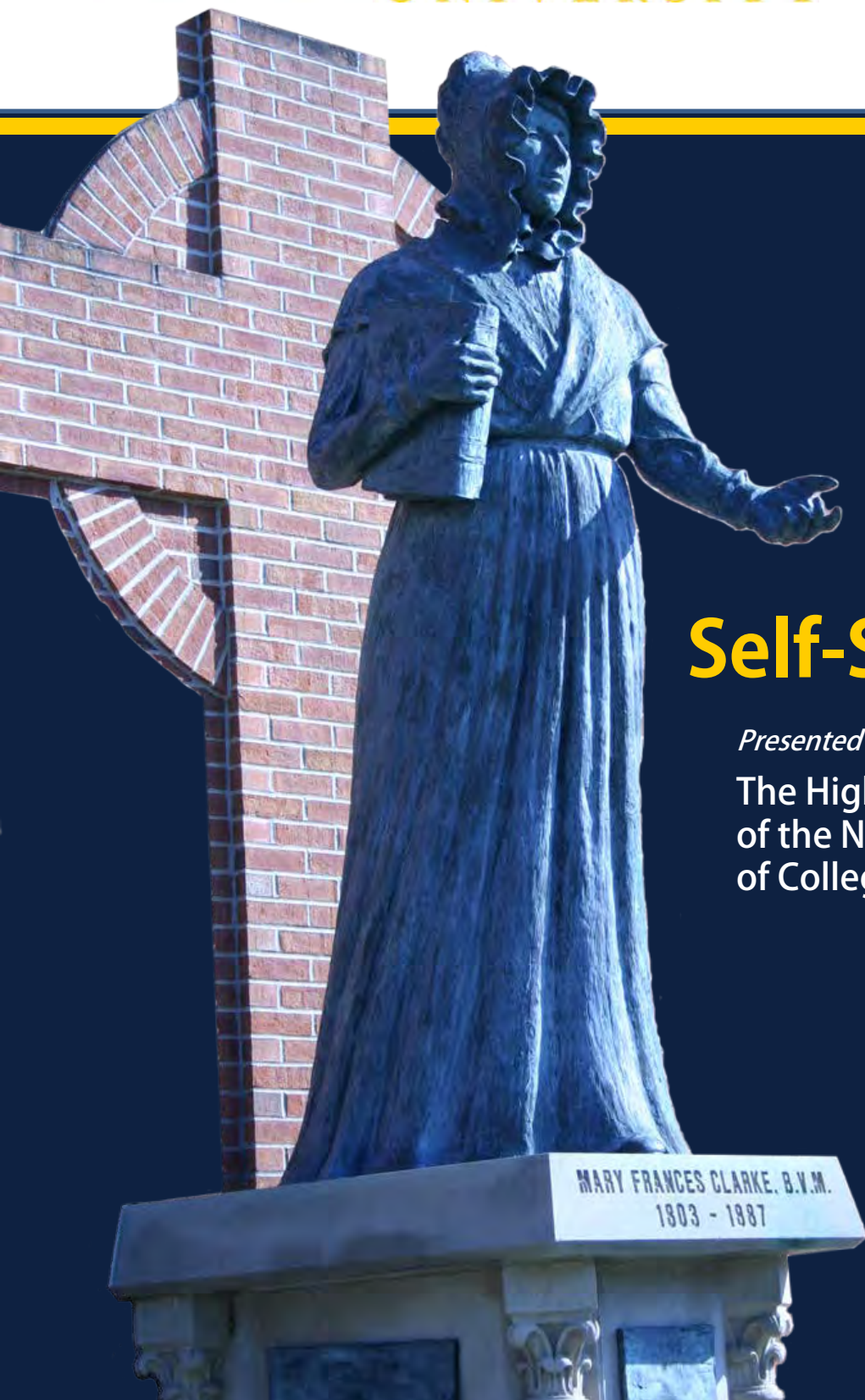# Clarke

UNIVERSITY

Self-Study Report

Presented to

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

MARY FRANCES CLARKE, B.V.M.
1803 - 1987

2013

Clarke University Self-Study Report
Table of Contents

Dear HLC Visiting Team:

On behalf of the Clarke University community, it is my privilege to present to you the Clarke University Higher Learning Commission Self-Study Report in anticipation of your upcoming visit in November.

This report represents two years of intense study and preparation by the Clarke University community. During that time, we have endeavored to examine all aspects of our operations through the lens of the Higher Learning Commission Criteria for Accreditation. We believe this report presents an accurate and comprehensive depiction of our institution's fulfillment of those criteria.

Clarke University takes its commitment to institutional peer review with its expectation of ongoing reflection and improvement very seriously. Since the last team visit, we have taken significant steps to enhance our campus, improve the educational experience we offer students, strengthen our financial health, and increase our capacity for assessment and planning. The current self-study process has provided the campus community with new insights about our institutional strengths and areas for future improvement.

