

# **Assurance Argument Summary**

## **Andrews University - MI**

2/10/2017

## 1 - Mission

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

1.A - The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1.B - The mission is articulated publicly.

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

1.D - The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

### 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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##### Strengths:

- Infusion of mission throughout the institution and its publications, with appropriate application to different areas and disciplines
- Intentionality in global reach that conforms to institutional mission
- Deep commitment to service to the community at individual, department and institutional level

##### Future Considerations:

- Deepening the commitment to diversity within the University structure, as for example by appointment of a senior administrator as the chief diversity officer
- Continued awareness of diversity at all levels of the University in hiring as positions become available, including intentionality in mentoring minorities for potential positions
- Development of a more structured approach to service engagement in the community (locally, nationally and internationally) to maximize institutional impact

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 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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##### Strengths:

- Development of a Board Policies Manual which clarifies governance roles and ethical board behavior
- Formalizing institutional compliance expectations through a compliance committee with annual report to the Board
- Creation of the Faculty Senate with clarity of governance identified through a shared governance document
- Online module training for FERPA and Title IX

##### Future Considerations:

- Embedding FERPA, and Title IX training into institutional operational cycle
  - Embedding integrity policy with more student ownership into academic operations
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### **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 - The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

3.B - 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.

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

3.D - The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

#### **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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##### Strengths:

- High Impact Practices: Undergraduate Research, Study Tours
- Introduction of the M.I.R.R.O.R program to deepen engagement with diversity
- Depth and stability of faculty
- Increase of focused faculty development through the Faculty Institute; and the Effective Teaching and Learning Council
- Increased infrastructure to support online and off-campus learning, including Digital Commons and the establishment of the School of Distance Education & International Partnerships
- Strong connection between student engagement with campus mission and priorities, through academic and co-curricular programming
- Health & Wellness initiative
- A strong process for providing support to struggling students.

##### Future Considerations:

- Capitalize on Andrews' diversity in students' learning experience.
- Continue to develop a strong first-year experience that integrates the curriculum and the co-curriculum.
- Continue to develop and integrate the Andrews University Unified Framework of Outcomes in ACE and across all levels of Andrews' programs.
- Develop a system of faculty peer review.

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

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

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

### 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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#### Strengths

- A well-developed process for program review.
- A strong process for approval of new courses and programs.
- Many programs with specialized accreditation.
- Annual assessment retreats have been a successful means of engaging faculty in routine program assessment.
- Emerging models of good practice in connecting assessment to academic decision-making
- Andrews' Explore program appears to be a successful initiative for attracting and retaining undecided students.

#### Future Considerations

- Ensure that all programs complete a periodic program review.
  - Continue to provide training sessions to strengthen faculty participation in assessment.
  - Develop a reporting tool in Learning Hub for aggregation of rubric scores.
  - Consider how to better engage faculty in using results from the National Survey of Student Engagement.
  - Develop more efficient process for obtaining completion rates of graduate students
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## **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 - The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

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

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

5.D - The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

### **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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#### Strengths:

- Financial planning and Strategic planning connected
- Organizational changes to support decision-making: University Strategy and Policy Committee, and Faculty Senate
- Success of Griggs University merger resulting in increased professionalism in online and distance education
- Unity of internal governance groups around institutional mission (students, faculty, administration, Board)
- Successful follow-through and positive impact of critical strategic decisions (e.g. founding of School of Health Professions and School of Distance Education & International Partnerships; Explore Andrews Initiative; New programs such as MS Speech-Language Pathology)
- Significant decisions to change direction due to assessment evidence (Visual Art Communication & Design department, nursing scholarships)
- Wide engagement in planning processes
- Growth of systems to increase cross-departmental decisions (Institutional Operations Council and Academic Operations Council)

#### Future Considerations:

- Continued need to adjust budgets to align with financial goals
- Expansion of capacity of ITS to meet best-practice needs
- Development of a Staff Council to broaden staff engagement in decisions (parallel to Faculty Senate)

- Development of greater capacity to shift flexibly with demographic shifts through such tools as BKD

### Federal Compliance Filing Summary Expectations

1. Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition	The institution has calendar and term lengths within the range of good practice in higher education. Credit allocations and outcomes are appropriate based on review of the credit hour worksheet, course descriptions, the course schedule, sampling, policy on credit hours and total credit hour generation.
2. Institutional Records of Student Complaints	The institution has documented a process for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints, as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.
3. Publication of Transfer Policies	The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies should contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.
4. Practices for Verification of Student Identity	The institution verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided through distance or correspondence education. The institution appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students, and the method of verification makes reasonable efforts to protect students' privacy.
5. Title IV Program Responsibilities	The institution has met requirements in the following areas: General program requirements; Financial responsibility requirements; Default rates; Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures; Student Right to Know/Equity in Athletics; Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies; Contractual relationships; Consortial relationships
6. Required Information for Students and the Public	The institution publishes accurate, timely and appropriate information on institutional programs, fees, policies and related required information. The institution provides this required information in the course catalog and student handbook and on its website.
7. Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information	The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with HLC and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.
8. Review of Student Outcome Data	The student outcome data the institution collects is appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs the institution offers and the students it serves.
9. Publication of Student Outcome Data	The institution makes student outcome data available and easily accessible to the public. The institution discloses student outcome data that address the broad variety of its programs.
10. Standing With State and Other Accrediting Agencies	The institution discloses accurately to the public and HLC its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditors and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.
11. Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third-party comments. The HLC review team will evaluate any comments received and complete any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments.
12. Competency-Based Programs Including Direct Assessment Programs / Faculty-Student Engagement	Students and faculty in any direct assessment or competency-based programs offered by the institution are expected to have regular and substantive interactions: the faculty and students communicate on some regular basis that is at least equivalent to contact in a traditional classroom, and that in the tasks mastered to assure competency, faculty and students interact about critical thinking, analytical skills, and written and oral communication abilities, as well as about core ideas, important theories, current knowledge, etc. (The institution has explained the credit hour equivalencies for these programs in the credit hour sections of the Federal Compliance Filing.)