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation or disability." As members of a unified community, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and members of the board each contribute to the governance, integrity, and ethical practice of the university as a whole.

#### Board of Trustees and Administration

Integrity is established in Marian University's organizational documents, and Marian's governing board, administration, faculty, and staff follow fair and ethical policies and processes. Policies are written and [electronically available](#) to all constituents via MyMarian. Faculty, staff, and student handbooks and related documents reference institutional integrity and lay out policies and procedures to protect fairness and integrity with respect to the rights and responsibilities of both internal and external constituencies. A sustainability initiative launched in fall 2014 focused on university policies and procedures. A standard [Policy/Procedure template](#) was selected, and educating the campus community on using the template began. All schools and departments are responsible for identifying their policies and procedures and setting a timeline for their review and transition to the new template. The goal is to transition all policies into the new template by June 1, 2017.

Marian University's [bylaws](#) direct implementation of all policies and practices related to its mission. The President and the Board of Trustees (BoT) and Board committees act according to the Code of Ethics delineated in [Article XIII](#) of these bylaws, academic freedom and shared governance being fundamental to university governance. [Article XI](#) clearly delineates functions and responsibilities of Board committees concerning financial, academic, personnel, and

auxiliary functions. The bylaws establish the ethical framework governing the institution's operation. All decisions are expected to serve the purpose and mission of the university and of higher education. To ensure transparent decision-making, reflecting “what is best for the university as a whole and for the advancement of higher education,” all Trustees are required to disclose potential [conflicts of interest](#) and refrain from participating in transactions where Board administration has determined a conflict of interest.

The President's Cabinet meets bi-monthly to discuss key institutional issues, demonstrating fair and ethical executive communication, for example, [e-communiques](#) from the Office of the President. The President has also offered regular university-wide opportunities for administrators, faculty, and staff to come together to share information and for the President to address questions. For instance, the President hosts [debriefings](#) after each board meeting to share the actions of the BoT. The president holds question and answer time for faculty and staff following the state of the university presentation at [university in-services](#) preceding the fall and spring semesters.

### **Financial Operations**

The Board Finance Committee ([Article XI, 11.8](#)) has principal fiduciary responsibility, including review of the President's annual operating budget and analysis and interpretation of financial reports. The committee considers reports and recommendations concerning payroll, salary schedules, personnel policies, and campus master planning.

The Board Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Committee ([Article XI, 11.7](#)) receives and reviews the university's annual audited financial statements, completed by an independent certified public accounting firm. The committee is responsible for interviewing the auditor regarding the findings of the audit. Additionally, the Committee has the responsibility to review matters related to risk management and compliance. A [communiqué](#) to the university president from the ERM Chair provides evidence of the committee's actions to ensure integrity of financial practices.

The Office of Business and Finance is responsible for employing generally accepted accounting principles to ensure consistent and transparent implementation of fiscal policies and financial processes as reflected in its mission statement: *"It is our goal to reflect the mission and core values of Marian University by conducting all operations of the department in an ethical manner."* See Criterion 5.A.5 for in-depth discussion and evidence demonstrating integrity in financial operations. As part of the Policy and Procedure Project initiated by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the Office of Business and Finance has begun a review of policies, such as the [Travel and Entertainment Policy](#), to ensure they address the needs of the university and follow generally accepted accounting principles.

The Office of Financial Aid maintains eligibility for Title IV funding. In 2014-2015, 46% of undergraduate students were eligible for Pell Grants, and 74.7% of all students received some form of financial aid. Responsible stewardship and student education by the Office of Financial Aid has resulted in low [cohort default rates](#), compared to the 9.2% state of Wisconsin default rate. The Office of Business and Finance provides several [tuition payment options](#) to

assist students with meeting financial obligations. Information about tuition payment options is available in tuition and fee brochures posted on the Marian University website, as well as through the Office of Admissions and the Office of Financial Aid.

## **Academic Affairs**

As a Catholic university, Marian University encourages a spirit of dialogue, questioning, and unity as essential to learning. Exercising academic freedom and advocating moral responsibility for academic honesty are central to the Catholic higher education tradition.

The Office of Academic Affairs, directed by the Vice President (VPAA), provides administrative oversight and support for Faculty Senate, sharing governance of policies and processes that support academic integrity as evidenced in the 2011-2012 [Faculty Handbook](#)'s delineation of policies under joint purview. [Curriculum and Education Standards](#) (CES) Committee and [Graduate Council](#) are primarily responsible for integrity and excellence of the undergraduate and graduate curriculum and educational standards, respectively.

Marian University endorsed and adopted the AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics as the Code of Professional Ethics (bottom of the [page 61](#)) of the faculty body. Academic freedom for faculty and for librarians is clearly defined. Any concerns related to a possible breach of the academic freedom statement by a faculty member is addressed by the respective school dean or the vice president for academic affairs as appropriate. The Faculty Senate supports the university's [Academic Honesty Policy](#) and has also included additional guidelines related to [faculty plagiarism](#).

All faculty, staff, and students have access to the institutional [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 policy](#) (FERPA), published on the university website, in the 2015-2016 [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) Academic Bulletins, and in the advising toolbox. In addition, the [Office of the Registrar](#) continually communicates policy to the university community regarding FERPA. As noted in the Employee Handbook (bottom of [page 38](#)), consequences for employees who fail to maintain confidentiality related to university business, including student information, are clearly explained.

Pertinent rules, rights, and responsibilities of students are published in the 2015-2016 [Student Handbook](#). The BoT, at its [February 2015 meeting](#), approved a general [student complaint policy](#). The policy and procedure included the goals of fair and ethical handling of student complaints. To make the process easier for students, an [electronic complaint form](#) was developed to enhance the university's responsiveness to student complaints as well as to use the data to improve university practices.

The Marian University [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) assures and monitors compliance with legal and ethical standards for research involving human subjects. This very active body upholds ethical principles regarding research involving human subjects and has established policies and guidelines regarding research carried out by members of the Marian University community as well as individuals or organization who wish to complete research at the institution (see Criterion 2.E.1.).

## **Employment Practices**

The university [complies](#) with federal non-discrimination regulations with respect to race, color, creed, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, and gender and is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer-educator. Policies are in writing and readily [available](#). The [Faculty](#), [Employee](#) and [Student](#) handbooks and the [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) Academic Bulletins reference various statements related to institutional integrity and describe policies and procedures to protect fairness and integrity concerning the rights and responsibilities of both internal and external constituencies.

Marian University aims for fairness and transparency in its employee practices and is an [Equal Opportunity Employer](#). The Office of Human Resources is dedicated to providing excellent customer service and support for all employees, emphasizing, developing, and maintaining a climate of mutual trust, confidence, and sensitivity to needs. This perspective is demonstrated by the established [employment policies](#), [employee conduct policies](#), [employee benefits](#), and [standard hiring practices](#). For example, [criminal background checks](#) are completed for all new employees to ensure the safety and integrity of the institution and students.

Non-tenure and tenure-track faculty participate in [annual performance reviews](#), and tenured faculty participate in performance review every three years. Additionally, procedures and participation in decisions concerning faculty tenure and advancement in rank are detailed in the [Faculty Handbook](#). Staff also participate in an [annual performance appraisal](#). To assist supervisors in completing performance reviews/evaluations, the Office of Human Resources provides [Performance Management Guidelines](#) demonstrating the university's commitment to meaningful, timely, and productive performance management for all employees.

The grievance policies for faculty, found in the [Faculty Handbook](#), articulate processes by which faculty can initiate prompt and efficient investigation and resolution of claims or concerns. While Marian University employees are expected to address issues of concern through informal means, employees can also address [complaints](#) through formal processes.

Marian University articulates clear policies in the Employee Handbook, holding employees to a high standard of [conduct](#) concerning [race abuse and harassment](#) and [sexual harassment or abuse](#). The institution periodically holds training for employees on sexual harassment; 100% of faculty and staff completed the most recent training. Marian University has worked to stay current with potential problems related to computers in the workplace. Employees are provided information in the Employee Handbook (bottom of [page 16](#)), as well as on the Information Technology webpage and the University Policy Manual.

The Human Resources Director meets with all new employees and is a resource to current employees on existing or new policies. A [new employee orientation](#) is scheduled for the beginning of each academic year. The Director of the Center for Instructional and Organizational Development (CIOD), in collaboration with the Faculty Development Committee, has enhanced the [year-long new faculty orientation](#). The Human Resources Director plans to institute more formal orientation sessions for new staff as well.

## **Auxiliary Services**

Marian University provides a range of facilities and services to support student academics, residence life, and safe, community-centered learning environments. The university contracts with [Follett Higher Education Group](#) for bookstore and campus merchandising services, and with [Sodexo Management](#) to provide multiple services, including facilities maintenance and dining services. As appropriate, the university works collaboratively with vendors to address necessary changes in [contracts](#) to meet new needs. These contracts contain provisions for adherence to the [service standards of the university](#), best practice standards in the industry, and applicable university policies. The contracts include provisions for [fair hiring practices](#) and employee training and support.

Contracts require mutual [communication](#), establishing procedures for the university to monitor vendors' compliance with laws, regulations, and terms relating to fair pricing and quality of services. An [example](#) is the communication related to textbook issues and the action steps taken between Follett--the bookstore vendor, and the academic deans .

**Athletics:** The [Athletic Department](#) adheres to the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) rules and regulations as well as ensuring student-athletes achieve academic goals.

**Campus Safety and Security:** The Office of Student Engagement discloses campus security policy and crime statistics on the Marian University website, as required by the Jeanne Clery Act. A policy is in place to address Title IX [complaints](#). Protocols and practices for parking services are available in the [Employee Handbook](#) and the [Student Handbook](#). Appeals to tickets are [processed and adjudicated](#) by a committee. During the fall 2015 semester, data revealed that of the 669 parking citations given, 47% were warning citations. Of the actual parking tickets served, 138 were appealed. The appeals process [outcome](#) revealed 63% were accepted and the fees waived, evidence of fair and ethical consideration of cases.

**Early Childhood Center:** The Early Childhood Center is a [Five Star Provider](#) with licensed early childhood teachers and voluntarily [obtained national accreditation](#) from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This accreditation review assures that the center demonstrates ethical practice in staffing, student/teacher ratios, and compliance with state and federal regulation of both childcare and early childhood education.

**Residence Halls:** The Department of Residence Life conducts regular professional and [peer staff](#) visits via safety and security rounds, interventions in [roommate conflicts](#), enforcement of [policies](#) designed for communal safety, and inspections of health and safety equipment and conditions in the halls. Residence Life also fairly advertises its [policies and procedures](#) regarding room selection and placement, move-in and move-out procedures, and billing.

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

## Sources

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## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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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

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**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.**

Marian University recognizes and responds to its responsibility to provide clear and effective communications to both internal and external constituencies. Multiple delivery tools, including electronic and print mechanisms as well as personal outreach, are utilized to present clear and relevant information regarding the university and its mission, academic programs, requirements, costs, accreditation relationships, and other consumer information. This section is organized by major sources of communication and underlined words indicate how each provides information on the areas outlined in the core component.

### Academic Bulletin

The Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Bulletins are the chief documents for communicating about undergraduate and graduate academic programs, undergraduate and graduate requirements, undergraduate and graduate course descriptions, faculty and staff (same in both bulletins), undergraduate and graduate costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships (same in both bulletins). The Office of the Registrar oversees the process of updating the Academic Bulletins on an annual basis, including distributing sections to appropriate individuals/departments to review and update. The Academic Bulletins are published every year on or around August 1. Once finalized, they are distributed to offices and posted on the website. The 2015-2016 Academic Bulletins were not published on schedule as a result of a marketability study of all undergraduate programs during the spring 2015 semester and the planned transition from 128 credit hours to 120 credit hours for graduation, which necessitated significant curricular revisions. Additionally, the Academic Bulletin was divided this year to provide separate undergraduate and graduate bulletins. All program changes follow a process of approval, which had to be completed prior to publishing the 2015-2016 Academic Bulletins. Faculty and staff worked quickly to update academic program sheets used by the Office of Admissions and academic advisors to ensure that prospective students had current information.

### Website and Social Media

The Marian University website is the primary medium for the public to obtain information about the university and its academic programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships. In addition, the website provides information about

admissions and financial aid, student life, athletics, and other university events. The Office of University Relations (OUR) manages website operations in collaboration with WebSolutions Technology, Inc. The OUR works closely with academic schools and other campus offices to assure accuracy. Turnover in website management personnel has presented a challenge, however. One or more designated staff members of academic schools and university departments make annual updates on policies, figures, and reports. Many areas update on a more frequent basis to ensure current and accurate information. To provide brand messaging consistency, the OUR maintains final review of updates and authorizes changes. Academic [program webpages](#) offer improved, comprehensive information about program missions and student learning outcomes, admission and progression requirements, professional standards and/or accreditation, faculty information, program effectiveness, and alumni.

The OUR also engages internal and external constituents through the university's [social media websites](#). Several academic programs and offices manage specific social media sites related to their areas. The OUR staff posts information, including event announcements and campus community accomplishments, and monitors Marian University social media sites to transmit timely and accurate information and responses to questions or concerns.

### **Publications to External Constituents**

The [Marian University Annual Report](#) is the required annual report to the BoT and Corporate Members (with the inclusion of expanded financials and a five-year history of various institutional characteristics) and is also the annual report to donors and other related constituencies. The annual report includes condensed financial reports for the previous fiscal year; the list of donors; articles presenting living out the mission, vision and core values; articles related to student outcomes; and alumni success stories.

[Marian University Magazine](#) is another communication targeting alumni and friends of the university. The magazine chronicles the university's commitment to community, learning, service, social justice, and spiritual traditions, across the generations. The [Alumni Newsletter](#) provides more frequent communication about news and events with alumni and friends of the university.

[Marian at a Glance](#), annually compiled by the Office of Institutional Research following definitions used by Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and an important source of accurate facts and figures about the university, provides objective data, reinforcing fidelity across the institution. This document is available to the public on the university website.

### **Marketing**

The majority of [marketing efforts](#), including the website, Academic Bulletin, and all other marketing materials, enhance Marian's institutional or programmatic brand identity and image, while increasing overall awareness. The OUR consults with academic program faculty to reflect the unique benefits and opportunities provided by Marian University as well as to accurately represent academic requirements, rigor, and outcomes of each program.

Marian University's [OUR](#) manages marketing and advertising policy, protocols, and guidelines for external public communications, so those communications adhere to institutional graphic standards, style guides, and design parameters in the Marian University Graphic Standards Manual and Style Guide. The OUR also provides support and guidance to departments with planning and creating compelling, accurate communications. The OUR helps author, edit, and confirm facts/data used in both print and online formats, following the graphics standards manual.

Academic program Fact Sheets (examples provided for [traditional undergraduate](#), [adult](#), [masters](#), and [doctoral](#)) include general information about programs and course requirements, so students are knowledgeable about their course of study. The Office of Admissions uses Program Fact Sheets for recruiting.

### **Student Handbook**

Accessible via the Marian University website and the intranet MyMarian, the [Student Handbook](#) includes rules, rights, and responsibilities largely applicable to all students. Clubs and organizations, however, are funded through Student Senate/Activity fees not assessed to adult and graduate students, so they are ineligible for Student Senate benefits.

As evidenced in the aforementioned argument, Marian University 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.

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## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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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

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The Marian University Board of Trustees (BoT) has a long history of faithful oversight and service to the university, maintaining autonomy to make decisions in the best interest of the institution. The [Bylaws](#) clearly outline the BoT policies and practices, designed to preserve and enhance the institution. The Bylaws also clearly define [delegation](#) of day-to-day management of the institution to the President. The Board-approved Faculty Handbook defines the [faculty's role](#) as primary in academic matters. When making decisions, the BoT considers a variety of interests, both internal and external. The BoT's 18 members have served from 1 year to 15 years. During critical periods of unanticipated transitions in presidencies and Board membership, the Board has requested that Corporate Members approve a [term limit request waiver](#) to provide consistency in leadership. This approach has been critical to providing stability and historical perspective.

#### **1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.**

The Marian University Bylaws clearly outline BoT policies and practices. The BoT is [charged](#) with maintaining an institution of higher education; conferring academic degrees upon candidates who have fulfilled curricular and institutional requirements; and engaging in other appropriate fiduciary, educational, charitable, and religious responsibilities. Additionally, the BoT has the authority to hire, evaluate, and dismiss the CEO of the institution as outlined in [Article XII 12.1](#). The BoT provides oversight of policies and operations of the institution. Several recent BoT deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution:

- Approved the reduction in credit hours required for graduation from 128 to 120 on [October 16, 2013](#), as a means of reducing the financial burden on students and thereby enhancing completion rates.

- Adopted the Mission Statement on [February 20, 2013](#) and the Vision and Vision in Action Statements on [February 18, 2015](#), preserving the values and spirit of the founding Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes (CSA).
- Approved a Strategic Advancement Plan on [October 15, 2014](#), initiating an agenda for Advancement to increase revenue from gifts and grants.
- Approved the purchase of the former A.C. Nielsen building on [October 15, 2014](#), for relocating School of Nursing & Health Professions to a future state-of-the-art academic facility.
- Approved the restructuring of the schools on [February 15, 2012](#), increasing the efficiency of academic administration and preserving resources.
- Assumed responsibility (Executive Committee) for oversight of the [academic product mix/marketability study](#)—that includes preservation of missional programs—as well as the [financial aid study](#).
- Maintained the final authority for [promotion and tenure recommendations](#).
- Continued responsibility for hiring--with final approval by the Corporate Members--and evaluating the President. The BoT recently completed a [presidential search](#). Since June 2013, the president's position has been ably filled by Mr. Robert Fale, former president and chief executive officer of Agnesian HealthCare. After an extensive search process, a new President has been selected and was announced to the campus and external community on October 27, 2015. [Dr. Andrew Manion](#) will take office on March 30, 2016.