The campus community and I look forward to welcoming you to Clarke University.

Sincerely,

Joanne M. Burrows, SC, PhD
President

The History of Clarke University

Since its establishment in 1843, Clarke University (formerly Clarke College) has maintained a consistent and impressive tradition of excellence in education rooted in the words and actions of its foundress, Mary Frances Clarke, an Irish woman for whom the institution is named. Also the foundress of a congregation of religious women, the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVMs), Clarke came to the United States with her small community in 1833 and to the Mississippi River town of Dubuque, Iowa, in 1843, when it was pioneer territory.

The earliest antecedent institution of Clarke University, St. Mary's Female Academy, was established in 1843 by BVM sisters three years before Iowa became a state. After occupying several locations in its early years, the school was renamed Mount St. Joseph Academy, and in 1881, it moved permanently to its present location. In 1901, the academy became Mount St. Joseph College, a liberal arts institution, and in 1910 it was chartered by the State of Iowa. First accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1918, the institution was named Clarke College in 1928. In August, 2010, it became Clarke University—a new status reflected in a fresh logo that interweaves several essential characteristics of the University.

Academic excellence has persisted as a goal in a variety of new programs and degrees that have been developed over the years. Graduate studies were added in 1964, and evening programs for nontraditional students began in 1968. In 1979, the college became a coeducational institution, admitting both women and men in full-time undergraduate programs.

On May 17, 1984, a devastating fire destroyed four historic buildings original to the campus. Undaunted, students hung a banner the next day proclaiming "Clarke Lives!" This spirit sustained the college community through a period of vigorous rebuilding under the leadership of President Catherine Dunn, BVM, PhD. In October 1986, a dedication was held for a new library, music performance hall, chapel, bookstore, administrative offices, and central atrium, all of which now constitute the core of the campus.

In the years after the fire, facilities were added or enhanced to accommodate a growing and diverse student population. A recreation and sports complex was built in 1994; the Catherine Dunn Apartments, which provided additional student housing, were constructed in 1998; and a student activity center was added in 2000. In 2012, the Lingen Technology Commons, housed in the lower level of the Nicholas J. Schrup Library, helped expand the University's learning spaces and technological resources. The most recent addition to the campus physical plant, the Center for Science Inquiry (CSI), is a
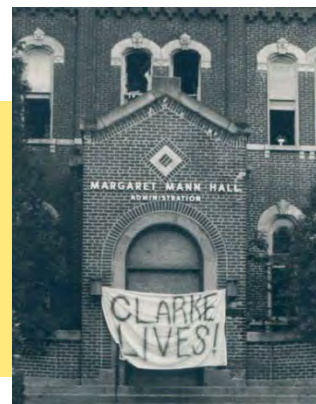
Let us ... keep our schools progressive with the time in which we live....

Mary Frances Clarke 1884

state-of-the-art science facility opened to students in August 2013. The building complies with the University's green initiatives and provides flexible spaces to support collaborative, interactive, and activity-based learning.

In keeping with its mission to promote global awareness and social responsibility, and in response to Mary Frances Clarke's injunction to "keep . . . progressive with the times in which we live," the University has recently initiated programming leading to a master's degree in organizational leadership, and plans are underway for a master's program in social work. In fall 2014, a new undergraduate major in food science will be offered. These exciting educational opportunities join a host of curricular and co-curricular offerings that empower Clarke students to impact communities far beyond the borders of the campus.

Clarke University has experienced substantial growth and improvement over the past several years under the leadership of President Joanne Burrows, SC, PhD, who in 2006 succeeded President Emerita Dunn, who had served the institution as its president for 22 years. Both women have built on a strong heritage of dedication to making Clarke a vibrant institution that assists students in becoming life and career ready.

In 1884, Mary Frances Clarke wrote to her community of sisters— almost all of whom were teachers—this directive: "…we should endeavor to make [students] think." Her words continue to inspire a faculty and staff of dedicated women and men who honor the history and heritage of the institution, its foundress, and her small band of creative and committed educators.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

Clarke College was founded in 1843 and was officially chartered by the State of Iowa in 1910 as a liberal arts college with the authority to award appropriate degrees. It was first accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1918 and has continued its accredited status to the present day.

The College's first graduate degree, the master of arts in education, was accredited in 1984. This was followed in 1995 by approval of a master of science degree in physical therapy, and in 1997 by approval of master of science degrees in nursing and management.

Clarke College had its last comprehensive visit in spring 2004, at which time it was the first institution to use the "New Criteria" crafted in 2003. The visit resulted in reaffirmation of accreditation with the recommendation that the next comprehensive visit take place in academic year 2013–2014. The 2004 visiting team also recommended a focused visit to address several concerns identified in the assurance section of the team report. These concerns were itemized and addressed in the documents provided for the focused visit, which took place in 2008. Specifically, the 2008 visit centered on the following: (a) assessment of student learning, (b) data management, and (c) data-informed decision making. The 2008 visiting team found that the institution had successfully addressed these concerns.

