3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

Courses and Programs Remain Relevant, Current, and Appropriate to the Degree or Certificate Awarded.

Specialized Accreditation Review
Some 127 university degree-granting programs hold discipline-specific or professional accreditation. These programs are subject to the quality standards of the external accrediting agency, and are reviewed regularly through processes established by each accreditor to ensure continued compliance with quality standards. The Provost reports annually to the Board of Governors (BOG) Academic Affairs on the accreditation of status of each program.

As of January 2017, 126 of 127 accredited degree programs are in good accreditation standing. The Doctor of Medicine program (School of Medicine) is presently working to correct deficiencies cited in its 2015 accreditation review, including a lack of student diversity. The accrediting Liaison Committee for Medical Education will conduct a follow-up visit in April 2017 to evaluate progress on a comprehensive action plan. As presented in Section 1.C., strategic investment by the President to increase diversity in the entering School of Medicine class yielded an increase of nearly ten-fold in URM matriculates in just one year.

Institutional Program Review
Programs that do not hold professional or discipline-specific accreditation undergo a formal Academic Program Review (APR) on a seven-year cycle; APR is addressed in Section 4.A.

Academic Unit Program Review

Each academic unit has a committee responsible for ongoing and periodic curriculum assessment and for establishing criteria for unit review of new program and course proposals. Changes are generally made as a result of formal and informal assessment of student learning and in response to the changing academic and wider environments. These changes are reviewed by a school/college-level committee, in the Office of the Provost, and are ultimately approved by the

BOG. The Office of the Provost provides schools and colleges with a low productivity report of programs that have had very few graduates over a period of years. While closure is not mandatory, the program in question must consider the viability of the program and, working with the appropriate dean, determine its future. Finally, the periodic program review requests information about courses that have not been taught in the recent past. They are considered by the unit for possible renewal or removal depending on the needs of students in the program and changes in expertise among faculty members as a result of new hiring and departures.

Differentiated Goals

Faculty have developed goals (learning outcomes and plans for assessing their success) for most courses (Section 3.C.). Statements of goals and desired outcomes appear on the syllabus for courses. The WSU Assessment website publishes programs' learning outcomes annually. Learning goals for each program are differentiated by level (e.g., undergraduate vs. graduate) as well as by discipline.

Consistent Quality and Goals Across Delivery Modes and Locations

Traditional, hybrid and online courses are designed, approved, and delivered according to standards that ensure consistent quality by providing guidelines and setting minimum responsibilities for development and delivery of online courses and programs. The Office for Teaching and Learning also offers an annual Institute for Hybrid and Online Learning, an immersive experience for instructors launching such courses. Schools and colleges provide support for the development of courses via educational development grants. Finally, the Online Instruction Task Force in 2012 established guidelines as institutional standards of best practices to inform and guide online course instruction campus-wide.

The university operates five extension centers and offers full and partial online programs. All programs and courses are proposed, reviewed, offered, and assessed by faculty and administration using the same policies and procedures, regardless of delivery mode or location. As the May 2015 HLC Multi-Location Visit Reviewer Analysis noted, *"Faculty at the extension sites are often full-time faculty with teaching loads assigned to (extension) locations; are adjuncts with reporting lines to main campus; attend faculty meetings and are involved in discussions."*

 Also consistent across modes and locations are admissions standards, academic regulations, and the credit hour policy as encoded by CA Statute 2.43.04 (Credit Hour Definition) and by UP 14-1 (Policy on Course Schedule Types, Credit Hours and Delivery Modes) to ensures an equal amount of work and effort are required in courses regardless of delivery mode or location. A list of frequently asked questions makes clear that the standards are the same whatever the mode of delivery or location.

As the May 2015 HLC Multi-Location Visit Reviewer Analysis further noted:

"All curricular and instructional oversight is done by the main campus academic units with the VP for Extension Services providing logistical support at the two mentioned locations. The same

course(s) or program(s) (learning objectives, assessment tools, decision-making) is/are offered on the main campus and at the locations. Academic units and the full-time main campus faculty approve and oversee all curricular development, expectations, and evaluation. Once a school approves a course or set of courses, the VP for Extension Services operationalizes the program along with the Director of Extension Centers/Programs and the staff at the Schoolcraft and Macomb locations."

Sources

- 14-1 Policy on Course Schedule Types, Credit Hours and Delivery Modes
- C4.40 WSU Assessment website 20160626
- COE Bylaws 2012 go to pg 3
- COE Bylaws 2012 go to pg 3 (page number 3)
- Examples of learning outcomes differentiated by degree level 20161215
- Extension Centers
- Guidelines and Standards of Practice for Online Programs
- HLC - MultiLocation Visit - Reviewer Analysis - 2015_05_08
- Institute for Hybrid and Online Learning
- Low Productivity by College Updated 29FEB2016
- Online Instruction Task Force Final Report and Recommendations - 2012
- Online Programs
- Online Programs
- Online Teaching Institute - Summer 2015
- Quality Standards for Online Instruction
- School of Med LCME Action Plan
- Status Report on Accreditation 2016
- Status Report on Accreditation 2016 (page number 4)
- Statute 2.43.04 Credit Hour Definition
- syllabus-guidelines