**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.**

[Representation on the BoT](#) reflects diverse external constituencies, while administration, faculty and student representatives on [standing](#) and special committees represent multiple internal constituencies. The BoT fulfills its ongoing responsibilities through an organized standing committee structure, with each committee pursuing defined goals and duties. These committees meet with relevant constituents, including faculty, staff, students, and administrators, to inform their oversight and decision-making.

Examples of various committees' consideration of internal and external constituency interests during decision-making deliberations follow:

- **Executive Committee** (Subcommittees include Nominating, and Performance Management and Reward):
  - A request was made for a [white paper](#) and follow-up analyses from both the [administration](#) and [faculty](#) regarding the proposal to move from 128 to 120 credits for graduation,
  - Stamats and Scannell & Kurz were engaged to conduct, respectively, an academic product mix/marketability study and a financial aid, admissions, and marketing study, as cited above,
  - National ([Yaffe](#)) and regional data (Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges & Universities [confidential]) inform the deliberations of the Performance Management and Reward committee.

- **Academic Affairs Committee:**
  - The committee acts on [recommendations](#) from Faculty Senate and other bodies on academic programs.
  - The committee makes recommendations to the BoT based on recommendations from bodies within the [promotion and tenure process](#).
- **Advancement Committee:**
  - A variety of external constituents were interviewed as part of a [campaign feasibility study](#), and their input, together with input from a [Campaign Planning Committee](#) that included internal and external representatives, informed the decision to proceed with a campaign to raise funds to enhance the Sadoff Science building and the new Center for Health Professions, and for scholarships.
  - The interests of Alumni were considered when approving the [Strategic Advancement Plan](#).
- **Enrollment, Engagement, and Retention Committee:**
  - An internal committee with broad representation recommended [2008 Student Handbook revisions](#), which introduced several new policies.
- **Enterprise Risk Management Committee:**
  - An [enterprise risk assessment tool](#) designed by the Association of Governing Boards was adopted by the BoT and is in its second round of deployment. Areas of consideration are influenced by numerous internal and external regulations, policies and requirements, e.g., Sarbanes Oxley\*, Title IX, Department of Education, Environmental Protection Agency, etc.  
\* Although Sarbanes Oxley does not regulate higher education, the ERM Committee has adopted its [best practice for audits](#).
- **Finance Committee:**
  - Deliberations regarding the university's recent financial condition included accrediting body, regulatory and reputational interests (external), and open communication within the university (see Criterion 5.A.).
  - [Proposals](#) from the Personnel Committee of the Faculty Senate for faculty salaries and benefits are considered when building the annual budget.
- **Investment Committee:**
  - The socially responsible investment (SRI) policy of the sponsors, the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes, was considered when developing the university's [Social Responsibility Policy](#) within the Investment Policy. The interests of endowed scholarship donors are also considered in the work of this committee.

BoT members interact with key internal and external constituencies, such as employers, alumni, donors, politicians, and professional organizations, in their role as representatives of Marian University. Input from these constituencies is critical for informed deliberations and data-based decision-making.

**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.**

The BoT is empowered to establish institutional priorities promoting the institutional mission, reflected in the Bylaws. Every BoT meeting begins with a review of Marian University's mission and core values and a [reflection](#) focusing on the business of the meeting.

To assure independence from undue influence by external parties, a [Code of Ethics](#) was established and embedded in the Bylaws. Board members are oriented to the Bylaws, Code of Ethics, and Marian mission in a [designated orientation session](#). Examples of thwarting undue influence not in the best interest of the institution follow:

- In 2014, a potential donor wanted to donate property in Galena, Illinois. Due diligence exposed association fees for the property in arrears in excess of \$10,000 and deferred maintenance would have cost thousands of dollars to rectify. The university declined the donation, in accordance with the Board-approved [Advancement Policies](#).
- The university has received offers to purchase a tract of land it owns north of the baseball stadium ([Land sale or trade 2008](#); [land offer 2016](#)). While the university has no immediate plans for use of the land, the Board has determined that there is no compelling case for selling it, especially in light of the fluctuations in land values.

BoT members take the risk of [conflicts of interest](#) seriously, and all members are required to annually sign a conflict of interest statement. An example recently demonstrated occurred when a [board member](#) brought to the BoT a potential conflict of interest related to the acquisition of a new building for the campus, and the board member recused himself from the discussion and vote.

#### **4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.**

The relationship between all levels of governance is well documented in the Bylaws, including differentiation of the BoT role from the corporate role. Bylaws [Articles I and II](#) deal with the corporate nature and the members of the corporation, and [Article III](#) deals with the trustees of the Corporation. [Article V](#) delineates the powers reserved for the trustees, establishing the BoT's general management and control of the business and affairs of the Corporation, and all the powers that may be exercised or performed by the Corporation under the laws of the State of Wisconsin and the Bylaws, subject to the limitations otherwise set forth therein.

The BoT Bylaws, [Articles X](#) and [XII](#), clearly state the President shall be the chief executive officer and shall have the authority to direct and administer all activities of the university, including all its activities and departments. While Article V clearly defines the powers reserved to the Trustees, Article XII defines the delegation of day-to-day management of the institution to the President. As provided in [Article IX](#) of the Bylaws, the Officers of the University/Vice Presidents are appointed by the president and confirmed by the BoT. The vice presidents serve at the pleasure of the president and, under the direction of the President, supervise operations, departments, and divisions as determined by the President, and perform other duties as assigned by the President.

Within the Board Code of Ethics, [Article XIII](#), the expectation of faculty to oversee academic matters is embedded in 13.4, i.e., to accept the spirit of academic freedom and shared governance as fundamental characteristics of university governance. Further, while [Article 11.4](#) defines the purview of the Board Academic Affairs Committee, i.e., to consider and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees concerning major educational policies and programs of the Corporation, major academic and departmental concerns, promotion and tenure status of faculty members, and faculty obligations to the Corporation, the practice is that much of this comes to the committee appropriately recommended by the faculty, as defined in the Board-approved Faculty Handbook.

## Sources

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- PRES\_BoT Meeting Reflection
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- PRES\_128 to 120 credits white paper
- PRES\_Board Meeting Action, 2015 Feb
- PRES\_Board Minutes 1202 Excerpt, Schools Restructuring
- PRES\_Board Minutes 1302 Excerpt, Mission Statement
- PRES\_Board Minutes 1310 Excerpt, 128 to 120
- PRES\_Board Minutes 1310, Excerpt
- PRES\_Board Minutes 1410 Excerpt, Advancement Plan
- PRES\_Board Minutes 1410 Excerpt, Nielsen Purchase
- PRES\_Board Minutes 1502 Excerpt, Vision Statement
- PRES\_BoT Membership
- PRES\_Campaign Feasibility Study
- PRES\_Campaign Planning Committee
- PRES\_Conflict of Interest
- PRES\_Conflict of Interest- BoT
- PRES\_Enterprise Risk Management Tool
- PRES\_ERM 1507 Excerpt, Audit Practice
- PRES\_Executive Committee 1501 Excerpt Stamats Report
- PRES\_Executive Committee 1502 Excerpt S&K Model
- PRES\_Land Offer 2016
- PRES\_Manion CV
- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws
- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws (page number 6)
- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws (page number 10)
- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws (page number 12)
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- PRES\_Marian University Bylaws (page number 21)
- PRES\_Marian University Governance Structure
- PRES\_Memo Excerpt 0802, Land sale or trade
- PRES\_Orientation Agenda\_20141029

- PRES\_Presidential Search Process Summary
- PRES\_SRI Policy
- PRES\_Term Limit Request Waiver
- PRES\_Yaffe Report, 2015
- VPA\_Advancement Policies
- VPA\_Advancement Policies (page number 26)
- VPA\_Strategic Advancement Plan Excerpt, Alumni
- VPAA\_128 to 120 Credits Faculty Senate Response
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 8)
- VPAA\_Faculty Salary Proposal
- VPSE\_2008 Student Handbook Revisions

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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#### **The institution is commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.**

As a Catholic university, Marian University demonstrates learning within the Catholic intellectual tradition. This is reflected in the Mission Statement: "...*Marian University engages students in the education of the whole person. We embrace justice and compassion and transform lives for professional service and leadership in the global community.*" The university embraces the value of learning as "*a collaborative lifelong process of seeking truth and appropriating knowledge and values to transform the individual, our communities and the world.*"

All employees of the university uphold the [Statement on Human Dignity](#) and demonstrate a commitment to "*creating an academic and work culture that is inclusive and welcoming of all people and their ideas...*" Marian University also endorses the American Association of University Professors Statement of Professional Ethics. Faculty are expected to uphold the Code of Professional Ethics (bottom of [page 61](#)), as outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

[Academic freedom](#) is a respected and protected Marian University value, reflected in part of Marian's statement on Academic Freedom:

*Marian University is a Roman Catholic institution sponsored by the Congregation of Sisters of Saint Agnes. While members of its faculty are free to present and discuss positions (in their respective disciplines) contrary to the defined position of the Church, they are expected to respect its position. As role models, Marian University faculty members are expected to show respect for the religion and religious values of others.*

While faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom, they are to practice restraint by not introducing controversial matters unrelated to course content.

Marian is committed to expanding learning beyond the classroom's confines. To that end, Marian University welcomes outside speakers to campus, whether for classroom presentations or presentation to the university and Fond du Lac community. The Academic Symposium is an example of the university's commitment to freedom of expression. Initiated in 2002, [Academic Symposia](#) have addressed sensitive and controversial issues. The foundational principle of every academic symposium, in keeping with the university's commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech, is not to take a stand on the issues, but to provide a forum to learn, discuss, debate, understand, and reflect.

Many co-curricular activities demonstrate commitment to pursuing truth in teaching and learning. The university's [Social Justice Committee](#) is one of the most active sponsors of presentations focusing on social justice. The Student Involvement Office and student clubs and organizations also sponsor events reflecting [freedom of expression](#), related to a variety of social justice issues.

The university supports the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning, encouraging a life of learning for faculty, administration, and staff, cultivating inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility consistent with its mission. The promotion and tenure process encourages faculty scholarship and development. In addition, faculty and staff development is supported [financially](#) by the institution, with over \$22 million spent over the last ten years. Faculty members have the [opportunity](#) to apply for scholarship and development opportunities at the university, school, and individual levels. The MyMarian home page highlights faculty scholarship in its [Academic Compendium](#).

The [Faculty Development Committee](#), a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, is responsible for providing faculty development opportunities and in-services, and oversees grant and sabbatical applications and fund distribution. The [Staff Development Committee](#), a standing committee of the Staff Senate, implements on-going staff development programs. To support and enhance a life of learning for faculty and staff, Marian University proposed a [Quality Initiative](#) focused on learning for all internal constituents. Creating a Center for Instructional and Organizational Development (CIOD) was one component of the initiative, and in fall 2015, the CIOD was [established](#) as a two-year pilot, and a Center Director was appointed. The Director developed a [two-year Professional Development Plan](#), and the [CIOD 2015 Year-end Report](#) reflects progress during the first semester. As the Faculty Development Committee's chair, the CIOD Director works closely with the faculty committee as well as working closely with the Staff Development Committee.

Faculty [tenure and promotion policies](#) are designed to provide clear review process guidelines while allowing for individuality in teaching and scholarship. A faculty member qualifying to apply for promotion and/or tenure completes a self-evaluation and a portfolio of evidence for the review process as outlined in the [Faculty Handbook](#). Marian University recognizes and endorses the importance of academic due process and addressing grievances properly without creating fear of prejudice or reprisal. Clear [grievance policies](#) are in place to ensure fair treatment throughout the process.

The Marian University [Student Code of Conduct](#) in the Student Handbook, delineates behaviors expected of students when on campus. Student Code of Conduct enforcement resides in the Office of Student Engagement and follows the [Student Conduct Process](#), which provides an educational and developmental response to behavioral concerns and violations of the Student Code of Conduct, embracing the core values and mission of Marian University. Student conduct programs affirm individuals' learning and development while validating the safety and learning environment of the Marian community. [Residential Life policies](#) are guided by the value of community--respect for self, others, property, and authority--fostering a culture of learning and reflection, balanced with development of healthy relationships and an enjoyable social life.

The student newspaper, [Sabre Voice](#), provides a forum for student discussion and news reporting, from Marian and the local community to national and international issues. Content of the Sabre Voice represents the views of student writers and editors, and opinions may not be those of Marian University.

Evidence provided above demonstrates Marian University's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

## Sources

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- 1695 20151019 Quality Initiative - Panel Analysis Report
- PRES\_Statement on Human Dignity
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 14)
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 34)
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 37)
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- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 61)
- VPAA\_2011-2012 Faculty Handbook - Revised 1601 (page number 70)
- VPAA\_Academic Compendium
- VPAA\_Academic Freedom Statement
- VPAA\_Academic Symposia 2002 to 2015
- VPAA\_CIOD 2015 Year-End Report
- VPAA\_CIOD Proposal & Position Description
- VPAA\_CIOD Two\_Yr\_ProfDevPlan
- VPAA\_Code of Professional Ethics Statement
- VPAA\_Faculty Senate Minutes 3-27-15 Excerpt on CIOD
- VPAA\_Promotion and Tenure
- VPAA\_Sabre Voice
- VPAA\_Social Justice Committee
- VPAA\_Staff Senate Bylaws Ammended October 14 2015
- VPAA\_Staff Senate Bylaws Ammended October 14 2015 (page number 7)
- VPBF\_Faculty and Staff Financial Support for Development
- VPBF\_Marian University Employee Handbook
- VPBF\_Marian University Employee Handbook (page number 8)
- VPSE\_Student Freedom of Expression
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16 (page number 28)
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16 (page number 41)
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16 (page number 54)
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16 (page number 61)

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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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

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#### **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.**

Marian University's [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) and its policies ensure the health, well-being, and ethical rights of human subjects are protected, and the university abides by all rules and regulations governing IRB compliance in accordance with federal law, as mandated by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The [IRB Policies and Guidelines](#) manual provides members of the Marian University community, and those wishing to complete research at the university, with the IRB's guiding principles; policy statement; role, function, and authority; and guidelines for submission, review, and approval of research proposals. This information is also available to the public on the Marian University [website](#). Any research project that involves human subjects, sponsored or not sponsored, originated or supported by the university, must be reviewed and approved by the IRB. Any data collection from human subjects for research purposes must first be approved by the IRB. This approval requirement includes research conducted by Marian personnel and student research supervised by faculty or staff, involving human subjects, even if that research has obtained prior approval from an external IRB.

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

[Cardinal Meyer Library](#) is the intellectual center of Marian University's Academic Community. It is integral to the university's commitment to educating the whole person and nurturing intellectual, spiritual, aesthetic, psychological, social, and physical dimensions. The library staff is committed to educating students on ethical use of information, accomplished through library instruction sessions and by availability of resources for students in the library and on the library website. The library [Copyright Policy](#) informs students as well as faculty and staff of the requirements of copyright law and assists them in determining "fair use." Policies on intellectual property rights are also published in the [Faculty Handbook](#).

In addition to the guidance and support provided by the Cardinal Meyer Library, Marian University's [Center for Academic Support and Excellence](#) (CASE) contributes to the development of student skills and attitudes central to the ethical use of information. Learning and

Writing Center staff provides assistance to all students across all degree levels with correct citation methods and guidance on avoiding plagiarism. The Learning and Writing Center also provides valuable student resources, which can be accessed through the MyMarian intranet site.

The General Education Program requires that all first-year students participate in the [First-Year Studies Program](#), which includes enrollment in [GEN 101 - First-Year Seminar](#). Through this program, students are introduced to ethical use of information, including orientation to the library and to technology. As part of the General Education Program, undergraduate students must complete two writing courses (ENG 105 and ENG 106). In these courses, the Reference and Instruction Librarian conducts classroom sessions concerning ethical use of information.

Faculty routinely refer students to the Learning and Writing Center for individual assistance. In addition, faculty teaching writing courses in the General Education Program follow the [English program's plan](#) for assessing writing assignments and evaluating ethical use of information in student writing, as reflected in the [VALUE Written Communication Rubric](#) indicators for use of genre and disciplinary conventions.

### **3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.**

Marian University has adopted an [Academic Honesty Policy](#), reflecting its mission statement, and reinforcing the importance of academic integrity, furthering the learning community's personal, moral, and intellectual development. The policy's intent is to establish consistency and to heighten the moral responsibility of the entire university community (faculty, staff, and students) by identifying areas that would violate academic honesty. The university has identified three major violations of academic honesty: plagiarism, cheating, and intentional misrepresentation of the truth. A well-developed [process](#) is used to investigate incidents of dishonesty. The Academic Appeals and Grievance Committee addresses cases of academic dishonesty.

Marian University's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by faculty, students and staff. Little distinction is made between students actually guilty of academic dishonesty and anyone who aids the student (i.e. by providing a copy of a stolen exam or by writing a paper for another student). The instructor and the university can change a student's grade at any time, even after a course has been completed, if the student has been found to have violated the Academic Honesty Policy. [Faculty](#) and [staff](#) are also held accountable for upholding the Academic Honesty Policy in their work, as noted in the [Code of Professional Ethics](#) and the [General Rules of Conduct](#), respectively.