The past decade has seen significant changes within the institution, including the inauguration of a new president, substantive upgrades in facilities and technology, purposeful programmatic innovation, and successful implementation/completion of one strategic plan coupled with the initiation of a second. In 2010, to reflect the expanding array of its academic offerings, the College changed its name to Clarke University. One year later, the University began the self-study process that would culminate in the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools' comprehensive review in fall 2013.

Our primary goal in conducting our comprehensive self-study was to implement a process that would create a positive attitude toward accreditation, enable participation of the entire Clarke University community, and culminate in a report reflecting the highest level of integrity and transparency. Creating a positive attitude toward accreditation required that the campus community understand the purpose of accreditation, why it is important to the institution, and how the institution can benefit from engaging in the self-study process. Assuring that the processes of review and reflection were genuinely collaborative required outreach to all segments of the campus professional community—administration, faculty, and staff—for assertions and supporting evidence that address each of the five criteria upon which accreditation is reaffirmed. The resulting self-study document represents the contributions of many individuals and groups. It is a focused and honest evaluation of Clarke University in terms of its growth since the previous HLC visit, its strengths as an institution of higher education, and the challenges it faces as it carries out its mission.

Preparation for the 2012–2013 self-study began in fall 2011 with the appointment by Clarke University President Joanne M. Burrows SC, PhD, of Kate Hendel, BVM, PhD (dean of adult and graduate studies) and Teri Zuccaro, MA (instructor of accounting) to serve as co-chairpersons of the Steering Committee. In addition, Provost Joan Lingen BVM, PhD, was assigned to serve as cabinet liaison. The Steering Committee, composed of 36 members of the faculty and staff, represented many segments of the campus professional community. Five subcommittees were formed within the Steering Committee, each focusing on one criterion for accreditation.

During spring and early summer 2012, the Steering Committee met numerous times to discuss the format of the self-study, to identify and locate evidence for the Evidence Resource File, and to establish a timeline for completion of tasks. A shared Dropbox account was created into which committee members placed documents, evidence, and supporting data utilized in the self-study process. In late summer 2012, Dr. Hendel left the University and Steven Kapelke, MFA, was hired as interim dean of adult and graduate studies and co-chair of the Steering Committee.

During fall 2012, the five subcommittees wrote the first draft of the self-study document. Each of the subcommittees also collected evidence related to its respective criterion. Drafts were edited and organized in January and February 2013. In March 2013, the five edited drafts, aggregated into one document, were posted for review and comment by the entire University community. Two town hall

> *The . . . self-study document . . . is a focused and honest evaluation of Clarke University in terms of its growth since the previous HLC visit, its strengths as an institution of higher education, and the challenges it faces as it carries out its mission.*

meetings, one in March 2013 and one in April 2013, were convened to reinforce the importance of reaffirmation of Clarke's current HLC accreditation, to review the self-study process that had occurred, and to explicate the process for commenting on the self-study document. Also, the co-chairs of the Steering Committee attended two student government meetings to discuss the self-study process.

Writing of the final draft of the self-study report began in May 2013 with a working group of seven members. The final draft was completed in September 2013 and shared with the entire Clarke community via the University's website.

Criterion One
Mission

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

CORE COMPONENT I. A. *The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.*

The Clarke University mission and the goals and values that support it bind this community of learners together. Since the development of its mission statement in 1992, the University has worked energetically to ensure clarity in the document and its supporting statements and to promote integration of the mission into all institutional enterprises as the preeminent guiding force.

The Mission Made Visible

That a learning community's mission is understood by that community can be determined primarily through the actions of its members and the degree to which the institution's learning (and other) goals are linked to the mission. Because Clarke's mission guides institutional actions, a concerted effort is made to make the mission statement prominent to current and prospective students and to the faculty and staff, both on the physical campus and in institutional publications. The University undertakes sustained efforts to ensure that all members of the Clarke community understand the mission and share the values embodied in it. This holds true in educational and co-curricular programming, in student life, and in the institution's administrative and support offices. Every academic and student life department or office defines its individual role within the larger context of the University's mission.

The institution's educational, student life, and co-curricular programs ensure a broad understanding of the mission and values in a number of ways. Several examples follow.

- The University's curricula and programs of study flow directly from the mission, assuring education and training aligned with the educational goals articulated therein. The mission statement is memorialized in all departmental syllabi, and in each syllabus the link between the mission and course and departmental learning outcomes is articulated. Students who successfully complete courses in their major, distributive, or elective areas of study demonstrate an understanding of the mission as it relates to departmental learning outcomes.

- The mission statement also is memorialized in general education syllabi, with direct links between the mission and general education learning outcomes. Students successfully completing the general education core demonstrate understanding of the educational and other values articulated in the mission.

Mission Statement

We are a Catholic coeducational liberal arts university founded in 1843 by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM), in Dubuque, Iowa. Clarke educates students at the postsecondary level in the liberal arts and sciences, the fine arts, selected professional programs, and graduate programs.

We, the faculty, students, staff, and administration, are a caring learning community committed to excellence in education. We provide a supportive environment that encourages personal and intellectual growth, promotes global awareness and social responsibility, and deepens spiritual values.

Institutional Goals

· *Encourage personal and intellectual growth*
· *Promote global awareness and social responsibility*
· *Deepen spiritual values*

Vision Statement

Clarke University, building on the history and tradition of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM), enters the twenty-first century as a distinguished, student-oriented, Catholic, liberal arts university recognized for graduating students prepared academically, morally, and spiritually to become leaders in a rapidly changing workplace and an evolving, diverse society.

Core Values

Clarke University is rooted in the core values of the BVM congregation. As such the university strives to be a community of freedom seeking God, a community of education seeking wisdom, a community of charity seeking communion, and a community of justice seeking social justice.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

- The University's Academic Integrity Policy begins with a direct reference to the mission, to the institution's Catholic tradition, and to justice, which is a cornerstone of the BVM value structure.
- The Clarke University Faculty Evaluation Manual—written and approved by the faculty—begins with the following statement:

  > The role of faculty members in reflecting the University values of community, spiritual life, global awareness, and social responsibility cannot be underestimated. Faculty members who … will continue to be active learners over their careers are central to continuing the mission of Clarke University….

  This statement is an example of the extent to which the University's faculty understands and supports the values embedded in the mission.
- Program reviews and end-of-year reports for every department in the Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Life provide descriptions of the link between the mission and departmental or office outcomes. Each department develops a report that includes evidence of how the department's/service's operations and initiatives have supported the mission of the University during the preceding year.

Consistent with its history, mission, and values, Clarke University is committed to a culture and decision-making process that is inclusive and collegial in nature. This is reflected in policy, in the institution's governance structure, and in practice. The periodic review of Clarke's mission over the past two decades demonstrates both a commitment to mission review and an inclusive review process.

The Mission Reaffirmed

Clarke University has reaffirmed its mission statement several times in the last 13 years. In fall 1999, in conjunction with redesign of the general education program, a task force was created to review Clarke's mission statement, first approved in 1992, to determine whether it was in need of revision. Through input provided by focus groups consisting of a wide range of internal and external constituents, substantial recommendations were put forward. Participants shared their ideas about what Clarke students needed to learn and experience to best prepare them for professions, careers, family life, church membership, productive citizenship, and membership in the global community. Recommendations of focus groups were synthesized, and from them a survey was developed and distributed to a large sampling of Clarke stakeholders, 37% of whom responded. Findings from the survey strongly reinforced the values and goals articulated in the Clarke mission statement; consequently, the decision was made to reaffirm the mission statement as written.

Following the 2004 Higher Learning Commission comprehensive evaluation, University administrators, the board of trustees, the Strategic Planning Committee, and representatives from the faculty considered the recommendation by the visiting team to make the

mission statement "more explicit about serving diverse learners, stakeholders off campus, and 'the greater society.'" The mission statement itself was again reaffirmed as effectively expressing the values, vision, and overarching goals of the institution. However, it was decided that the institution address the concerns expressed in the HLC recommendation via two vehicles: the strategic plan for the University and the formation of a Catholic Identity Task Force.

The strategic planning committee recommended that a focus on serving diverse learners and the global society be addressed in detail in the University's 2007–2012 strategic plan, *Set the Course, Secure the Future,* which guided the University through its recent past and provides substantive evidence of the institution's renewed commitment to its mission. The Catholic Identity Task Force recommended the formation of a Catholic Identity Committee consisting of representatives of the faculty, staff, and administration appointed by the president to more firmly establish and promote the Catholic identity and BVM history of the University and to assure that the principles of Catholic higher education as put forth in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* were implemented.

With the review and reaffirmation of the University's mission, the mission statement in its original form remains the compass by which the institution will chart its course over the next several years. The Clarke University Strategic Plan 2012–2017, a document developed with broad input from University constituencies, approved by the board of trustees in May 2011 and shared with the entire campus community, provides evidence of the continuing centrality of the statement to all Clarke endeavors.