## **Sources**

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- VPAA\_2015-16 Undergraduate Academic Bulletin (page number 37)
- VPAA\_2015-2016 General Education Program
- VPAA\_Cardinal Meyer Library
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- VPAA\_English Program Data Collection and Analysis
- VPAA\_Faculty Handbook 2011-12
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- VPAA\_Faculty Handbook 2011-12 (page number 69)
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- VPAA\_Faculty Handbook 2011-12 (page number 74)
- VPAA\_First Year Studies Program
- VPAA\_GEN 101 Syllabus
- VPAA\_Institutional Review Board
- VPAA\_IRB Policies and Guidelines
- VPAA\_Written Communication VALUE Rubric
- VPBF\_2014 Staff Handbook
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- VPSE\_CASE
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16
- VPSE\_Student Handbook 2015-16 (page number 41)

## 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Marian University conducts itself with integrity within an ethical framework grounded in the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and its identity as a Catholic university. As a unified community, Marian acts from explicit statements of principle that guide policy, processes, and evaluation of outcomes in the functional areas of fiscal responsibility, academic integrity, personnel and human resources, and auxiliary functions supporting learning.

While the university is successful in meeting Criterion Two, continued improvement in this area is necessary. Current and future work will focus on:

- Enhancing clarity, consistency, and ease of access to important information by internal and external constituents.
- Improving clarity and navigability of information on the public website.
- Continuing the review and revision of policies and procedures for clarity, consistency, and relevancy to ensure sustainable practices.
- Maintaining a uniform, navigable electronic repository of all institutional policies and procedures.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

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

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

### 3.A - Core Component 3.A

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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

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

Marian University offers degree programs at the baccalaureate, master, and doctoral levels. Faculty who are experts in their disciplines develop program-specific curriculum in each school (see Criterion 3.C.2). Faculty through the [Curriculum and Education Standards](#) (CES) and [Graduate Council](#) (GC) establish, review, and govern curriculum and educational standards to ensure learning outcomes and benchmarks are appropriate for baccalaureate, master, and doctoral programs. Departments and schools design and develop programs based on guidelines of recognized scholarly and professional organizations in the field, and many programs are nationally accredited. A listing of all programs is provided to students and the public in Marian University's [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) Academic Bulletins--updated annually--and on the university [website](#).

Faculty, staff, and administration work together within the governance structure to decide on the appropriate response to the evidence and to align planned responses with mission and strategic priorities. Validation of quality, currency, and relevance is accomplished through a cycle of academic program review that includes an [annual analysis of evidence](#) of student learning and a comprehensive [program review](#) every 5 years (7 years for those programs with specialty accreditation so the reviews are synchronized). The program review documents then undergo a [process of review](#), beginning with deans of respective schools and ending with the Board of

Trustees. The [history](#) of the program review process demonstrates the university's progress in assuring programs are current and reflect appropriate levels of student performance.

Whether as a result of the annual program analysis or the comprehensive program review, faculty initiate curricular changes through the submission of [course and program change proposals](#) (see [example program change proposal](#)). These proposals are evaluated through a systematic process of [leveled review and approval](#) from the program up to the institutional level. This leveled process assures that all curricular changes and additions are reviewed for quality and alignment to mission. Further evidence of the outcomes of the review process are documented in Criterion 3.B.

## **2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.**

Marian University articulates and differentiates learning outcomes for all degree levels. The institution does not have an established differentiation framework; however, a clear progression in the level of learning expectations exists across [program-specific student learning outcomes](#) (PSLOs) within disciplines. Discussions related to developing an evidence-based framework for differentiation of outcomes across all degree levels began in [2014](#) and progressed to discussions in [Graduate Council](#).

All programs, [undergraduate and graduate](#), have approved PSLOs. The majority of PSLOs are based on the standards and guidelines of nationally recognized scholarly and professional organizations. Nationally accredited programs align their PSLOs to the accrediting body's criteria or standards. All undergraduate program learning outcomes are reviewed for alignment to the undergraduate student learning outcomes (USLOs) and approved within the curriculum change and program review process, at the program and school levels, prior to submission to CES for review and recommendation. Alignment is evident in each program's program-level assessment plans, access to the data management system available onsite (See Criterion 4.B.1 for additional discussion). Program requirements are also provided in the [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) Academic Bulletins.

## **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).**

Marian University's policies require all programs to meet standard expectations for the quality of student learning outcomes, course and program design, and systematic assessment of student learning. These policies apply regardless of delivery modality or location. All courses have an approved syllabus (examples of [traditional](#) and [adult](#) undergraduate, [master](#), and [doctoral](#)) with standard elements, and 96% of programs have [mapped learning](#) across the major and/or minor curriculum (undergraduate, master, doctoral). Students are expected to demonstrate the same level of learning relative to institutional and program outcomes in fully online, hybrid, and face-to-face versions of the same curriculum, no matter the degree level.

Online and hybrid instructional design and teaching is supported by the [Office of Academic Technology](#). Access to and delivery of course content for face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses is supported by Moodle, an Internet-based, open-source learning management system, called Marian Online 2. The Academic Technology intranet site provides access to resources supporting the use of Marian Online 2, and the design of effective online instruction. In addition to the individualized support provided by the instructional technologist and instructional designer, faculty and instructors are required to access and complete a [self-paced online short course](#) in online teaching and the use of Marian Online 2. In addition, they are provided with online access to best practice guidelines and examples and regularly scheduled face-to-face workshops providing training in specific elements of online teaching and learning.

Marian University uses the [IDEA Student Rating of Instruction](#) (SRI) to collect data on student perceptions of instructional effectiveness in a course. All undergraduate courses are rated through this process, and all faculty and instructors receive an evaluation of their ratings benchmarked to a national sample of courses in their discipline. This practice assures that all instruction in all courses is rated against research-based indicators of effective practice, and that all instructors are evaluated on the same set of indicators. Until fall 2015, adult undergraduate and graduate courses were not consistently using the SRI. It was deemed of critical importance that the SRI be used for all courses across all degree levels. For graduate level courses, 10 additional questions were included to address particular concerns/needs of graduate students.

Data on student learning outcomes is collected across all programs ([undergraduate](#), [master](#), [doctoral](#)), no matter the mode of delivery or the location, including dual-credit courses. This assures that Marian can annually compare student learning outcomes across modes and locations to determine if there are significant differences in outcome and investigate further as needed.

Based on the evidence provided in the argument above, Marian University's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

## Sources

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## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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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

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#### **1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.**

Marian University's [General Education Program](#) develops a broad base of knowledge, skill, and disposition, enabling students to develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their connections to the world. The Core is grounded in the liberal arts and [aligned](#) with the mission, values, and student learning outcomes of the university. An emphasis on knowledge acquisition, critical thinking, effective communication and global perspectives within and across disciplines prepares students for civic responsibility, so they are able to address needs within their communities. Opportunities to engage in socially responsible action provide a foundation for considering how knowledge acquired through higher education is applied to local and global challenges. This foundation is most strongly developed during the initial 60 hours of learning in most traditional undergraduate programs, and is further developed within all undergraduate programs through [alignment](#) with the Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes (USLO) to key discipline-specific program learning outcomes. Access to the data management system used for assessment of student learning is available onsite.

#### **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.**

The General Education Committee conducted a [self-study](#) of the General Education Program in 2014-2015. Based on evaluation of student learning and other evidence of program effectiveness, the institution established the position of Director of General Education and placed the General Education Program within the School of Arts and Sciences to support leadership continuity and clarity regarding governance of the General Education Program.

### **Scope and Sequence**

The General Education Program is divided into two components: First-Year Studies and the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC). The full program of study is presented in the [Undergraduate Academic Bulletin](#). Students entering Marian University with fewer than 24 credits are required to successfully complete [GEN 101: First-Year Seminar](#), a 3 credit course that focuses primarily on transition to college and critical thinking. First-year undergraduate students are assigned a trained peer mentor, who assists in the transition to campus and the selection of programs and opportunities to develop leadership and promote overall well being.

All students, including transfer students and adult undergraduates, complete the 31 credit LACC, or demonstrate equivalent knowledge and skill in the USLO through transfer credit (bottom of [page 29](#)), [credit by examination, or the assessment of experiential learning](#). The core develops proficiency at the introductory (100) level in the institution's USLO across five broad areas of study: Math and Natural Sciences, Arts and Humanities, the Social Sciences, the Applied Liberal Arts (Expository Writing and Argumentative and Research Writing), and Theology.

All students must complete an additional 15 credit hours distributed across elective strands in each of the five areas of study. Courses in these elective strands are designed to further develop proficiency in the five learning outcomes. In practice, choices are often prescribed by professional programs in business, teacher education, and health professions, and contribute to major completion in the degree program.

### **Assurance for Learning in the General Education Program**

The General Education Program has [defined performance indicators](#) at the developing level in each of the five USLO. In 2008, Marian University elected to participate in the Higher Learning Commission's Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning. [Marian's Assessment Academy Plan](#) was to develop embedded assessments and standard rubrics to assess student learning outcomes in the LACC. Each academic program has aligned embedded assessments with student learning outcomes. The Committee on Student Learning developed and approved [undergraduate student learning outcomes rubrics](#), used in all courses in the General Education program to assess student learning outcomes by evaluating performance on those embedded assessments. Descriptions of assessment methods, characteristics of data, and results of data analysis are described in the General Education [Program Review](#) and the Impact Report to the 2014 Results Forum of the HLC Assessment Academy.

In spring 2014, the General Education Committee approved a pilot of a subset of the [VALUE rubrics](#) most closely aligned to effective communication, critical thinking, global perspectives and socially responsible action. The goal of the pilot was to determine whether the performance levels indicated in these validated rubrics were consistent with performance levels evidenced in the university's internally developed rubrics. Analysis of student learning outcome data from the pilot demonstrated that indicators of student performance at the "benchmark" and first "milestone" level were consistent with indicators in the university's rubrics, and that raters found the detailed descriptors of the VALUE rubrics to be valid. There has been some discussion regarding the possibility of adopting the VALUE rubrics in place of the internally developed rubrics.

**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.**

The [Curriculum and Education Standards Committee](#) and [Graduate Council](#) oversees Marian University's requirements that all programs meet standard expectations for the quality of student learning outcomes, course and program design, and systematic assessment of student learning. Every degree program offered at Marian is designed to develop a level of mastery in a field, discipline, or profession, appropriate to the level of the degree.

The General Education Program engages students in the foundations of inquiry and creativity across the LACC's five areas of study. Analysis of critical thinking performance-based [embedded assessment measures](#) is evidence of this student engagement. Undergraduate research is a high-impact practice used in developing and mastery level courses (300-400 level), including capstone courses in most majors. Progression through degree programs enables students to develop skills adaptable to changing environments: being open to new ideas, working independently or as part of a team, carrying out multiple tasks or assignments, and evaluating and adjusting to changing roles and expectations. Faculty use appropriate [measurement strategies](#), based on discipline specific standards or requirements, to evaluate students' abilities to collect, analyze, and communicate information; to ensure students have mastered modes of inquiry or creative work; and to make certain students' skill development is adaptable to changing environments.

Graduate courses at the master and doctoral level further develop scholarship capacity and learning application in professional contexts. All master's programs require a thesis or major project to partially fulfill degree requirements. Faculty use appropriate measurement strategies, at both the [master](#) and [doctoral](#) levels, based on graduate level discipline specific standards or requirements, to evaluate students' abilities to collect, analyze, and communicate information; to ensure students have mastered modes of inquiry or creative work; and to make certain students' skill development is adaptable to changing environments. The doctoral program requires a dissertation as a component of degree completion requirements. Doctoral students complete a public defense of their dissertations, and dissertations are archived in the Cardinal Meyer Library and online through ProQuest LLC.

**4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.**

Marian University's core values of community, learning, social justice, and spiritual traditions all speak to recognizing and respecting diversity of individuals and of cultures, and to learning that challenges assumptions and biases. These values are expressed in our mission, vision, and student learning outcomes. Marian University offers a [wide variety](#) of courses and [co-curricular activities](#) that expand students' knowledge and understanding of diverse populations and cultures, global issues, and the implications of cultural diversity in their lives. This supports students' achievement of the [USLOs](#) related to global perspective and socially responsible action (see Criterion 1.C.).

In addition to supporting student learning concerning diversity, Marian University serves as a model for how to take socially responsible action in support of learning for its own diverse student population. The [TRIO Student Support Services](#) program is highly successful in helping students respond to challenges posed by higher education norms that may be at odds with class, social and cultural norms of students. [Upward Bound Math Science](#) helps pave the way forward for students in several Fond du Lac area high schools interested in STEM careers.

The [Working Families Grant \(WGF\) Program](#) is a unique offering for Marian University undergraduates. Economically disadvantaged single parents of dependent children work in partnership with Marian University and community service and health providers to successfully complete their chosen degree programs. Recipients of the grant are provided with tuition and stipend grants tailored to their needs as they progress through their program at Marian. The impact of the WGF Program has been significant as evidenced by a 90% retention rate and an 88% graduation rate.

**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.**

Faculty and students at Marian University contribute to scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge consistent with their areas of expertise and the level and nature of the degree program. Faculty annually report on scholarly and creative work published or presented in their fields as part of their annual review. [Schools](#) present a report on this activity to the VPAA. Faculty can also post notable accomplishments in the university's Academic Compendium on the home page of [MyMarian](#). Data from the [past three years](#) of scholarship reported in the Academic Compendium reflect that all schools participate in sharing faculty achievements with the Marian community.

Students in master and doctoral program produce original creative works (master level projects or theses and doctoral dissertations). Dissertations are available to the public through ProQuest. Examples of student scholarly work at all degree levels will be available on site.

As described in the above argument, Marian University demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

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### 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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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

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**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.**

As of [fall 2015](#), Marian employs 99 full time and 7 part-time pro-rata faculty in addition to 139 part-time per course (adjunct) faculty. Average class size is 14.1, and the student to faculty ratio is 12:1, which has remained fairly consistent over the past five years.

The faculty is comprised of all persons having appointment for student instruction. Marian University's faculty consists of [four distinct groups](#): full-time faculty, part-time pro-rata faculty, part-time per course (adjunct) faculty, and special appointment faculty. Specific contract types and specific contractual rights and responsibilities of each type are defined in the [Faculty Handbook](#).

Both full-time and part-time pro-rata faculty have a principal responsibility for the academic growth and development of students. Faculty have responsibility for designing and providing current and effective instruction in the courses and programs in which they teach. Marian University has standards for teaching, scholarship and service common for all faculty, explicitly including responsibility for currency and relevance of the curriculum, outlined in the [promotion and tenure policy](#). Further, faculty are responsible for establishing course objectives and

assessing student learning according to the requirements of the university, the needs of the majors, and the needs of the students, delineated in the [duties and responsibilities](#) section of the Faculty Handbook.

**2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.**

Faculty qualifications and required credentials are determined by [rank](#). In addition, each school and academic program determines additional qualifications appropriate to standard practice in the discipline and responsibilities of the position. All faculty hiring actions are initiated by programs, departments, and schools and are based on the [duties and responsibilities](#) of faculty by rank. Schools submit approved position descriptions via the [Faculty Personnel Request Form](#). The Chief Academic Officer, currently the Vice President for Academic Affairs, reviews each description to assure alignment to mission, alignment to standard practice, and [commitment to diversity](#). Faculty are hired through a [search process](#) designed for successful faculty hiring. Human resources verifies credentials and conducts a criminal background check for all faculty candidates.

Marian faculty at all ranks hold a minimum of an earned master's or equivalent academic degree from an accredited graduate institution, or have demonstrated experiential qualifications in their professional fields, based on the process described in the [Faculty Handbook](#). Faculty teaching in graduate programs hold the terminal degree in their discipline or a minimum of a master's degree with experiential qualifications. Of the full-time faculty, 57% hold a terminal degree. The credentials of faculty teaching in dual credit programs are verified by faculty in the discipline and academic deans. Faculty credential data will be available on site.

**3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.**

Marian University uses the [IDEA Student Rating of Instruction \(SRI\)](#) to evaluate instruction in all courses and of all faculty. Piloted in 2007, IDEA is currently used to rate instruction in both undergraduate and graduate courses. The ratings are summative end-of-course ratings of student learning perceptions in six broad categories of objectives. The surveys are administered either in person or through an individualized link to an online evaluation form in a standard process prescribed by IDEA. Instructor ratings are compared to those of a national sample of instructors in the same discipline or field. IDEA provides program and school level summaries of ratings, also compared to a national sample.

Full time and part-time pro rata faculty also complete an [annual review process](#). The annual review includes self-evaluation of teaching based on ratings of instruction and other evidence of teaching excellence. The self-evaluation is submitted to a peer review team, which reviews the self-evaluation and supporting evidence in relation to specific goals for teaching, scholarship, and service. The team provides [feedback](#) to the faculty member, who can respond to the feedback and provide further evidence supporting the self-evaluation. The annual review process ends with an Annual Performance Conference with the dean or designee.

Part-time per course faculty are evaluated at the end of their first semester teaching and then annually thereafter, if they maintain teaching assignments each semester. The program chairperson or academic dean of the respective school provide feedback to the individual regarding their performance based on evidence gathered from IDEA evaluation data for the courses the faculty member taught and an assessment of teaching (completed by the program chairperson or designee).

**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.**

Marian University uses two strategic approaches to support faculty development to continuously improve student learning outcomes. The [Faculty Development Committee](#), a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, administers three programs to support scholarship and advanced education and training in the discipline: the [Faculty Scholarship Release Time](#) program, the [Educational Improvement Leave](#) program, and the [Faculty Development Grant](#) program.

The Faculty Development Grant program is significant evidence of Marian University's support for professional learning and teaching development. An endowment established by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes (CSA), provides full time and eligible part time pro rata faculty with financial support to complete planned professional study or activities in response to professional challenges. These may include the integration of new technologies in teaching, developing new programs, or innovation or knowledge generation in the discipline. Since 2011, the endowment has provided \$27,941 in support of faculty development across all schools. Over the last ten years, the institution provided [financial support](#) of more than \$1.7 million for faculty development (e.g. conferences, workshops, special training). On average, 42 full-time or part time pro-rata faculty are [awarded grants](#) each year. Faculty have disseminated original research, attended professional workshops and conferences in their fields, and developed expertise and skill in such high impact practices as undergraduate research and "flipped classrooms."