The Mission Lived: Academic Programs

Clarke University's mission statement outlines both the nature of the institution's educational programs and their scope—specifically, that the University offers programs in the liberal arts and sciences, the fine arts, selected professional programs, and graduate programs. A review of individual majors and programs of study in the Clarke University Academic Catalog confirms that Clarke's current programs align with those described in the mission. Clarke offers 40 majors at the undergraduate level and programs in four departments at the master's or doctoral level, consisting of seven individual programs of study. The University's educational programs are reviewed every five years for currency, and additions or deletions are made when appropriate.

Clarke University takes particular pride in its assertion that it is "a caring learning community committed to excellence in education." This care and commitment is demonstrated in a number of ways, both within academic affairs and student life.

Student-to-faculty ratio

Essential to Clarke University's goal of creating a supportive learning environment is the institution's 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio, which enables personal interactions between students and faculty members in classrooms, laboratories, and studios. Students frequently indicate

that their close relationships with faculty members are the most valuable and influential part of their Clarke careers.

Academic support services

Services available to all students through the Margaret Mann Academic Resource Center (MARC) strongly support learning and development and contribute to the ethos of caring referred to in the University's mission statement. MARC skills specialists and peer academic coaches offer assistance in all disciplines as well as in effective study strategies. Accommodations services are also facilitated through the MARC. The MARC and other academic/learning resources are detailed in Criteria Three and Four.

The Mission Lived: Student Life Programs

In matters related to student life, Clarke also provides an array of services that foster students' intellectual, personal, and spiritual growth. The catalog description of the Division of Student Life articulates the purposes of the office in this way: "…the division of student life partners with the academic community to facilitate the growth of the whole student." Offices within this division and the role each plays in supporting Clarke's mission include those described here.

Campus Ministry

The mission of the Office of Campus Ministry is to "foster the spiritual life of each member of the community"; in so doing, it serves the University as the bedrock of its value system, sustaining its Roman Catholic heritage while reaching out to students of all faiths. Campus Ministry arranges Sunday and holy day liturgies, weekday prayer opportunities, service learning experiences, social justice programs, spiritual retreats, and many other activities and services.

The Counseling and Career Center

The Counseling and Career Center offers students both individual counseling and a variety of substantive developmental programs. These initiatives are designed to assist students in making the transition to higher education, to nurture their growth as they move through their years at Clarke, and to provide activities and programs that prepare them to make informed career and adult life choices. These goals align with that section of the 2012-2017 strategic plan that identifies life and career preparedness as a primary objective of the plan.

The Office of Residence Life

The Office of Residence Life has placed specific emphasis on engaging students in examining their spiritual life through the lens of everyday activities. Catholic social teaching provides the foundation for the University's residential community development plan, with the goal that students experience the principles of the Catholic faith as those principles are translated into action on a daily basis. A focus on stewardship is exemplified through community service during each resident assistant training session, in monthly visits to serve meals at

the Dubuque Rescue Mission, and in sponsoring teams for the Into the Streets days of service. These activities encourage students to be aware of and responsive to the needs of others at a time in their lives when it is perhaps more instinctive to be concerned only with meeting one's own needs.

Clarke University athletics

Approximately 39% of Clarke's full-time traditional undergraduate students participated in the University's athletic program through membership on sports teams during the 2012–2013 academic year (AY). Between AY2009 and AY2013, the number of students participating grew from 174 to 284—a result of adding other sporting teams and enlarging roster sizes. It is important, therefore, that this critical program be aligned with the mission of the University and the core values upon which that mission rests. In 2011, the athletics program updated its handbook to strengthen this alignment. The following passage has been excerpted from the Clarke University Student Athlete Handbook:

> [The] Intercollegiate athletic program at Clarke University seeks to integrate the objectives and lessons of athletic participation and competition with the academic and social life of the university. The program reflects the mission of Clarke, the philosophy of the NAIA, and the Midwest Collegiate Conference.
>
> The purpose of intercollegiate athletics at Clarke University is to provide each student the opportunity to develop as a whole person in the pursuit of fulfilling individual and team potential. Clarke University strives to promote an environment that fosters academic success, discipline, and leadership in a spirit of sportsmanship.

The Mission Lived: Enrollment Profile

The institution's enrollment profile aligns directly with the description in the mission statement of its educational programs. Clarke offers traditional undergraduate degree programs, innovative undergraduate and master's degree programs for working adults, full-time doctoral programs, and continuing education for personal or professional enrichment.

In addition, Clarke's TimeSaver program provides undergraduate degree options in eight instructional areas for working adults aged 24 years and older. TimeSaver classes are delivered in hybrid format and structured in 8- and 16-week terms. The TimeSaver program supports the mission of the University in further establishing the institution's commitment to education as a lifelong endeavor. Through this program, in existence for 27 years, Clarke University has distinguished itself from other institutions of higher education in the Dubuque region in addressing the educational needs of learners of all ages.

The Mission Lived: Planning and Budgeting Priorities

As described earlier in Criterion One, Clarke University's current strategic plan contains priorities that align with and support the mission and the goals contained therein. The plan makes explicit reference to the mission in its vision statement: "Rooted in the

Catholic tradition and the BVM core values, Clarke University will be a vibrant, relevant, and collaborative environment that creates career- and life-ready graduates who positively impact the organizations and communities in which they work and live." To that end, the plan focuses on such priorities as a redesigned general education program, an integrated (converged) student learning experience, and the implementation of a student leadership development initiative.

Likewise, the University's budget is crafted to give priority to the institution's educational, co-curricular, and student support programs. This is evident in many of its features, perhaps most prominently in the design and construction of the new science facility, the Center for Science Inquiry (CSI), the intent of which is to "…foster modern teaching and learning of science." In that same regard, one action step in the 2012–2017 strategic plan is to "Offer new undergraduate majors that capitalize on the science facility."

More thorough description and analysis of the institution's planning and budgeting procedures and their relation to mission priorities is provided in Criterion Five.

CORE COMPONENT I. B. *The mission is articulated publicly.*

The Mission Memorialized

Clarke University's mission statement is the primary vehicle through which the institution's purposes and values are made known. To this end, the University ascertains that the mission statement is memorialized in all key internal and public documents, including the institution's website, its promotional and recruitment literature, the Clarke University Academic Catalog, the [Clarke University Student Handbook](), and the 2012–2017 strategic plan, among others.

On a more informal level, the University's mission statement is displayed in many areas throughout the campus. Copies are posted in classrooms, faculty offices, campus buildings, and public areas, including the Student Activity Center, the admissions reception area, the student dining room, the four student residence facilities, and the R. C. and Celeste Wahlert Atrium, which is a hub of activity for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the campus. All public and internal representations of the mission statement are current and accurate.

The Mission and Currency of Identity

Two recent changes of note exemplify the seriousness with which the Clarke community views its mission, its purposes, and its commitment to the currency of its identity as an institution of higher education. These changes have contributed to the vigor and vitality of the University as it moves forward.

A new name

In 2009, a committee consisting of representatives from the faculty, staff, and administration was convened to investigate the appropriateness of a shift in the identity of the institution as it related

to programmatic scope. The expanding number and range of Clarke's undergraduate and graduate degree programs led to discussions about a proposed name change. After considerable discussion and a survey of various Clarke constituencies, it was determined that the designation of *university* rather than *college* best communicated the educational identity of the institution and its mission, given the diversity of programs it offers and the populations it serves. This change was recommended to the board of trustees and approved in May 2010, becoming official on August 1, 2010. This name change is now reflected in all public and internal documents.

A new logo

In 2010, in conjunction with the transition to its new name, Clarke University adopted a new graphic identity to better communicate the spirit of its endeavors, its BVM heritage, and its commitment to education in contemporary times. This logo is separate from but supports the University's more traditional seal. The new logo communicates Clarke's Catholic identity and educational mission, representing the Cross of Christ—the center of Catholic faith—and the four core values that undergird the institution's purposes.

CORE COMPONENT I. C. *The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of U.S. society.*

The Mission of Clarke University: Its Relationship to a Diverse Society

Clarke University sets high standards for students in terms of their growth as informed, reflective, empathetic members of the human family concerned with working toward the common good. Each September at Convocation, first-year students recite the Clarke Pledge, which expresses the most deeply held values of the institution:

> *To reach for the star of faith in the ultimate goodness of humankind; To work toward a universal hope for social, racial and economic justice; To open our eyes and hearts, in the Christian spirit of love, to all those whose lives we may touch; And to seek peace in all the world … We pledge our lives.*

Each May, as part of the commencement ceremony, Clarke graduates recite the same pledge. Whether students attend Clarke for only one term or for four or more years, the institution's goal is that that these ideals become lived doctrines that guide their future endeavors.

Clarke University is diligent is its efforts to address the institution's role in a multicultural society. Its commitment is rooted in the Catholic tradition's celebration of diversity within the human community. Because the Clarke campus is set in a substantially homogeneous community and is to some extent isolated geographically in terms of diversity, administration, faculty, and staff are very conscious of the need to intentionally broaden students' social and cultural experiences. The institutional commitment in this regard is for students to respect difference, to learn from it, and ultimately to take leadership in promoting and modeling this respect. While the University acknowledges the challenges it faces in these efforts, and while it acknowledges also its need to continue working for a truly

All our words and dealings with the children tend to the formation of their character; therefore we must … put before them noble ends for all their actions.

Mary Frances Clarke 1884

diverse community of learners, the past decade has seen a marked increase in the institution's educational, co-curricular, and service activities that demonstrate Clarke's commitment to being an inclusive campus.

Diversity Efforts in the Clarke University Educational Program

Several diversity-related aspects of educational programming at Clarke underscore the relationship between the institution's mission and the diversity of society.