Marian University also recognizes the need to provide systematic support for teaching excellence and organizational learning. In fall 2015, the university established the [Center for Instructional and Organizational Development](#) (CIOD) to work collaboratively with the Faculty Development and Staff Development Committees to support improvement of student learning outcomes in all areas of the university (see Criterion 2.D.).

**5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.**

Faculty responsibility for regular interaction with students to support academic growth and development is described in the [Duties and Responsibilities](#) section of the Faculty Handbook. Office hours are set by all faculty and communicated to students via the course syllabus. These hours set aside specific times for in-person and virtual meetings. Faculty interact with students in person; via email, phone, and messaging; and through the course node in Marian Online 2.

In these interactions, faculty are responsible for advising students in the courses they teach about classwork and assessed learning. Faculty serving as academic advisors work with students to set academic goals, establish academic plans, and counsel students to seek assistance for academic challenges.

**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.**

Staff qualifications and required credentials are determined by unit supervisors in collaboration with area vice presidents and the Office of Human Resources, as appropriate. All staff hiring actions are initiated by programs, departments, schools, units, and divisions. The supervisor initiating the hire submits the approved position description to the appropriate divisional Vice President via the [Staff Personnel Request Form](#). In all cases, the divisional Vice President is responsible for reviewing each description to assure alignment to mission, alignment to standard practice, and [commitment to diversity](#). Once the position is approved, staff are hired through a [search process](#) designed to facilitate successful hiring. Staff credentials are verified by Human Resources, and a criminal background check is conducted for all candidates.

Professional development of staff is guided by a [performance management process](#) that is ongoing, interactive, and based on an annual cycle of [self-assessment and review](#). Staff identify areas of expertise or skill they intend to develop over time and set goals for that development. These goals are specifically aligned to Marian University's mission and strategic priorities, and to the responsibilities in the position description. Each year, staff develop or continue implementation of [professional development plans](#) based on this performance management review process. Professional development activities are [documented](#) in the professional development plans and reviewed annually for completion and impact.

In Spring 2014, Institutional Effectiveness launched the implementation of the [Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education](#) (CAS) standards to guide the self-study review and evaluation of operations. CAS works with professional organizations in student services and academic affairs to set individual and program standards in 44 functional areas and provides a guided self-assessment process that supports professional development planning in these areas.

More generally, the [Staff Development Committee](#) of Staff Senate maintains an active program of training and development, both in-person and through online resources. Development activities are [financially supported](#) by the institution with more than \$10 million provided over the last ten years. Included in this amount was funding from the CSA endowment in the amount of \$4,428 for staff development. The Staff Development Committee is engaged in [strategic planning](#) with the Director of the CIOD to continue to enhance the development of staff.

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## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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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

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#### **1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.**

In keeping with its mission and core values, Marian University engages with students in their education as whole persons. A broad range of support services, coordinated by the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Engagement, are detailed in Marian University's [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) Academic Bulletins.

Marian University serves students who are academically capable but who face socioeconomic challenges to pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree. Approximately 42% of undergraduate students are first-generation students. Transfer students account for 35% of new undergraduate enrollment and 46% of undergraduate students received Pell grants. Approximately 26% of all undergraduate students commute significant distances to attend classes, either on the main campus or at the satellite locations in West Allis and Appleton, WI. Approximately 21% of the total undergraduate student population is enrolled in adult undergraduate programs offered in modes other than the traditional 16 week semester (data derived from [Marian at a Glance](#)).

To meet the needs of this demographic, Marian University offers special programs to acclimate undergraduate students to higher education. Traditional undergraduate students participate in [SOAR](#) (Student Orientation and Academic Registration) as an early introduction to student life and their academic advisors. Transfer students participate in a SOAR event

developed specifically for their needs. For example, large programs such as health profession programs have a specific [SOAR event](#) for transfer students as a means of helping students get acquainted with each other and gain the information needed to assist in their success. [First Year Studies](#) provides direct support to all entering students with fewer than 24 credit hours of prior college-level learning.

The [Working Families Grant Program](#) is unique in that it supports economically disadvantaged single parents with dependent children to attain undergraduate degrees. Recipients of the grant are awarded tuition and stipend grants to assist them in achieving a four-year undergraduate degree. Support also includes access to Marian's [NAEYC-accredited Early Childhood Center](#), targeted career services, and academic support. The grant is provided through the generous sponsorship of an anonymous donor, the Marian University community, and other generous donors.

As a member of the [Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges](#) (SOC), Marian also provides [support services](#) tailored to the needs of active military and veterans, providing flexibility in admissions, counseling, credit transfer, credit for prior learning, scheduling, and residency requirements. Renovation is presently being completed on a house specifically for active military and veteran students, providing them a place to gather.

In addition to these targeted services, Marian University provides centralized academic advising and support through the [Center for Academic Support and Excellence](#) (CASE). In addition to academic advising, CASE offers the following:

- Academic Testing Services supports accurate assessment of student achievement and aptitude.
- Disability Services assists students' successful transition into higher education and coordinates with instructors, academic programs, and other student services units to advocate for and secure reasonable accommodations.
- The Learning and Writing Center provides support for learning in math, sciences, and effective communication through writing. The Writing Services area provides support for undergraduate and graduate students with academic writing and reading, using specific documentation styles, and preparing for basic skills tests.
- EXCEL provides support for capable first-year students who are identified as at risk, guiding them through a highly structured first year program involving intensive advising, tutorial support, and individualized services to improve student capacity for college-level learning.
- Career Services assists and guides students and alumni with resume writing and review. Additionally, students and alumni are connected with businesses and agencies through career fairs and other events.

Student physical and spiritual well-being is the focus of [Student Engagement](#). Residence Life, student organizations, counseling services, health services, Campus Ministry, and Campus Safety and Security are coordinated by the Dean of Student Engagement. This functional area was the first to engage in the CAS Self-Study process at Marian University, and its [annual report](#) provides evidence of its services' effectiveness.

Satisfaction trend data from three indirect measures ([NSSE](#), [SSI](#), and [ASPS](#)) indicates that Marian has maintained a statistically high level of overall satisfaction, but the data also provides evidence of [trends that need attention](#). Ratings for meeting student expectations for the college experience, significantly above the national norm and rising through 2012, are beginning to trend downward. Students' significant positive response to the question in the SSI, "Would you choose Marian University again?" fell below the national norm in 2012 and again in 2014. These trend data were discussed in May 2015, and in June 2015 the VPAA formed two [ad hoc taskforces](#) to investigate these trends further.

**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.**

Assessment of students' prior learning and level of preparation begins during the application and admissions process. Many traditional undergraduate students are assessed to determine entering proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics and are placed in appropriate courses in the required core English and mathematics sequence based on performance on the ACT or the [Accuplacer exam](#). Highly qualified students are directed to the Marian University Honors program.

Adult undergraduate students work with admission counselors and advisors to determine credit for prior learning, including [transcript analysis](#), [credit by examination](#), and [experiential learning assessment](#). Policies and practices are intended to maximize awarding relevant credit while assuring quality and equivalent prior learning.

Program faculty review graduate student applications. Once students are admitted, faculty analyze transcripts to determine whether additional coursework is needed, based on evidence of prior learning. At the doctoral level, assessment includes the Miller Analogy Test (MAT) and determination of transfer credit. Admissions works closely with CASE to make certain entering students are appropriately assessed and placed to tailor initial advising, and to coordinate access to special programs entering students qualify for, based on demonstrated need.

**3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.**

The CASE office coordinates academic advising for all degree-seeking students, including graduate students. Advisors meet regularly throughout the semester with students to assist in making decisions about scheduling, tutoring, skill development, and career development. Students who have not declared a major are offered access to career and aptitude inventories and other opportunities to learn about areas of study fitting their needs and interests.

Students in graduate programs work with graduate faculty advisors who provide guidance and support for degree planning, projects, thesis and dissertation development, internships and practica, and clinical experiences.

Effectiveness of undergraduate student advising is evaluated by annual and biennial [indirect assessments of student satisfaction](#). The CASE office receives relevant survey data, which is analyzed by the Dean of CASE. Based on the evidence, new and revised strategies to improve student outcomes and satisfaction are developed and implemented, such as the addition of a nurse specialist to enhance nursing student success. Grant and foundation-supported services such as [TRIO Student Support Services](#) and the [Working Families Grant Program](#) submit annual reports documenting the services provided and evidence of impact on learning.

**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).**

Marian University's broadband network supports simultaneous access to all students, faculty, staff and visitors through both wired and wireless connections. Supported access devices include desktop and laptop computers, netbooks (i.e., iPad and Chromebooks), and mobile phones. Faculty and staff are provided with either desktop or laptop computers and can access the Marian network remotely to facilitate hybrid, online, and distance learning formats.

The classrooms in all locations are equipped with multimedia presentation technology that supports access to Marian Online 2 and web-based teaching and learning [resources](#). The Fond du Lac campus has eight classroom-style computer labs used for instructional/classroom purposes, including a dedicated lab for information technology, economics, and finance program instruction. Additional computer stations are located throughout the campus in the Hornung Student Center, Stayer Center, Agnes Center, the Science Building, Cardinal Meyer Library, the Learning and Writing Center, and the campus coffee shop in the Todd Wehr Alumni Center.

The Director of Information Technology Services' [strategic plan \(Goal B.11\) update](#) of September 2015 provides evidence of Marian's continuing focus on sustaining a high-quality technological infrastructure and software to support online learning. To meet the increased demand for high quality instructional design and support for online learning, Marian University recently restructured existing resources to create an [Office of Academic Technology](#), focused on instructional technology use and online instruction design. Faculty who teach courses in the online format are required to complete a [Marian Online Faculty Certification Course](#) which is self-contained and self-paced. The university recognizes that maintaining technology is insufficient and needs to focus on enhancing structure and software in this area (see Criterion 5.A.1.).

Teaching lab spaces are found in the Ben Sadoff Science Building. Renovation of this space to support learning in the STEM disciplines was identified as a high priority in the 2005 self-study. In 2007, a renovation plan was developed, but the economic downturn of 2008 forced a hiatus. In 2015, the Board approved a capital campaign to support the renovation as a high priority action. The silent phase of the campaign is well underway (see Criterion 5.A.1.).

The Nursing Resource and Simulation Center at the Agnes Center, approximately two blocks from the Fond du Lac Campus, supports students in the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs. Through real life teaching methodologies using simulation technology, students develop crucial nursing skills to provide high quality care in the healthcare setting (see Criterion 5.A.1.).

Marian University's [James L. Kuber Law Enforcement Training Center](#) supports students in the forensic science program in developing skill in multiple tools and technologies associated with crime scene investigation and forensic analysis. The land around the center has also been used by the Biology Department for research.

The [Cardinal Meyer Library](#) (CML), located centrally on the Fond du Lac campus, provides resources and services that advance academics. The CML is open 91 hours per week. It provides study space for over 200 students and 61 computers for accessing library resources. For students using their own computers/tablets, wireless access is provided. All students, regardless of their physical location, are able to access the library's collection online at any time via a secure portal. The library provides specialized support to "[Outreach Students](#)" or students who take all or a majority of courses at an off-site location.

The [Music Department](#) space consists of one large (25-30 capacity) classroom, one smaller (12-15 capacity) classroom, and a combination keyboard/computer lab, along with two soundproof practice rooms. At this time, Marian does not have rehearsal rooms or a performance space such as a recital hall.

##### **5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.**

The undergraduate [student learning outcomes](#) of Knowledge Acquisition, Critical Thinking, and Effective Communication include key performance indicators focusing on developing proficiency in the research process. In the undergraduate program, this capacity is initially developed in GEN 101: First-Year Experience and in the LACC of the General Education program. The [Cardinal Meyer Library](#) provides significant support and guidance to all students engaged in research. The library offers an extensive online tutorial for accessing and using electronic databases, interlibrary loan, and reference resources. Student learning outcome data indicates 80% of students meet or exceed expected undergraduate levels of proficiency in this aspect of knowledge acquisition and critical thinking.

Faculty and students wishing to pursue research are supported by the Director of Research and Sponsored Programs in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The [Institutional Review Board](#) of Marian University provides information about federal law, rules, and regulations governing human subject research.

Based on the aforementioned argument, Marian University provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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## 3.E - Core Component 3.E

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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

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#### **1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.**

Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students. Marian University offers a variety of co-curricular and extracurricular programs and activities consistent with its mission and contributing to the educational experiences of students. Focused on Marian's core values, activities are developed to create a culture of student engagement and involvement that enhances and reinforces the mission and spirit of Marian University through the education of the whole person outside of the classroom.

Community: Students are encouraged to participate in [clubs and organizations](#), live on campus in learning-centered communities in residence halls and apartments, and attend sponsored programs and events. The Hornung Student Center, the Sabre Den, Common Grounds coffee shop, the Cardinal Meyer Library, and the Student Lounge provide settings for social interaction. Marian University is also host to several [Greek organizations](#) that focus on learning, service, and social justice.

Learning: Marian University supports undergraduate and graduate student attendance and presentation of scholarly work at professional conferences. Sponsored events, such as the [Academic Symposium](#), feature scholarship of faculty, staff and students as well as nationally recognized scholars and professionals. TRIO [Student Support Services](#) and [Career Services](#) explicitly develop life and professional skills such as career planning, professional etiquette, and public speaking through year-round events. The Summer Bridge program is designed to support students in their transition to college by helping them build relationships with fellow students, faculty and staff. Resources and services are also shared to enhance students' academic and personal success in their first year. The [Athletic Department](#) assures that while student athletes are learning about team dynamics and good sportsmanship, they also achieve their academic objectives.

Service: Students engage in service to the university through participation in the governance structure as representatives on Faculty and Staff Senate and other university committees and task forces. The Office of Student Involvement and student organizations offer events, [OSE Annual](#)

[Report, pp. 10-11](#), like Campus Beautification Day, Student Senate Service Projects, and community volunteer projects. Over the last five years, organized [service-learning](#) in 118 courses resulted in 35,628 hours contributed to local service organizations and projects. Students log service-learning hours and [demonstrate](#) their learning relative to community need and application of critical thinking, effective communication, global perspectives, and socially just action. There has been a decrease in the number of service-learning hours recorded. It is not yet clear whether the decrease noted is a result of students not logging their hours in the electronic management system called Noble hour or the decrease in student enrollment. The number of courses with a service-learning experience also decreased from its high in 2010-2011; however, there was a sharp increase in 2014-2015 as a result of an increasing focus on service-learning.

Social Justice: Student Engagement and the Social Justice Committee challenge students to learn more about the world around them by [presenting speakers](#) and topics about diversity and inequity, [sponsoring clubs and organizations](#) that tackle these topics, and providing opportunities to engage through service-learning and [mission trips](#) to challenge oppression, poverty, and inequity in local and national communities.

Spiritual Traditions: [Campus Ministry](#) serves students of all faiths and provides the means for students to connect faith and learning. The Campus Ministry Club coordinates an annual service and mission trip. The Student Involvement Office provides intentional opportunities facilitating leadership development, encouraging student growth, and helping provide meaning outside the classroom on living the Core Values (see [OSE Annual Report, pp. 10-11](#)).

**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.**

Learning opportunities associated with co-curricular programs enhance and enrich the student experience at Marian and effectively translate Marian's values into real-life activity. Co-curricular activities fostering student engagement include discipline-specific, leadership-focused, and service-oriented student groups in addition to a number of intercollegiate athletic teams. Co-curricular activities reflect Marian's values while helping students learn leadership and teamwork skills.

Program-level learning outcomes and measures ([undergraduate](#), [graduate](#), [doctoral](#)) directly and indirectly assess student learning through engagement in research, service learning, clinical placements, and structured learning opportunities, such as Model United Nations, the Student Leadership Conference, and the Honors Field Trip. (See Criterion 4 for more detailed information).

Marian University is in the initial phase of implementing the Council for the Advancement of Standards ([CAS\) program review model](#). This phase includes self-study evaluation of student learning in core co-curricular and student service programs, in reference to the CAS [Learning and Development Standards](#) aligned to Marian University's core values. A [self-study](#) in the area of Student Engagement provides evidence of learning in critical thinking, effective communication, and socially responsible action.

An example of the extent to which learning is embedded and assessed in university processes is the outcome of the program review of the student conduct program, a [student conduct adjudication system](#). This has recently been restructured to align all hearing processes and sanctions to the student learning outcomes listed in the academic bulletin. If a student is found to have violated a student code of conduct policy, that student will be issued a sanction, such as writing a paper or performing community service. The hearing agent assigns a specific student learning outcome and writes outcomes for the sanction to be assessed in a follow up meeting after the sanction is completed. Students who do not meet the outcomes, such as demonstrating critical thinking about alcohol use and successful academic strategies, may be required to re-write or complete a different sanction. A study of the impact of this system on learning is in progress and preliminary results will be available on campus.

The preceding argument clearly demonstrates that Marian University provides an enriched educational environment for its students.

## Sources

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## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Marian University fulfills Criterion Three through provision of high-quality higher education programs at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral level by qualified faculty and academic staff. Quality of programs and learning outcomes, in all formats and in all locations, is assured through the systematic, institutional assessment of learning outcomes, annual analysis of evidence of learning, and a cycle of substantive program review and revision. Evidence from embedded assessment, standardized assessment, and surveys of engagement and satisfaction demonstrate that Marian University is successful in educating the students in accord with the values and mission.