Diversity studies requirement

All Clarke University students are required to satisfy a diversity requirement by successfully completing two courses or experiences identified as "diversity studies." These courses are offered in a variety of disciplines, as a representative sample of their titles indicates: RELS222 The Multicultural Faces of Jesus, HLTH233 Transcultural Health Care, SPAN103–104 Intermediate Spanish, and EDUC202 Introduction to Exceptionalities B–21. As one element of these courses, students may complete a service project at a community-based organization such as the Dubuque Alzheimer's Association, the Dubuque Food Pantry, the Dubuque Rescue Mission, and the Dubuque Multicultural Family Center.

Departmental curricula

Academic departments such as History and Political Science, Language and Literature, Religious Studies, and Social Work shape their curricula to include substantive exploration of diversity issues as one aspect of professional and civic preparation. Through course content, discussion of social issues, and exposure to different ideas and cultures, students are asked to view diversity and multiculturalism through the lens of critical analysis. For example, as established by the Council on Social Work Education, the Social Work Department assesses students' engagement of diversity in practice as one of its competencies. Assessment of this competency and related practice behaviors takes place in several courses, including SW101 Introduction to Social Welfare and SW499 Social Work Field Capstone.

Opportunities for international study

While creating an inclusive community on campus is fundamental to Clarke's living its mission, the University also is committed to providing students with opportunities for international study. The University considers the option of international study especially important for a student body that includes many from rural communities. These opportunities vary by country of study, program length, and sponsoring institution.

In 1997, Clarke's tradition of faculty-led international study programs was supplemented with consortium agreements involving several institutions, including Central College, the University of Kansas, St. Louis University, and the University of Wisconsin–Platteville, so that Clarke students would be able to apply their

institutional aid to study abroad. In 1999, Clarke established a spring semester program for Spanish majors and minors in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Other programs have recently been added, including a study abroad experience for honors program students through the University of Glasgow, and exchange programs with the International University of Kagoshima (Japan) and Ireland (through the Irish American Scholars Program).

Clarke demonstrates its commitment to internationalizing the campus by permitting students participating in these programs to receive a minimum of 75% of their institutional aid in addition to federal financial aid for which they are eligible. Two coordinators assist students interested in pursuing these opportunities.

Clarke continues its tradition of faculty-led international programs in the form of study and service opportunities. For example, Clarke students and faculty members from different professional and liberal arts majors have traveled to the Working Boys' Center, a BVM mission in Quito, Ecuador, and Damian House in Guayanquil, Ecuador. Each of these experiences enables participants to encounter economic, cultural, and racial diversity. Students experience firsthand how many of the world's poor live—and the ways educators, health professionals, and scientists must adapt in impoverished places where resources are in short supply.

Diversity Efforts in the Clarke University Division of Student Life

Multicultural Issues Committee

One committee that regularly demonstrates its effectiveness in helping to foster a community that lives its values and seeks to include all as equal and important members is the Multicultural Issues Committee (MIC). The overarching purpose of MIC is to address the needs of a multicultural community by advocating for individuals from under-represented groups. Serving as a resource to the campus community on issues related to diversity, MIC performs ongoing review of the campus climate, supports campus equity advocates, and promotes an inclusive learning community through collaboration, dialogue, and action. For example, in response to results of a recent campus climate survey conducted by MIC, several concerns were identified, including the need for more handicapped accessibility and greater support for the LGBTQ (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered/ queer/questioning) community on campus. Survey results also provided focus for the 2012 Faculty and Staff Retreat, which centered on diversity.

Multicultural Newsletter

Clarke's *Multicultural Newsletter*, a monthly e-newsletter disseminated to all students, administration, faculty, and staff, identifies and describes multicultural events taking place on campus and in the Dubuque area. The newsletter promotes awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity by featuring short articles on various holidays and traditions, many of which are celebrated by members of the Clarke community.

Clarke
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Honoring our veterans

In response to a U.S. veteran student request, Clarke has begun a tradition of publicly acknowledging Veteran s Day. Activities include a flag-raising ceremony in front of the Atrium, provision of free lunches to all veterans on campus, and an annual free concert honoring veterans that is open to the public.

Student groups: Clarke Alliance and Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE)

In response to concerns about support for LGBTQ students, the University created a student group, Clarke Alliance, which centers its goals and activities on human rights, specifically LGBTQ issues on campus. A second campus organization, Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE), works against all forms of violence toward individuals and groups. Formed in fall 2012 in conjunction with National Coming Out Day and as a result of an initiative by students, SAVE sponsors activities to address verbal and other forms of violence against LGBTQ persons.

Diversity initiatives and new students: CONNECT

As is the case with students at many institutions of higher learning, students new to Clarke frequently encounter beliefs, values, and lifestyles different from their own for the first time when they arrive on campus. Sensitive to the challenges of such transitions, the University provides programs to support new student integration into the Clarke community and to demonstrate how Clarke has been shaped by Catholic and BVM values.