Marian University's mission and challenge is to serve students who have historically had limited access to higher education. These students need significant support and guidance to persist in attaining their degrees. A successful Quality Initiative is setting the direction for future work as follows:

- Providing systematic support, through the Center for Instruction and Organizational Learning and the Office of Academic Technology, for developing faculty and staff expertise and practice in teaching and learning.
- Providing systematic support, through the Committee on Student Learning, for the evaluation and use of evidence of student learning in sustaining and enhancing the current high level of program quality.
- Developing short and long-term strategies to improve retention in programs of study, based on addressing the educational challenges faced by the population of students served.

Marian University is also challenged by the need to update critical infrastructure that supports effective teaching and learning. The university will continue to:

- Maximize the efficient and effective use of existing instructional and information technologies,
- Develop a comprehensive plan for improving instructional and information technology to support high-impact instructional practices in both "on the ground" and online learning.
- Implement the planned renovation of the Sadoff Science building to create collaborative learning spaces and a community hub at the center of the main campus in Fond du Lac.
- Develop a plan to enhance student places and spaces to foster learning, connections, and community.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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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

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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

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#### 1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

Marian University has an established [schedule of program review](#) for each school and all degree levels. The program review process was revised and approved by the Faculty Senate February 5, 2010 and implemented in fall 2010. A review of the process was conducted in summer 2012. Additional revisions were made to the guidelines and implemented in fall 2012. The [review process](#) currently in place is the result of a review of policy and guidelines in summer 2014 and revisions implemented in fall 2014. These reviews are the foundation for curriculum revision and overall program development. The program review process is currently managed by the Curriculum and Education Standards committee of Faculty Senate, and the Graduate Council.

Academic programs submit an annual program report to support continuous evidence of learning outcomes and effectiveness. The types of information historically included in the annual program reports varied, depending on information deemed essential by the Chief Academic Officer at different points in practice development. During the 2014/2015 academic year, annual report design was significantly revised to better focus on evidence of student learning outcomes and use of that evidence in planning (including budget requests). The focus also shifted from "reporting out" to evaluation and analysis within a cycle of continuous improvement. The report was renamed "[Annual Program Analysis of Evidence](#)" to emphasize the change in focus.

The completed Annual Program Analysis of Evidence (i.e, the [analysis for Educational Technology](#)) includes data on annual program student learning outcomes; data on co-curricular activities, measures, and outcomes; data on recruitment, retention, and persistence; and budget and planning in response to evidence of student learning. The [Annual Assurance for Learning Review Cycle](#) allows programs to evaluate and respond to the prior academic year data and be proactive in planning for needs at the beginning of the institutional budget development process. This will facilitate more timely action to enhance overall student learning and document evidence of continuous improvement between cycles of program review.

The [outcomes of program review](#) have led to significant restructuring of programs, including the General Education Program. These recommendations also contributed to decisions about Marian University's current mix of academic programming and creating a marketing focus on signature programs.

**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.**

All credit awarded by academic programs is reviewed and approved by programs and schools each semester. Faculty submit grades for coursework to the SabreNet Student Information System. Grades are evaluated within the data management system (PowerCampus), and the Office of the Registrar reviews, certifies, and awards credit for courses.

The university offers students a number of options for earning credit outside of traditional course structures, including mutually directed study, independent study, credit by examination, advanced placement, and [experiential learning assessment](#). Faculty review all proposed credit for prior learning and approve the award of transfer credit in the major, experiential learning credit and transfer credit, which is then codified in articulation agreements. In 2014, Marian University conducted a pilot of a new procedure for managing the increasing volume of petitions for experiential learning assessment. The [outcomes of the pilot](#) demonstrated that Marian University's existing processes for awarding credit for prior learning could be coordinated to expedite review of all three types of credit (transfer, examination, and experiential) and successfully manage a large-scale review of experiential learning. This coordination would require a revision of existing policy to improve clarity regarding the difference between types of credit for prior learning and to establish clear lines of responsibility for administering the institutional process.

The Office of the Registrar maintains a database of reviewed and evaluated credit transfers and agreements. The database supports the work of the Transfer Credit Evaluator, assuring only approved credit is transcribed on official transcripts. Before students are certified for graduation, faculty advisors perform a graduation evaluation to assure accuracy of the transcript, including transfer credit. The Office of the Registrar completes a final evaluation for verification that all degree requirements have been met for both [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) students.

**3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.**

The [Transfer Credit Evaluation Policy](#), [Credit by Examination Policy](#), and [Experiential Learning Assessment Policy](#) govern evaluation of credit. The Office of the Registrar and the Director of Assurance for Learning implemented, in collaboration with faculty, and support these policies. All outcomes evaluating quality of credit are stored and maintained in the Office of the Registrar database.

**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.**

Marian University maintains and exercises authority over the quality of all academic programming and outcomes through a system based on levels of review by faculty in programs, school committees, [Graduate Council](#), and the [Curriculum and Educational Standards](#) (CES) Committee of the Faculty Senate. Faculty Senate recommends action on undergraduate curriculum. Graduate Council recommends action on all graduate curriculum. The Vice President for Academic Affairs then reviews and presents recommended actions to the Board of Trustees for approval, according to the by-laws of the university.

These governing bodies oversee the quality of proposed curriculum and educational standards, including [standard course syllabus expectations](#) and [credit hour policy](#), using well-established practices specified in the Faculty Senate bylaws, after individual schools have conducted due diligence regarding curriculum changes and new program and course proposals. This work, supported by [guidelines](#) for the the production and submission of proposed curriculum action and reviewed by relevant committees, is managed by the Office of the Registrar. An example of this [process](#) is the approval of the undergraduate Special Education Program.

A proposal currently before Faculty Senate would shift oversight of assessment of learning, annual program analysis, and program review within Academic Affairs to an institutional [Committee on Student Learning](#). [Marian University's Quality Initiative](#) included a goal to "increase the university-wide focus on a culture of learning through data-informed, evidence-based decision-making that pervades the university." The initial plan was to create a new structure, an institutional [Assurance for Learning Council](#), to assure the quality of learning outcome assessment and use evidence in all functional areas of the university.

This proposal is seen as an evolution of Academic Affairs' existing Committee on Student Learning.

Faculty and staff recommended the decision to retain the name "Committee on Student Learning" and proposed it becoming a standing committee of Faculty Senate. Faculty Senate appointed an Ad-Hoc Committee on Student Learning in 2014 to write the charge of the proposed standing committee, including a clear description of the relative roles of faculty, staff, and students who would be asked to serve. This proposal, in its fourth revision, is expected to be approved during the 2015-16 academic year.

The Higher Learning Commission [Quality Initiative Report Panel Review](#) found this work demonstrated evidence that Marian University learned an important point: "creating sustainable systems and using evidence for decision making as it relates to fostering a culture of learning."

[Faculty qualifications](#) are established in the Faculty Employment Policies and Procedures, documented in the Faculty Senate Handbook. Faculty Senate and Graduate Council establish qualifications, and Human Resources administers recruitment and hiring policy and practice, following these guidelines (see Criterion 3.C).

Enrollment Management authorizes student access to learning resources at admission. Access to services is managed across operations through a database linked to students' specific identification number and Marian University email account, assigned by Information Technology Services (ITS). This access includes assignment to general and faculty advisers and access to advising and academic services, MyMarian, Marian Online 2 course management system, and library resources (See Criterion 3.D.). All institutional budget directors, including school deans, base allocation of resources and budget requests on projected enrollment, projected tuition revenue, board-approved program actions, annual analysis of program outcomes, and recommendations of program review (see Criterion 5.A.5.).

Marian University has had agreements in place to provide dual credit courses and programs with various high schools since 1991. Currently Marian has agreements with four Wisconsin high schools (two private and two public), evidence available on site. Dual credit courses and program curriculum are supervised by the respective schools at Marian University offering the courses or programs. Marian University assures that course and program rigor, educational standards, and outcomes are equivalent to the university's overall academic programming by including these courses and programs in the curriculum review process. Discipline faculty and Academic Affairs review [the credentials of faculty in dual-credit courses](#) and programs based on university [faculty qualification standards](#). Evaluation of dual-credit faculty according to the recently clarified Higher Learning Commission standards for all faculty is in progress. The Dean of Academic Advising and Academic Services administers dual credit programs to make sure students have access to the same level of institutional resources as students in other programs,

**5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.**

The School of Business, School of Education, and School of Nursing and Health Professions have sought and secured [specialty accreditation](#). These three schools' programs participated in specialty accreditation review during spring 2014, all with positive outcomes. These external reviews offer programs the additional opportunity to verify quality and rigor of academic programs and identify ways to improve. [Academic programs](#) without specialty accreditation available, align their programs with available professional or discipline standards (see Criterion 3.B.3).

**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).**

Marian University uses a variety of indicators to evaluate success of its graduates at the undergraduate and graduate level, including post-graduation employment in related fields and endeavors, advanced education at graduate and post-graduate levels, and indirect measures of employment and continued learning outcomes, post-graduation.

Post-Graduation Employment and Advanced Education: Prior to AY 2013-14, graduates of undergraduate programs received a mailed, paper-and-pencil based survey, where they reported on employment and graduate school enrollment. The survey averaged a 20% response rate from students and did not provide data of sufficient quality or quantity to make decisions and determine where improvements were needed.

As of the conclusion of AY 2013-14, Institutional Research implemented [First Destination Outcome Survey](#), a career destination survey, developed by CSO Research. The survey, benchmarked to results from 35 other schools and the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) data, seeks information with regard to employment, military service, graduate school and any other additional field experience. The online survey is sent, six months after graduation, to graduates with baccalaureate degrees and with the M.S. in Organizational Leadership degrees. Recipients are asked to update the survey again one-year post graduation, at which time their results are locked for analysis for that academic year.

The resulting response rate on the First Destination Outcome Survey was **62%** for fall 2014 undergraduates, a significant increase over the previous method. Academic programs include this information in the annual program analysis of outcomes and use it to make curricular decisions. They also disclose this information on their external websites as program effectiveness indicators. Career Services uses the First Destination Outcome Survey data to assess Marian University graduates' employment history compared with other institutions. Admission Counselors use the program quality evidence in recruitment to demonstrate placement rates for various programs.

Graduate programs in nursing and education conduct post-graduation surveys at the six month, one year and five year marks. These data are important indicators of program effectiveness

included in annual analysis and program review, and have been used to make decisions about curriculum, assessment and program effectiveness (see Criterion 4.B).

Licensure and Certifications. [Accredited Professional programs](#) at Marian University collect, analyze, and use professional examination, licensure, and certification data as indicators of program effectiveness. The national accrediting bodies for nursing, radiologic technology, and educator preparation require members to annually report data for post graduate success at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Radiologic Technology Program is required to report employment and pass rates on the American Registry of Radiologic Technologist exam to their accrediting body, the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT). Likewise, the School of Education is also required by US Title II legislation to report pass rates on required professional examinations, including the edTPA, to both the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). DPI also tracks graduates' employment as teachers and makes this information available to all educator preparation programs in the state.

This data is reviewed, and changes are made to curriculum and other requirements as deemed necessary. For example, the traditional nursing program noted a significant drop in its graduates' pass rate on the nursing licensure exam. Based on this data and a review of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Program Reports, which provides analysis of aggregate performance of graduates taking the licensure exam, the nursing faculty undertook a major curriculum revision at the beginning of spring 2011, which resulted in a leading edge concept-based curriculum, initiated in fall 2013. The first graduates of the revised curriculum graduated in December 2015. Performance results will not be available until later in spring 2016 (see Criterion 4.B.).

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## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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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

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#### **1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals**

Marian University has clearly stated goals for learning, articulated in Marian University's Core Values and stated as five broad [Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes](#) (USLOs), adopted in 2007 by Faculty Senate. Graduate programs align discipline and field-specific [program learning outcomes](#) to the Core Values. Co-curricular programs and functional areas of Academic Affairs, Student Engagement, Enrollment Management, Advancement, and Business and Finance have adopted Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education ([CAS](#)) Student Learning and Development Outcomes, relevant to their work and aligned to the Core Values. These outcomes are made public on the Marian University website on each Academic Program's page and on the [Marian University Assurance for Learning page](#).

Marian University initiated institutional assessment of student academic outcomes in AY 1997-1998 and established a [Strategic Plan for Institutional Assessment in AY 2003-04](#). Continuous improvement planning was initiated in AY 2004-05. The [Institutional Assessment System](#) (IAS) triangulates data from direct embedded assessment in programs and units, direct norm-referenced assessments in fields and disciplines, and indirect assessment of learning through norm-referenced surveys of student satisfaction and engagement.

Data from these three sources are collected according to a cycle established by Institutional Effectiveness and administered by Assurance for Learning. Institutional Research manages survey assessment data collection and analysis. Assurance for Learning collaborates with programs to manage data collection and analysis in program-level assessment processes.

#### **2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.**

A continuous cycle begins with assessment planning, which is required of all [academic programs](#) and all [functional areas](#) of the university. The plans all include direct and indirect assessment of student learning outcomes aligned to the Core Values, USLOs (for undergraduate programs), and discipline-specific standards (for undergraduate and graduate programs). Learning in co-curricular programming such as [First Year Studies](#), SOAR, and service learning is assessed through both [direct and indirect](#) assessments in this system.

In the *action phase*, data are collected annually using approved measures ([undergraduate](#), [graduate](#), and [doctoral](#)). The suitability of the measures for collecting meaningful data are evaluated at the program level as part of the [annual analysis process](#). Faculty teaching in the general education program [submit student learning outcome data by course](#), based on performance on approved embedded measures, evaluated using [standard rubrics](#). Assurance for Learning manages student learning outcome data collection in the general education program. Data are collated and then disaggregated and analyzed by outcome, program, student level, and course.

In the *evaluation phase*, faculty and staff in schools, programs, and units assess data, analyze evidence, and identify needs. Programs evaluate evidence of student learning outcomes in relation to program and institutional strategic priorities and goals. [Annual Program Analysis of Evidence protocol](#) guides this phase of the assurance cycle at the program level.

Evidence of [assessed student learning outcomes](#) is presented annually to the institution, including the Board of Trustees (BoT), in the [Institutional Data Dashboard](#). This reporting protocol provides a rolling five-year trend analysis of student learning outcomes from direct, course embedded assessment in the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, undergraduate and graduate programs, and co-curriculum; direct assessment, using normed assessments (institutional and by program); and indirect assessments of learning from the [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) (SSI), the [Adult Student Priorities Survey](#) (ASPS), and the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (NSSE).

Programs, schools, and functional areas determine the evidence's meaning in relation to student learning expectations and make [decisions about future action](#) in the *response phase* of the cycle. These decisions are based on further research into emerging trends; comparison to benchmarks, such as percentile rankings; pass rates; and percentage of students meeting or exceeding expected levels of performance. Decisions lead back into the planning phase of a new cycle.

### **3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.**

Analysis of trends from 2009-2015 in program decision-making related to student learning demonstrates the following:

- An increase in action to transform the program to improve student learning outcomes
- Important modifications in existing programs' ability to review trends in the evidence of student learning outcomes versus yearly snapshots

- An upward trend in assessed student learning outcomes over time

One example of such a proposal to transform is the re-envisioning of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) curriculum in 2013-2014. This transformation in curriculum was intended to improve learning in the clinical program and increase the first-time NCLEX pass rate, a key indicator of learning in nursing. The 2014-2015 Annual Program Analysis of Evidence for the [BSN program](#) provides evidence of the transformation and the rationale for the curricular change.

The General Education Committee undertook a significant program review process in summer 2014, using [assessment data](#) as a basis for reviewing the program. [Response to the review](#) led to collaboration with the ONE Marian Committee to modify the existing program. Review affirmed the effectiveness of the existing core curriculum. The ONE Marian Committee [proposed a redesign process](#) to further align learning across the general education program and the majors.

The majority of programs respond to evidence of student learning by sustaining existing curriculum and practice. This response is evident in the [Accounting program's decision](#) to make minor adjustments in the curriculum to sustain and improve upon a strong learning outcome in knowledge acquisition.

#### **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.**

The Institutional Assessment System (IAS) is based on self-study and professional standards for learning and assessment. Marian University successfully completed participation in the HLC Academy for the Assessment of Learning. The [Impact Report](#) documents the high degree of faculty and staff engagement in the assessment process. The HLC Results Forum in 2014 provided an opportunity to engage the President, VPAA, Dean of Student Engagement, a senior faculty member, and a member of the Board of Trustees in designing a [sustainability plan](#) for continued systematic assurance of learning. Major elements of the plan are integrated into Marian University's strategic planning and action to improve student learning outcomes.

Implementing the CAS Self-Study process, which actively engages staff in assessment of student learning outcomes, is well underway. In the first two years, three functional areas of Student Engagement have completed the self-study process ([Orientation Program](#), [Campus Safety & Security](#), [Student Conduct Program](#)). The [Student Conduct Adjudication process](#) was specifically redesigned to focus on student learning outcomes of critical thinking and socially responsible action.

An equally important aspect of the sustainability plan is full implementation of Marian University's [Quality Initiative](#), creating a formal structure to increase faculty and staff engagement in the institutional assessment process, and to establish assurance for learning as a process within faculty governance. The Committee on Student Learning would bring

together institutional program review, including academic and functional area program review, and evaluation of the quality of the Assurance for Learning system.

## Sources

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- VPAA\_Institutional Assessment System
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- VPAA\_Student Satisfaction Inventory Analysis S14
- VPAA\_Summary of Student Learning Outcome Measures\_20150208
- VPAA\_UG Student Learning Outcome Standard Rubrics
- VPAA\_Undergraduate Programs Embedded Assessment Measures
- VPAA\_Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes
- VPSE\_CSS CAS - SAG Forms
- VPSE\_Orientation Program CAS Self-Assessment
- VPSE\_SCP SAG Executive Summary
- VPSE\_Student Conduct Adjudication System

## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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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

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#### **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.**

Marian University has established specific strategic goals for retention, persistence, and completion of students enrolled in traditional programs. These targets are based on understanding the undergraduate student demographic profile and analysis of five-year trends in national retention data as well as data from Marian University and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) consortium. Prior to academic year 2014-15 goals had been established for traditional first year students only. Since that time, strategic goals ([Objective A.2](#)) have been established for traditional students moving from first to second year, second to third year, and third year to degree completion.

Retention, persistence, and degree completion are evaluated at the program and school levels for students in adult undergraduate and graduate programs. As of AY 2014-2015, annual program analysis includes [setting appropriate goals](#) for retention and persistence, and identifying and evaluating specific [improvement strategies](#). Determining appropriate goals and standards for time to graduation will necessarily be based on characteristics of students in Marian University's accelerated and graduate programs as well as the characteristics and goals of the programs themselves. These goals are not the same as the traditional undergraduate program goals, and setting and evaluating appropriate goals pose some challenge to faculty, staff and administration. An institutional [Retention Task Force](#), convened in Fall 2015, is currently reviewing evidence and existing research to identify and recommend a strategic plan,

aligned with the mission, to improve retention and persistence in all undergraduate and graduate programs.

## **2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.**

The Registrar collects information regarding retention, persistence, and completion, based on data generated through pre-registration, registration, student application for withdrawal, degree audit, and school-level confirmation of degree. Data from these sources are stored in the PowerCampus data management system. Institutional Research prepares an annual report, [Student Right To Know](#) (SRTK), and reports retention and graduation rates to programs and schools with the [Institutional Data Dashboard](#) (IDD).

Marian University's Office of Student Engagement (OSE) has primary responsibility for analyzing data and acting strategically concerning undergraduate retention, persistence, and graduation. OSE annually compares Marian University's rates to national benchmarks for private, non-profit four-year institutions and to rates reported by WAICU schools.

As noted in the IDD, freshman retention rates for 2013-2014 [varied](#) between 66.5% and 75.7%, with an overall average rate of 69.6%. This is slightly above the national mean of 67% (U.S. Department of Education). The 6-year graduation rate (2008 cohort) is 55.8%, also above the national rate of 43% (U.S. Department of Education). Both rates are lower than the WAICU consortium mean in each category and fall slightly short of goals set in the strategic plan. This data indicates Marian University is sustaining retention and graduation rates and will need to continue efforts to improve both rates going forward.

## **3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.**

Annual analysis of data and trends inform the decisions relating to institutional strategic planning, delivery modalities, program quality, program mix, and student services. Several initiatives have been implemented to improve student retention, persistence, and completion:

- A Retention Task Force to develop a retention plan that will address engagement, academic, and business practices. The plan will include specific strategies, initiatives, and benchmarks for tracking retention by major.
- The writing and award of TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) grant in 2010, initiated based on a review of retention and persistence in 2008-09. The significant improvements in retention, persistence, and completion of students supported by the TRIO SSS grant resulted in a second grant award in 2015.
- Inclusion of goals for retention and graduation in both [annual program analysis](#) and [program review processes](#). Realistic goal-setting and planning based on goals is used as a key indicator of the quality and viability of academic programs.
- A [marketability study](#), conducted by Stamats, a higher education marketing company, in 2014-2015. The study was aimed at program improvement and overall quality and sustainability. All undergraduate academic programs were required to demonstrate

successes and to explain challenges, based on outcome data including student learning, enrollment, retention, and graduation/completion rates. Several programs were restructured, and some majors were eliminated.

- [Curricular decisions](#) to reduce the number of credits required to earn an undergraduate degree, and changes in the number of credits required in both major and minor programs. This work was initiated by the Executive Vice President in 2013, based on a review of recruitment, retention, and graduation data in undergraduate programs. A reduction in the minimum number of required credits (to 120 from 128) was approved by Faculty Senate in 2014. Since May 2015, faculty have undertaken curricular revisions resulting in changes to the number of credits required for both majors and minors ([CES Minutes](#) and [Faculty Senate Minutes](#)). This process will continue with adult and graduate programs in the near future.

The vice presidents for Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Business and Finance, and Student Engagement include data on student retention and graduation as evidence of student outcomes. Retention rates are used in regression models to predict possible trends in revenue generation as well as operating costs needed to support student learning (evidence available on site).

#### **4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice.**

Marian University has structured data collection regarding student admission, retention, and graduation to be responsive to federal reporting requirements. Institutional Research uses data collected through these processes to produce the IPEDS report as well as specialized reports in response to requests of specialty area accreditation in business, nursing, and education. All functional areas of the university rely on these data to provide evidence of program effectiveness.

Program review in functional areas follows the process designed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). This was initiated by the Academic Affairs Officer in 2013 as part of the Marian University Quality Initiative. The goal is to assure institutional data collection and analysis is high quality and leads to continuous improvement and learning in the organization. The Director of Assurance for Learning leads the development, training, and implementation of non-academic program review in collaboration with the VPs.

The benefit of CAS Self-Study is evident in the 2014-2015 [annual report](#) of the Office of Student Engagement. Three completed self-studies have identified key areas where programs and services can improve to support student retention and attainment of undergraduate learning outcomes (see C.3.E).

Based on the aforementioned evidence, Marian University has demonstrated a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

## Sources

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- PRES\_Strategic Plan 2014-15 Workplan, June 2015
- VPAA\_Academic Program Review Process
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- VPAA\_Analysis of Change from 128 to 120 Credits for Graduation
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## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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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

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Marian University has an effective institutional assessment system that evaluates student learning in academic programs and co-curricular activities as well as student learning through experience in the university environment. Marian uses evidence of student learning to improve instructional practice, assessment practice, and curriculum. Evidence of student learning informs the design and work of support structures at the program, department, school and institutional levels. This evidence is also used to identify both short and long term strategies to meet goals for recruitment, retention, and persistence to graduation.

The effectiveness of institutional planning and action is evaluated through a coordinated self-study review process that includes annual program analysis, a cycle of academic program review, and a cycle of functional area review based on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) standards. The evidence indicates that this cycle of review and evaluation contributes to strategic planning and continuous improvement in all aspects of the university's operations.

The newly established Center for Instruction and Organizational Learning provides a structure within which evidence of student learning guides Marian University's organizational learning and faculty and staff development. The continued effort to establish the Committee on Student Learning as the governing body that will assure quality in assessment and evaluation practice is evidence of the institutional commitment to ongoing system improvement.

While Marian has a strong and effective institutional assessment system, continued improvement will include:

- Implementing the second component of the Quality Initiative for the creation of the Faculty Senate Committee on Student Learning.
- Evaluating the impact of evidence-based changes in curriculum, assessment, or program design in attaining goals for improved student learning; in other words, effectively "spiraling up" the quality and effectiveness of the work of the institution.
- Assuring that evidence of student learning is communicated effectively to all constituents, including the public.
- Continuing to enhance the graduate culture by centralizing administration and management of all graduate programs through the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, in collaboration with Graduate Council.
- Establishing and implementing a comprehensive retention plan.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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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

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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

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**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.**

#### Fiscal resources

Marian University's commitment to long-term sustainability and responsible oversight of financial operations has resulted in 2014-15 assets of \$45.57 million, modest institutional debt of \$16.85 million, and favorable operating surpluses five of the last ten fiscal years. This, in addition to aggressive steps to increase efficiency, reduce expenses, and enhance revenue while limiting tuition increases, demonstrates Marian's commitment to responsible fiscal management and operational accountability.

As indicated in the [2015-16 operating budget](#), Marian University is heavily tuition dependent, with 79% of annual revenue base derived from tuition and fees. Other revenue sources include grants, investment and endowment income, and revenue from auxiliary services, including facility rentals. Since FY 2006, the Board of Trustees (BoT) has maintained a goal to produce annual operating surpluses of \$500,000 for supporting deferred maintenance and

discretionary initiatives and projects; however, periodically over the last several years, in spite of careful financial planning, the university has faced challenges in generating the revenues necessary to fulfill this goal ([FY06](#), [FY07](#), [FY08](#), [FY09](#), [FY10](#), [FY11](#), [FY12](#), [FY13](#), [FY14](#), [FY15](#) Statements of Financial Position and Activities). To ensure annual operating budgets generate anticipated surpluses, a variety of intentional controls, processes, and initiatives were instituted or strengthened to reduce expense while improving revenues and institutional efficiency. For example, Marian University participates in a consortium of other private Wisconsin colleges and universities that provides cost saving opportunities and support. As a result of participation, Marian has [demonstrated](#) an annual cost savings of nearly \$1.5 million through health insurance premium savings and purchasing programs.

The need for strong fiscal oversight and increased accountability prompted development of a [Strategic Financial Plan](#), providing a road map to long-term financial sustainability. The Board of Trustees approved this plan in October 2014. For this fiscal year and the year prior, budget managers submitted their revised budgets, incorporating cost reductions that [resulted](#) in savings of over \$1 million in 2014-15. During the upcoming cycle for financial planning, the plan horizon will be expanded from three years to five years. The Composite Financial Index (CFI) serves as a key metric, along with other [financial ratios](#) assessed against budgeted, forecasted, and actual results.

### Human Resources

Marian University is committed to recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified faculty, staff, and administrators who believe in and support the mission and core values of the university as well as the students served. Marian has [invested](#) in human resources by allocating 58-62% of the operating budget the last three years to personnel related expenditures. The number of full-time and part-time [faculty and staff](#) has remained fairly consistent over a ten-year period. Marian's robust adult and graduate enrollment in face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses explains the significant number of part-time faculty.

Marian continues to align institutional human resources with goals and objectives in the strategic plan and with current financial realities. In spring 2009, as a result of the economic downturn and its effect on Marian's financials, a [reduction in force](#) resulted in the elimination of 15 full-time and 7 part-time positions and time-reductions to 23 positions for a total personnel cost savings of \$1,521,000. Several—though not all—positions have since been reinstated. Recently, investments have been made in Advancement staff in an effort to bolster fundraising revenues, and in Business Office staff in response to shortcomings discovered when the new Controller came on board and in response to repeated financial [audit findings](#) of material weakness in segregation of duties. To support Marian University's expanding fully online programming, a segment of Information Technology dedicated to academic affairs was recently reorganized and staffing expanded to enhance faculty's ability to create quality online programs and learn sound online pedagogy.

### Physical and Technological Resources

Marian University's main campus occupies 83 acres with 422,616 square feet of facilities. In addition to the main campus, the university has over 100,000 square feet in off-campus facilities in the West Allis Center, the Appleton Center, the Kuber Center in Byron, and the Agnes Center and recently-acquired Center for Health Professions (CHP) building in Fond du Lac. The physical plant is managed by Sodexo.

The immediate to short-term challenge for the university will be maintaining the existing infrastructure and addressing high-priority deferred maintenance. The Strategic Plan includes an objective to prioritize from the current [Sodexo Facilities Condition Assessment 2016](#) to increase quality control on campus. This working document, to be updated annually, provides a comprehensive report on the condition of all facilities. To provide sufficient financial resources to maintain facilities, the Strategic Plan's goal is to provide an annual capital expenditures budget equal to depreciation. In recent years, capital expenditures financed by operations have consistently fallen short of this objective.

While several additions to Marian's facilities over the last decade have been for athletics or student housing, e.g., Herr-Baker Field Stadium, the Lenz Center, and Cedar Creek apartments; the recently acquired CHP is the first addition to academic facilities since 2009. Marian has not yet taken occupancy of the portion of the building it has designated for its own use; however, it will provide a [state-of-the-art learning environment](#) for health professions students. Expansion and renovation of the existing [science building](#) is the cornerstone of a capital fundraising campaign—the silent phase of which is underway—and this will further enhance academic facilities and student learning environments.

In 2005, the Higher Learning Commission visit report commended Marian University's technological support for learning. Significant and rapid changes in mobile technologies and software and improvement in real-time analytics have posed a challenge in both infrastructure and training, as the need is so great. Marian University continues to invest in maximizing existing technological resources, as is evident in the [upgrades](#) in servers and wireless capacity as well as in essential platforms. However, the challenge of effective investment of resources in technology remains. At the end of FY 2014, a commitment was made to reestablish a technology oversight committee.

The [Marian Institutional Technology Committee](#) (MITC) was developed in response to concerns about the current state of Marian University's technology and its ability to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff. The MITC provides ongoing evaluation of the technological infrastructure that supports academic and business practices. The MITC reports to the Cabinet through the Vice President for Business & Finance (VPBF). The [MITC](#) works collaboratively with the Director of Information Technology Services (ITS) to facilitate the alignment of technology with institutional goals and objectives and helps to fulfill the policies and strategic direction established by the Cabinet.

In addition to the maintenance and operation of the university-wide technology systems, and to mitigate risk in technology infrastructure, the IT staff supports students, faculty, and staff computer hardware and software issues. The Help Desk moved to an automated system to provide improved communication to users about the status of their requests in February 2015.

**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.**

As a private 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation, beyond the [nominal fee](#) paid to CSA sponsors to support the Sponsorship Ministry office, all of Marian University's resources are allocated to educational purposes and not dispersed to a superordinate entity. Surpluses generated are reinvested in the university. No funds are directed to external organizations except [select resource allocations](#), such as charitable gifts and donations, all of which support the educational mission of the university.

**3. Marian University has incorporated into its mission statements and elaborations of mission statements goals that are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.**

As the mission statement affirms, "Marian University is a Catholic applied liberal arts community that welcomes diverse spiritual traditions." Educational experiences are based on the teaching mission of a Catholic university, and fulfilling this promise calls for continuous assessment of students' capacities to act in accordance with Marian's core values of learning, community, service, social justice, and spiritual traditions. Crucial student and organizational learning outcomes have been identified that, when assessed, provide evidence of quality work that fulfills the teaching mission.

The five strategic goals and thirty objectives outlined in Marian University's strategic plan are intentionally linked and aligned to the educational mission and legacy of service by which Marian was founded by the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes in 1936. Evidence of the university's ability to carry out the mission in light of current organizational resources and offerings is best illustrated in the [stories of the students served](#).

**4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.**

The [hiring process](#) for staff clearly communicates in [job postings](#) minimum position qualifications. Applications and resumes are checked upon submission to confirm adherence to the position's minimum guidelines.

The annual [staff evaluation process](#) includes evaluation of a Personal Performance Plan and identification of Professional Development Plans. The process requires that staff set, assess, evaluate, and achieve goals throughout a Staff Performance Evaluation process, monitoring qualifications, training, and proficiency. Performance plans and individual goals and objectives intentionally link to the university's strategic plan at all levels of the organization.

In 1993, the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes provided endowment funds for staff development opportunities (similar to a fund provided for faculty). Originally meant for individual staff development opportunities, the grants evolved—due to the limited monies generated by the endowed fund—to funding group staff development opportunities, coordinated by the Staff Development Committee. Since 2011 \$4,428 from the endowed fund has been used

to support staff development activities. Supervisors budget development funds for staff to attend national conferences, meetings of their respective associations, etc.

The [Center for Instruction and Organizational Development](#) (CIOD), established in FY16, collaborates with the Staff Development Committee to implement programming and evaluate strategies for professional development of staff, faculty, and administrators, broadening learning and improving student learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness.

Marian is responsible for educating the campus community concerning harassment prevention, unlawful discrimination, campus Save/Title IX issues, and issues related to violence against women (VAWA). An on-line training, Preventing Discrimination and Sexual Violence: Title IX, VAWA and Clery Act for Faculty and Staff, was completed by 100% of all current employees in 2014-15. Additional related training has been and will continue to be provided to faculty, staff, Student Senate and student athletes.

##### **5. Budgeting and expense monitoring processes are well-developed and evident at Marian University.**

[Following a period](#) of using a budget development committee of approximately 25 members, in 2009–2010, a more focused, eight-person Budget Review Committee (BRC) was charged with reviewing the university budget process and recommending efficiencies in operations and overall improvements in budgeting, spending, and organizational structure. The committee was charged with ensuring resource allocations were aligned with industry best practices and allowing effective fulfillment of Marian’s mission. As a result, the BRC recommended a cautious and conservative approach to the development of budgets to mitigate long-standing challenges that had resulted in several years of declining actual revenues as compared to budget expectations. [Recommendations](#) included immediate and longer-term structural changes, spending reductions, and a conservative approach to budgeting and planning. Implementing these recommendations resulted in a net surplus of approximately \$1M for the [2009–10](#) fiscal year--the first surplus following three years of consecutive losses in revenues.

In 2010 and 2011, following precipitous declines in adult and graduate student enrollment, largely attributable to the economic downturn and the State of Wisconsin’s implementation of ACT 10, Marian’s BoT [requested](#) an even more aggressive and conservative approach to budget forecasting in an effort to mitigate the volatility in enrollment and subsequent tuition revenues. To enhance participatory budget planning during these economic times, a broader constituency was engaged to directly weigh in and influence the budget and planning process. The deans and key budget managers were appointed to provide student revenue forecasts and budget recommendations to the Offices of Business and Finance and Enrollment Management, which were then reviewed by the President’s Cabinet. This expanded involvement resulted in enhanced accountability and active engagement in the budget building process. Nonetheless, gaps in the process existed, including the fact that once expense budget requests were submitted to the Business Office, there was no explanation as to why they were returned at a different level of funding.

In 2013, Marian University appointed a new Interim President, with decades of leadership experience in the healthcare industry and extensive expertise in organizational change. Upon his arrival, an aggressive and strategic approach to fiscal management was reinitiated, resulting in increased accountability, multi-year planning and formalization of budget processes. In 2013, the services of a retired Beloit College CFO were retained to enhance monitoring of financial performance. This resulted in increased oversight by the Board Finance Committee and the identification of key financial ratios and performance measures, including the resulting Composite Financial Index (CFI), which serves as the ultimate measure of an institution's fiscal performance and well-being. Full financial statements are reviewed monthly by the Board Finance Committee and [financial ratios](#), including the CFI, are reviewed periodically. This has resulted in enhanced accountability and helped aid informed, data-driven decision making.

The reinstatement in 2014 of a full-time Vice President of Business and Finance (VPBF), charged with providing strategic direction and oversight of these critical functions, reinforced the institution's continued commitment to improving business and financial performance. The VPBF instituted a [revised budget-building process](#) in 2015 that engaged budget managers across the university in the development of expense and revenue budgets. The enhanced process included education and training for budget managers, clearly delineated expectations with tools and templates, and increased tracking of revenue and expenses, including clear identification of anticipated spending by month. This process, which will be continually assessed and refined, enhances transparency. Additionally, it assists the institution's planning, which is now based on historical spending patterns and aligns with departmental needs.

The planning process also requires meetings with each budget supervisor in order to assess and evaluate draft departmental requests. These are held early in the budget process and conducted with the President, VPBF, budget manager and the respective vice president of the area under review. This process provides senior administration with a better understanding of the financial resources required to support and enhance student learning as well as more accurate forecasts of anticipated revenues. In addition, redundancies in budgeting requests have been identified, thus improving accuracy in budgeting. This process is an important step in establishing a trend-based budget model aligned with strategic planning efforts.

As indicated, transparency is greatly improved as a fundamental tenant of the enhanced process and provides assurance that no budget changes will be made by the Office of Business and Finance without communicating such changes to budget managers. If necessary, budget managers are given cost reduction targets and asked to develop their own plans on achieving lower spending. Previously, this had been a top-down, non-consultative approach. This [process](#) is being improved during FY16 to include a mid-year re-forecast prior to the development of the FY17 budget.

With regard to budget monitoring, [increased spending controls](#) include a robust expense approval process requiring requests of \$500 and over to be reviewed and approved by the VPBF and the President. This process has been [institutionalized](#) and is ongoing. In addition, budgets that produce revenue via fees, etc. have also received updates on revenue production. These reports are now available electronically as opposed to hard copy (green initiative), and a goal of the Business Office is to make them available in real-time rather than following the close of the

month. The monthly operating results are reported in general to the President's Cabinet and reviewed with the Administrative Council.

As evidenced in the aforementioned argument, Marian University has the necessary resources, infrastructure and processes to not only support its operations, but also to live its mission of service and transformation through education with integrity and purpose.

## Sources

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## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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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

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To fulfill the mission and ensure long-term sustainability, Marian University's organizational structures, including administrative and academic governance, enable effective leadership and foster collaboration, shared responsibility, and engagement in decision making.

On April 9, 2008, the Marian College Board of Trustees and the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes passed resolutions approving a change of the name [Marian College to Marian University](#), marking a historic moment in the institution's 71-year history.

The move from college to university marked [significant change](#) in administrative and organizational governance, as it facilitated a natural transition of the academic governance structures in place at the time, resulting in five new schools being added to the existing Schools of Education and Nursing.

**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.**

To ensure appropriate orientation to university governance, all new members of the Board of Trustees (BoT) participate in a [comprehensive orientation](#) session as they begin their service to the university. In addition, the university is a member of the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), and Trustees receive the AGB Magazine *Trusteeship*, which provides pertinent [articles and reports](#) regarding the national higher education landscape in general as well as legal and fiduciary responsibilities. An [annual evaluation](#) is conducted to determine Trustees' satisfaction with BoT processes and to identify perceived BoT education needs. The BoT calls a special meeting or [retreat](#) to facilitate further development and learning as needed.

Agendas for BoT meetings include a consent agenda that includes regular reports from the President and the standing committees, and Trustees follow a [calendar of decision-making](#), necessary for the operation of the university. Any Trustee may request a consent agenda topic be removed from the consent agenda to seek clarification or to request discussion on that topic by the full BoT.

The BoT functions within a [committee structure](#), established in Marian University's bylaws. Committees meet outside of and prior to the established meeting of the full BoT. The Finance Committee meets monthly, the Enterprise Risk Management Committee has recently begun to meet bimonthly, and the Executive Committee meets as needed between BoT meetings. The BoT book for each meeting [available on site], containing the agenda and supporting documents, is published to the BoT portal, no later than a week before the meeting, so Trustees have adequate time to read all reports and minutes and to be fully informed in advance of the BoT meeting. The BoT portal on MyMarian contains current and historical documents and information as well as educational resources.

Narratives, financial analyses, and other documents presented for approval of purchasing the [Nielsen building](#), for the future home of the Center for Health Professions, clearly demonstrate that the BoT was already using data to make its decisions. However, in May 2014, the BoT identified a need to further develop their practice in this area. They formally established a three-year focus on improving the process of data-based decision-making, particularly the use of evidence of student learning outcomes. In October 2014 the BoT approved an [Institutional Data Dashboard](#) (IDD) that provides a five-year history of critical areas, including student learning outcomes. All BoT agendas are now [mapped to the IDD](#), leading Trustees to data points related to the topic at hand.

The BoT provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities in several ways:

- The BoT Executive Committee has taken responsibility for oversight of two major projects undertaken to ensure the sustainability of the university, the Scannell & Kurz Study—see Criterion 5.C.4—and the work following the Stamats study—see Criterion 5.D.2.
- The BoT [Enterprise Risk Management](#) (ERM) Committee completes initial review of the financial, OMB A-133 and 403(b) Plan, and audits and makes recommendations to the BoT of their acceptance.
- The BoT committees move matters forwards to the full BoT related to academic matters and policy approval that, by policy, [require BoT action](#).
- The BoT Finance Committee forwards to the full BoT financial matters that, by policy, [require BoT action](#), e.g. approval of the budget.
- The BoT approves—and refers to the Corporate Members as appropriate—all [real estate purchases](#).
- The BoT [approves](#) who may sign various financial instruments on behalf of the university.

**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.**

Students, faculty, staff, administration, and the BoT have opportunities to provide input and to shape decisions made relative to the university’s operations and sustainability, appropriate to each level. The university’s [governance](#) and administrative structures are reflected in various formal institutional documents ([Marian University Bylaws](#), [CSASM Governance Authority](#), [Curricular Levels of Review Policy](#), [University Committee Membership](#)) that provide processes and opportunities for various constituencies to provide input, make recommendations, and/or make decisions. Elements of this structure encourage less formal communication and collaboration to occur across organizational lines. Other teams/ad hoc committees are formed to address specific matters and then disbanded when their work is finished. Recent/existing examples include an [ad hoc Campus Planning Committee](#) considering office moves in light of the acquisition of the new CHP, and a [team](#) that considered alternative uses for the library.

All formal policies and procedures related to the institution’s governance are subject to the approval of the BoT and consistency with the Faculty and Staff Handbooks and Faculty, Staff, and Student Senate Bylaws, with some requiring the approval of the Corporate Member.

Structures for university-wide contribution and collaborative efforts are evidenced in [discussion boards](#), [various minutes](#), [white paper](#), and a [presentation](#) on the change from 128 to 120 credits required to graduate.

Employees from across the university are invited to attend two formal in-services each academic year, to encourage dialogue among the leadership and constituencies. The president presents “state of the university” remarks, and attendees [engage in discussion](#) about major events like the Higher Learning Commission comprehensive visit and in ongoing work to advance the university. The president employs a process that models mutual respect by offering all participants an opportunity to submit questions and make comments orally or in writing, and the president and members of the Cabinet respond directly during each inservice. Faculty and staff are also invited to [presidential debriefings](#) after each of the three BoT meetings held each year. These gatherings provide a forum for administration, faculty, and staff dialogue as information is shared and discussions follow.

In late summer 2013, growing concern arose on the part of some faculty regarding the BoT’s commitment to shared governance. Having researched the topic, President Fale, after initially consulting a professional recommended by the Association of Governing Boards, invited the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and members of the Administration to engage in conversation with the consultant. These initial [conversations](#) resulted in adding members of the BoT to the group to begin a renewed sense of trust and to create a model of shared governance at Marian University.

The resulting "Shared Governance Statement" recommendation was scheduled to be considered for approval by the BoT at their May 2014 meeting. However, Faculty Senate approved a [motion to table](#) further action on the shared governance statements at that time, based on faculty

concerns with some elements of the Statement. Faculty Senate [passed a resolution](#) of conditional acceptable principles expressed in the [Shared Governance Statement](#) through May 2016. A recent meeting of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Interim VPAA, and the President resulted in a firm commitment to continue discussion furthering a common understanding of the concept of shared governance. This process demonstrates the extent to which the institution values shared governance and long-term engagement of internal constituents in dialogue concerning implementing principles of shared governance at Marian University.

### **3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.**

Faculty is [responsible](#) for assuring the quality of academic curriculum and setting academic standards, and this right and privilege is manifest in the formal governance processes surrounding program and curriculum development, approval, and review.

The University's committee structure at both the undergraduate and graduate levels promotes faculty discussion, input, and recommendation in the aforementioned processes. School curriculum committees review curriculum, after which the [Curriculum and Educational Standards Committee](#) (CES) reviews undergraduate, and [Graduate Council](#) (GC) reviews graduate curriculum, and then Faculty Senate discusses, reviews, and recommends undergraduate curriculum for approval. Graduate curriculum is referred directly to the Chief Academic Officer; however, incorporating GC as a standing committee of the Faculty Senate is under discussion. Each governing body has specific criteria they address in [their review](#). An exemplar of approval is provided for an [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) program. The undergraduate program, as a new program, goes through full approval from the department level to the BoT. The graduate example demonstrates the level of approval for a major program change. The graduate program example did not require approval up to the BoT level, but was shared as an informational item. Guidelines for determining [substantive versus non-substantive](#) items of business are clearly delineated on [CES](#) and [GC](#) agendas.

A [Sunset Policy](#) was established by CES and approved in February 2012. New course and program proposal forms, used by both CES and Graduate Council in the curricular review process, address the sunset policy. CES and Graduate Council are currently engaged in a [joint review](#) of the policy. Sunset clauses are included in new curriculum proposals, and the CES and Graduate Council committees assess the course or program to determine whether it meets student learning outcomes as well as enrollment and revenue targets. CES currently has [programs](#) up for review under the sunset policy. To date, no program has been discontinued under this policy.

Students have several opportunities to be included in the university's administration and governance processes. In addition to their own representative body, the [Student Senate](#), student representatives participate on the majority of committees and other bodies identified in the Levels of Review, up to and including two BoT committees: Academic Affairs and Enrollment Engagement & Retention.

Marian University's governance and administrative structures are such that all constituents—BoT, administration, faculty, staff and students—are engaged and involved at appropriate levels in the governance of the university and in policy development, approval, and oversight.

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## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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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

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Marian University is maturing in its planning processes. The interim president was charged with implementing the strategic plan developed under the leadership of the former president--plan for which the entire institution did not have a sense of ownership. However, during the process of refreshing the three year rolling plan, [Cabinet members](#) engaged their teams in adding measures and goals for each year, indicating whether the item was resourced or needed new resources. Therefore, planning is systematic and integrated throughout the institution.

#### **1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.**

The President's Cabinet is responsible for articulating the institutional mission and facilitating implementation of the strategic plan, including aligning strategic objectives and fiscal resources. In September, 2014, the Cabinet's [Statement of Purpose and Guiding Principles](#) was adopted to ensure continued advancement toward Marian's vision and sustainability. Key stakeholders and constituents and guiding principles are included on the agenda for each Cabinet meeting to ensure they guide decision-making at each meeting.

Marian University's mission, vision, and [Strategic Plan](#) inform strategic planning efforts and drive resource distribution. Implementation of the Strategic Financial Plan resulted in an integrated budget development process aligning goals and objectives with available resources at the strategic, division, and department/unit levels. Reflected in the [2015-16 budget](#), the result enhanced decision-making processes and systematic planning (short-term and long-range).

Resource allocation aligned with the mission is demonstrated in the following examples, illustrating Marian University "embraces justice and compassion and transforms lives for professional service":

- Unfunded institutional [financial aid](#) is provided to the student body annually. These resources are provided as merit or grant aid in the form of tuition discounts and are designed to serve a highly first-generation and low-moderate income student body, as evidenced in annual [IPEDS Compendium Reports](#). The 2014-2015 academic year freshman-discount rate of 48.5% (a 4% increase from the prior year) assisted these students' matriculation at Marian.
- [Breadwinner Tuition Assistance policy](#) If the breadwinner in a student's family dies, the university absorbs, i.e. waives, the student's tuition and fees (after all grants have been applied) through to their graduation.
- Extensive academic support services are provided by master's-prepared specialists in writing, reading, mathematics, science, and nursing. Free tutoring (professional and peer) is also provided for specific courses of study, general study skills, and licensing/certification exams, as well as successful writing, reading, and learning in all areas of study. As illustrated in the [2014-2015 WAICU report](#), Marian meets all 13 Student Service categories

## **2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.**

The maturation of processes had led to a deliberate approach to creating a sustainable planning infrastructure, resulting in rigorous process and policy development and documentation to create linkages and accountability measures for assessment of learning. A longstanding challenge at Marian has been maintaining consistent and stable policies through multiple leadership changes. Presently, a collaborative, campus-wide project is underway to document policies, as well as written and unwritten procedures. Faculty, staff, and administration are taking an active role in transitioning to a [policy template](#), identifying who is impacted by a given [policy](#) and who is responsible for policy implementation. Subsequently, position descriptions will be linked to the policies and procedures relative to the area of accountability or impact.

Evidence of Marian's ability to assess and implement a best practices approach, which had significant impact on length of time to degree completion, and could potentially have had an adverse effect on planning and budgeting, focused on the reduction in minimum credits required for graduation. In October 2012, the BoT charged leadership with determining the [financial impact](#) of reducing the number of credits to graduation from 128 to 120. As a result, a model was developed to forecast the financial outcomes based on historic and predicted enrollment and persistence scenarios. Deans and key stakeholders had the opportunity to weigh in on both methodology and outcomes. As a result, the institution has moved to a 120 credit minimum requirement for graduation, reducing students' length of time and cost to completion, effective for the 2015-16 academic year,

With the support of HLC's Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning, Marian has implemented an institutional assessment system designed to ensure availability and access to quality data on student learning outcomes. The system triangulates evidence from embedded assessment, standard assessments, and internal or external survey data ([NSSE](#), [SSI](#), [ASPS](#)). A formal plan to evaluate and sustain this system was created and is directly linked to strategic planning (see Criterion 4.B).

Strategic investment in training (via the HLC Academy) and staffing (Director of Assurance for Learning and support staff), as well as institutional commitment, have resulted in adoption (at the undergraduate level) of five common student learning outcomes assessed throughout the undergraduate degree program. Enhancements to academic programs, including curricular changes in both the School of Nursing and Health Professions, as well as the Marian School of Business, link assessment data and learning with planning and budgeting processes via intentional review and approval.

- Evidence in the literature and feedback from the Marian University Advisory Board, [illustrated](#) that the Nursing curriculum had not kept pace with the current practice environment in which Marian Nursing graduates work. With the assistance of a curriculum consultant and review of resulting recommendations, faculty rebuilt the curriculum to better reflect current nursing practice, transforming it to a lifespan-based curriculum. Realignment of resources and formal approval by internal bodies occurred in 2012. The foregoing information demonstrates Marian's ability to create linkages to identify performance gaps and opportunities to improve learning outcomes.
- During 2011–12, a [review](#) of the MS Organizational Leadership & Quality program (MSOLQ) was conducted. The Self-Study utilized the recently-approved Marian University Program Review Process Guidelines and linked data gathered from key constituents, including employers, faculty, and alumni to assess strengths of the program, areas for improvement, and desired skills and outcomes of graduates.

Recommendations from the review identified several key areas of opportunity for improvement, including restructuring the program, online delivery, modification of program name, and increased marketing. Based on this evidence, a formal proposal was developed which included market and financial assessments in addition to traditional curricular program modification. The [MSOL proposal](#) was endorsed and approved by appropriate bodies, including Graduate Council, CES, and Cabinet, and in fall 2015, an enhanced, online and market responsive MS in Organizational Leadership was launched.

Processes of planning, budgeting, assessing and evaluating both organizational and student learning are becoming institutionalized at Marian University.

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

Although Marian has used different approaches to the planning process over the past 10 years, all processes have encompassed the institution as a whole and have considered the perspectives of internal and external constituents. The university planning process relies on the active participation of administrators, faculty, and staff to collaborate, plan, and fulfill institutional strategic goals and objectives. Increased attention to creating a culture of shared responsibility and accountability in planning and assessing both spending and revenue generation is evidenced below.

- Marian University's recent [vision and mission](#) (see 1.A.1) revision resulted from extensive internal constituency input. These documents inform all strategic planning efforts and drive resource distribution.
- A [Sustainable Budget Task Force](#) (SBTF) was charged with identifying budget savings and/or revenue generation opportunities. This [resulted](#) in actionable plans with clear goals, objectives, and deployment timelines, designed to result in short-term and long-term benefits to the institution. Subsequent university-wide engagement allowed employees to recommend similar suggestions to improve overall institutional effectiveness and finances. Work is underway to implement ideas submitted to the SBTF.
- University-wide focus on continuous improvement includes systematic review of academic programs and non-academic units/programs, using [CAS self-assessment evaluation tools](#).

Planning frequently considers the perspectives of external constituents, including donors, community leaders, prospective students, and others, such as accreditors, auditors, and consultants.

- The [Capital Campaign Feasibility study](#), conducted by higher education fundraising firm McDonald Schaefer, included in depth interviews with local and regional business and industry leaders as well as prospective donors.
- As a leader in healthcare education, Marian responded to community needs after being approached by Mercy Hospital, Oshkosh, WI, to discuss sponsorship of the hospital's radiologic technology (RT) program. Previously, an affiliation agreement with the Mercy RT program provided five clinical placements reserved for Marian students annually. The two institutions collaborated to work through legal, financial, and accreditation issues, and on July 1, 2012, Marian University [officially assumed sponsorship](#) of the RT program. This created one of the first four-year RT programs in the state of Wisconsin. The RT program remains within Mercy Hospital in Oshkosh, and the two institutions continue to [collaborate](#) to ensure both quality healthcare and [quality education](#) are accessible in the communities served.

**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.**

As a result of the historic tuition dependency and the corresponding necessity this creates, Marian has become adept in its ability to understand current capacity, including limitations, and to anticipate and adjust for potential external impacts. [Budget assumptions](#) are made with input from key constituencies and with thoughtful consideration of current enrollment and retention trends, demographic data and new student projections, tuition/pricing variables, discount requirements, and necessary staffing expenditures. The Office of Business and Finance oversees Marian's budget, taking into account multiple variables and scenarios when creating [projected](#) financial forecasts and annual budgets.

Marian has demonstrated the ability to mitigate fluctuations resulting from declines in enrollment as well as to make course corrections and adjustments when unexpected fluctuations occur.

During the international economic downturn in 2008-09, Marian responded by instituting cost cutting measures and [workforce reductions](#) and responded [similarly](#) to an anticipated downturn in enrollment for 2015–16.

To further augment Marian’s resource base, an aggressive institutional advancement agenda is underway as evidenced by strategic investment in human resources and operating capital. A three-year [Strategic Advancement Plan](#) was approved by the BoT in 2014, establishing key fundraising priorities and requirements necessary to broaden the university’s revenue base. The plan calls for the Office of Advancement to be fully staffed by the end of fiscal year 2016, as significant incremental contributions are expected from this department, and a capital campaign will publicly launch in Fall 2016.

Auxiliary income increases via lease of property also demonstrate strategic and creative planning. On October 29, 2014, the university completed the purchase of an office building in downtown Fond du Lac, WI. This Center for Health Professions (CHP) will be the future home of the School of Nursing and Health Professions (SNHP). The building was purchased with tax-exempt financing and the financial model was structured to be [cost neutral](#) to the university. The university will occupy one of the building’s three floors. The building's seller and a unit of a local hospital will occupy the other floors as tenants. The rental income was structured to cover the debt service and the building’s operating costs. In fact, as projected for fiscal year 2015-16 budget purposes, the tenant-related revenues will not only cover all costs but provide a profit to the university.

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

To guide data-based decision-making that anticipates potential impacts, including changes in market demand, demographic shifts, changes in state and federal financial aid funding, and shifts in public perception regarding the value of private higher education, Marian uses a variety of institutional data ([MAG](#), [IPEDS](#)) as well as external benchmarking [reports](#) and [resources](#). For example, demographic declines in the number of projected graduating high school seniors and changes in the economic climate in Wisconsin, have led to initiatives focused on:

- increasing online non-traditional and graduate program enrollments
- creating partnerships designed to serve transfer students
- improving marketability of Marian’s program portfolio
- expanding athletic opportunities, including increased varsity reserve options as well as additional sports
- enhancing professional development offerings

In 2011 the BoT endorsed a comprehensive adult and graduate programs [market research study](#) to address declining enrollment, increasing competition, and organizational performance. Marian partnered with higher education consultants CREDO (formerly Performa) to explore ideal programmatic offerings and preferred delivery options. Results of this study led to the restructuring of adult and graduate areas, including centralizing and streamlining administrative (recruitment, admission, and direct marketing) and academic (programs and delivery, advising,

and center management) functions. Initial implementation of the latter was ineffective, and after subsequent deliberation, an organizational structure resulting in increased accountability and enhanced academic integrity returned responsibility for academic programs to the deans. New student enrollment in these programs is being realized. Additional recommendations from CREDO follow:

- increase online, hybrid, or blended programs in nursing, business and/or education to build upon current strengths and align with areas of market demand. Upon further consideration and financial assessment, Marian has expanded on-ground [adult completion programs](#) and [graduate](#) programs to online delivery modalities.
- [invest](#) in infrastructure and support services and, upon implementation, reintroduce Marian to the marketplace via an aggressive, targeted marketing campaign. Marian has enhanced staffing, training, and development of online programming and developed targeted marketing messages within resource constraints.

Over the last several years, Marian University has strategically invested in expanding athletic opportunities, as evidenced in [growth](#) of the athletic department staff, athletic facilities, and sports offerings. These initiatives are central to maintaining enrollment, recognizing retention rates among this population are much higher than non-athletes, and student athletes also diversify the student body and expand market reach.

To meet the professional development requirements of teachers, Marian's School of Education is addressing emerging needs in technology through the Institute for Professional Development (IPD). Demographic changes in the adult/graduate market occurred in 2011, due to Wisconsin Act 10 legislation that resulted in teachers no longer being able to negotiate pay raises by earning a master's degree. As a result, the School of Education created the IPD. The IPD works with area school districts to provide professional development courses, in-service activities, workshops, and conferences customized for their specific needs. The School of Education [continues](#) to review, refine, and evaluate current programs and processes in [response](#) to emerging Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) accreditation and DPI requirements.

Regarding Marian's ability to embrace technology and use it effectively in teaching and learning, the department of Academic Technology (AT) addresses emerging areas in technology and increases faculty/staff performance. This department [supports](#) lifelong learning, student success, and effective teaching. Additionally, to establish an excellent team of proficient and confident online instructors, AT maintains a [list](#) of all online instructors they certify.

Marian strives to meet technology-based change by adopting technology for enhancing student learning, student and faculty engagement, staff empowerment, and university communications. Recent examples include migration to Office 365, including enhanced licensing agreements and inclusion of Skype for Business.

Marian is [committed](#) to the renewed interest of international students coming to Marian and Marian students studying abroad, following the downturn in these areas immediately after 9/11. Currently, Marian enrolls 39 international undergraduate and graduate students from 13 countries: Australia, Canada, Colombia, Curacao, France, Haiti, India, Latvia, Nigeria,

Philippines, Romania, Sweden, and Thailand. A working arrangement with the Thailand Ministry of Education Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology has been created to enroll graduate students in the MAE program. Marian students are encouraged to study abroad through the Study Abroad Office (SAO). The SAO has developed partnerships with the following institutions abroad and third-party study abroad providers: International Studies Abroad, St. Mary's University-Twickenham, School for International Training, School for Field Studies, Loyola University Chicago–John Felice Rome Center.

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- VPEM\_Breadwinner Tuition Assistance Policy
- VPEM\_Comprehensive Adult and Graduate Market Research
- VPEM\_International Student Statistics
- VPEM\_MSOL marketing plan 04-15
- VPSE\_Student Engagement Strategic Plan

## 5.D - Core Component 5.D

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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

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#### 1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

Marian University's system for developing, documenting, and learning from evidence of institutional performance is based on principles of continuous quality improvement. Consistent with Lane, Kehr, and Richardson's (2008) key concepts for assessing productivity in higher education, *value creation* is demonstrated through evidence that structures, policies, and processes assure the quality of learning required to achieve the mission, based on the standards of higher education. *Production* is demonstrated through evidence that structures, policies and procedures improve student learning experiences and outcomes at all levels, in all settings; attain fiscal stability and growth necessary to achieve the mission; and build and sustain the relationships essential to leading and serving the community.

Evidence of performance is gathered through an institutional self-study review, and evaluation process, grounded in the standards of practice in higher education, using the following systems:

- The [Institutional Assessment System](#), which triangulates direct and indirect evidence of student learning outcomes in all academic programs (see Criterion 4.B)
- [Annual Program Analysis of Evidence](#), formerly the Annual Report (see Criteria 4.A and 4.B)
- [Annual Reports](#) of operational units and non-academic units (others available on site) (see Criterion 5.C.2)
- [Annual Audit](#) (see Criterion 5.A)
- [Academic Program Review](#)
- [The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education \(CAS\) Self-Study for Program Evaluation](#) (as of 2014-15 academic year)
- [The Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System](#) (IPEDS)
- [The National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity](#) (aka the Delaware Study)
- [The National Survey of Student Engagement](#), the [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) and the [Adult Student Priority Survey](#)
- Discipline specific accreditation self study reports (available on site)
- Board Committee meeting materials and minutes (available on site)

Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness jointly manage evidence generated by these systems and document evidence in standard form in the [Institutional Data Dashboard](#), and [Marian-at-a-Glance](#). The [Office of Institutional Research](#) and the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#) provide reports in response to recommended actions, such as an inquiry into a specific practice or challenge.

## **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.**

Marian uses evidence of operational performance to assess and evaluate institutional effectiveness relative to the mission, core values, federal and state requirements, and the Higher Learning Commission's criteria for institutional quality in higher education. Additionally, intentional focus and priority centers on the consistent practice of evidence-based learning and decision-making, both of which are grounded in data and analytics, versus instinct and intuition. Recently, it resulted in the bold decision to [rectify accounting](#) for allowances for bad debt (student receivables) by writing-off debt that had been carried on the balance sheet, producing a net loss of \$2.5 million the 2014–15 fiscal year. This decision underscores Marian's commitment to sustainability and demonstrates the principles and practices of continuous improvement that represent a learning organization.

Organizational and best practice-based learning examples and outcomes are provided to demonstrate Marian's awareness of the benefits of internal research, data, and assessments as well as appreciation and need for insight of external assessment and research, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to institutional learning.

Over the last decade, Marian University has engaged in several initiatives to strategically improve internal organizational processes and planning efforts.

- Recognizing the importance of leading by example in an increasingly challenging higher education landscape, the President's Cabinet began to deploy lean six sigma techniques to enhance team performance. As the executive leadership team, the Cabinet is responsible for articulating the mission, implementing the strategic plan by aligning objectives and resources, and ensuring advancement toward the vision and long-term sustainability of Marian University. In 2013, the Cabinet began a [Six Sigma Continuous Improvement Process](#), designed to enhance overall team effectiveness and operating performance. This ongoing process and the [resulting](#) Plus/Delta theme outcomes and data/analytics have informed and aided the development of the [Cabinet's Statement of Purpose and Guiding Principles](#). Corroborating summary statements and outcomes data have identified [opportunities for team improvements](#) in key areas of communication, accountability, and use of data/analytics, all of which enhance overall Cabinet performance.
- The Program Review process at Marian provides valuable insight regarding [Marian's evolution](#) as a learning organization, as it has, in fact, had a rather tumultuous history. From 2002 through 2009, several iterations of program process review were proposed and approved by Faculty Senate but never implemented. Then, another revised iteration

would move forward for approval and implementation process, causing inconsistencies and redirection. Following critical assessment, the development of a robust program review process now allows for review and input at multiple levels, including the School Dean, Program Review Subcommittee of Curriculum and Educational Standards Committee (CES) or Graduate Council (GC), Chief Academic Officer, Cabinet, and Board of Trustees, as appropriate (also addressed in Criterion 3.A.1) The enhanced Program Review process helps insure [continuous improvement](#) from the quality, curricular, financial, and assessment points of view. Program reviews scheduled for the 2014-15 academic year were interrupted by the program mix study and restructuring process that took place during that academic year; however, the [schedule](#) will resume this academic year, 2015-16.

- In 2012, the Assessment Academy Team reviewed evidence of the performance of the Institutional Assessment System, according to goals set in the [Assessment Academy Story Board 2012](#). The goal was to successfully complete the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy, in which the university had participated since 2008. Results of the review led the then Executive Vice President to propose an [HLC Quality Initiative](#) to a) establish a governance structure for the assurance of learning at Marian University and b) establish a Center for Instructional and Organizational Development (CIOD) to build and sustain capacity to use evidence of student learning to drive instructional practice and professional development to support learning. The Faculty Senate approved a suspension of bylaws to support a two year pilot of the CIOD. First established in 2003, the Committee on Student Learning is projected to become a standing committee within Faculty Senate with responsibility for governing the institutional self-study and review processes, including the assessment of student learning outcomes.

Marian University has a rich history of implementing best-practices and utilizing industry experts to assist in conducting research and assessment, and providing recommendations based on industry learning.

- Academic Marketability and Admission/Financial Aid Studies  
In 2013–14, after two years of financial deficits, Interim President Fale asked the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to consider a new course of action for the university to ensure its long-term sustainability, and to set up the next administration for success. The Executive Committee recommended the hiring of outside consultants to conduct research, provide recommendations, and assist in the development of implementation plans.
  - Stamats Communication, Inc., higher education consultants, conducted the academic marketability study, which assessed both demand and quality characteristics of thirty academic programs in addition to analyzing competitor programs. Upon [completion](#) of the study, multiple programs were either eliminated, reduced, or consolidated, in addition to the reduction of 4.5 faculty positions. Pending 2015-16 final financial results, surplus funds are to be allocated to a group of programs determined to be “[signature](#)” in nature, i.e., they demonstrate quality and marketability and set Marian apart, to some extent, from its competitors.

- Scannell & Kurz (S&K), higher education consultants, specializing in enrollment management and retention, conducted a comprehensive review and analysis of Marian University's current practices in financial aid administration, admissions and marketing. The resulting [study](#) provided a detailed report assessing operations, strategies, and procedures of the Offices of Admission and Financial Aid. This resulted in the utilization of a new predictive model for forecasting enrollment and budgeting net tuition revenues.
- In December 2012, CREDO higher education consultants completed an [assessment](#) of Marian's student services areas and departments. Research, including data collection and analysis, resulted in recommendations and action plans designed to enhance and improve student retention, student services, and overall department effectiveness. Interviews and focus groups were conducted and upon analysis, a CREDO team provided an in-depth presentation on site to the Marian University Cabinet and Student Affairs teams. Recommendations included organizational realignment to ensure Student Affairs has its own administrative area, separating it from Academic Affairs. As a result, the Division of Student Engagement was [established](#).

Since fall 2014, areas within Student Engagement have been [performing](#) self-evaluations. Every area is responsible for developing an annual assessment plan, based upon core functions of the unit. All goals are aligned to a strategic plan theme and at least one Student Learning Outcome (SLO). Additionally, each area conducts a [Council for the Advancement of Standards \(CAS\) Self-Assessment](#), using the Council's guidelines review, on a three year cycle.

As evidenced in the argument, Marian University has and continues to demonstrate an ability to create, document, and analyze internal evidence, which is then applied to improve results, all of which signify continuous improvement and applied learning.

## Sources

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- 1695 20151019 Quality Initiative - Panel Analysis Report
- PRES\_Change in Organization Chart 2012-2013
- PRES\_HLC Advise of Student Receivables
- PRES\_Institutional Data Dashboard
- PRES\_Plus Delta CIP Cabinet Exercise
- PRES\_Plus Delta CIP Results 8-15 Final
- PRES\_Plus Delta CIP Results 8-15 Final (page number 4)
- PRES\_President's Cabinet Purpose Guiding Principles
- VPAA\_2013 Delaware Study Presentation
- VPAA\_Academic Program Review Process
- VPAA\_Adult Student Priorities Survey Analysis S14
- VPAA\_Annual Program Analysis
- VPAA\_Assessment Academy Storyboard 2012
- VPAA\_Assurance for Learning Report to ONE Marian 2015
- VPAA\_CAS Report Template Forms
- VPAA\_Council for the Advancement of Standards - Development Launch\_2014

- VPAA\_History of Program Review
- VPAA\_Institutional Assessment System
- VPAA\_IPEDS Compendium Complete 2014-2015
- VPAA\_IR Report - ELumen Data Collection Trends Analysis 2008-2014
- VPAA\_Marian at a Glance
- VPAA\_NSSE 2015 Benchmarks and High Impact Practices
- VPAA\_Program Review Recommendations and Updates
- VPAA\_Program Review Schedule
- VPAA\_Signature Program Criteria Worksheet
- VPAA\_Stamats-ProgramConsolidReducElimProposal BOT Exec 2015 05 06
- VPAA\_Student Satisfaction Inventory Analysis S14
- VPBF\_2015-16 Budget
- VPBF\_2015-16 Budget (page number 7)
- VPBF\_2014-15 Financial Audit
- VPEM\_EM Admission and Financial Aid Ops Audit and Study
- VPSE\_CASE Office and LWCenter -Annual Report\_2013-14
- VPSE\_Credo Student Success ACE
- VPSE\_OSE Annual Report

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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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

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Marian University has sufficient resources, institutional structures, and processes necessary to fulfill its mission. Marian has demonstrated continuous improvement in teaching and learning processes, academic programs, and support services. The university maintains an effective infrastructure of people, facilities, and technology.

While the university is managing with current resources, institutional structures, and processes, Marian is also addressing the following challenges to strengthen its future:

- Continuing the ongoing improvements in systematic and integrated strategic planning, based on current evidence with the arrival of the new university president.
- Enhancing the budgeting process to improve forecasting and multi-year budget planning to ensure financial sustainability.
- Improving processes to address maintenance of existing infrastructure and high-priority deferred maintenance.
- Anticipating major shifts in the enrollment demographics and responding appropriately through strategic planning and resource allocation.
- Developing a strategic technology plan to enhance the infrastructure to improve data management for effective analysis, decision-making, and workflow.
- Enhancing allocation of resources to support continuing development of an active, effective, vibrant graduate culture.
- Clarifying and strengthening shared governance.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*