Prior to the opening of the school year, Clarke welcomes traditional first-year and transfer students through CONNECT, a program that works with and supports students as they acclimate to the University, acknowledging that each is unique and thus uniquely affected by major life transitions. Various campus and community organizations offer presentations during CONNECT. For example, representatives from Dubuque's Riverview Center have presented programs focusing on issues related to sexual violence on college campuses, not only educating students about behaviors that enhance safety but also informing them about how to be active bystanders who choose not to be complicit to acts of abuse. The High Impact Training Group performs scenarios common in student life situations and allows for open discussion of topics on LGBTQ issues, racism, substance abuse, and sexual violence.

Other Supports for Diversity

The University provides dedicated services to students of color and international backgrounds to assist them in making Clarke their home and to foster networks of support between students and among students, faculty, and staff.

Clarke also provides support for many campus clubs and organizations whose purpose is to address one or more diversity-related issues. These include Clarke Alliance (described earlier); Students Working for Change, which promotes human services

activities and education; and the new Building Love Among Cultures for Knowledge (B.L.A.C.K.) Student Union, which strives to bring together racially, culturally, and ethnically diverse students to address social issues.

During the first year of study, the University provides special, focused programing through the Spark program for up to six students who would not normally be admissible and who are in need of special learning supports. Details about this program are presented in Criterion Three.

Antidiscrimination and Antiharassment Protections

A supportive learning community marked by the values of charity and justice is one in which all individuals—students, administrators, faculty and staff members, and visitors—feel safe from physical, psychological, and social harm. In addition to the policies articulated in the [University's Employment Manual](#) and the [Student Handbook](#) forbidding harassment and discrimination, the institution has designated equity advocates who review allegations of discrimination and/or harassment based on age, race, religion, gender, color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability. This review process may result in recommendations to appropriate administrative offices. Posters identifying current equity advocates and how and where they can be contacted are displayed throughout the campus.

CORE COMPONENT 1.D. *The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.*

Clarke University's Commitment to the Public Good

Clarke University is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization 501(c)(3) founded exclusively for the purpose of higher education by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, another not-for-profit entity. Throughout its history, Clarke has functioned for the sole purpose of education. Neither the sponsoring congregation nor any member of the University's board of trustees receives financial remuneration from the institution.

As an institution of higher learning whose history has been shaped from its birth by a commitment to helping those in need, Clarke's ethos is one of service for the common good. This culture emanates from the institution's Catholic tradition and is rooted in the values of its foundress, Mary Frances Clarke. A Clarke education takes place, as its mission states, in "a supportive environment that encourages personal and intellectual growth, promotes global awareness and social responsibility, and deepens spiritual values."

Moreover, the University recognizes and honors its place in the world of higher education institutions whose common purpose is, in part, to provide benefit to the community, the nation, and the world. At Clarke, this is evident in the quality of teaching; in the impact of faculty research, clinical work, and creative activity; and in the institution's service to the larger community. The institution's commitment to environmental sustainability, to co-curricular volunteer and mission experiences, to classroom and clinical

Teach them to wish and to labor to be useful members of society.

Mary Frances Clarke 1884

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

requirements that embrace the wider world, to involvement in the greater Dubuque community, and to promotion of the arts through programs open to the public gives testimony to Clarke's serving the common good.

Environmental Sustainability

A visible example of Clarke's commitment to the public good is its focus on environmental sustainability. On the Clarke campus, sustainability is not limited simply to placing recycling containers in strategic areas around campus. The Sustainability Committee, which consists of faculty, staff, and students, reviews University practices from the perspective of environmental stewardship and makes recommendations accordingly. The institution has been recognized for its sustainability efforts by receiving "petals" from the Petal Project and by being designated a Tree Campus USA. Both of these designations are won only after rigorous requirements for environmental sustainability have been successfully addressed. Concern for the environment is also reflected in the construction of the new Center for Science Inquiry, which incorporates green characteristics including numerous energy-efficient features and a greenhouse for environmental studies.

Academics and an Ethos of Service

The service ethic is a defining characteristic of Clarke University. In academic programs, service is built into general education and professional program requirements. As noted earlier in Criterion One, every student must satisfy a diversity studies requirement through coursework, co-curricular experiences, or a combination of the two. This requirement might be fulfilled by participating in a service experience among marginalized or disadvantaged groups at local agencies such as the Dubuque Rescue Mission, the Presentation Lantern Center, or the Dubuque Boys' and Girls' Club. Social work, education, and health sciences programs place students in the community as part of their field experiences, many in agencies that provide critical services. Students in the nursing program, for example, assist with care at Crescent Community Health Center, the only provider of low-cost medical services in the area.

Clarke University maintains strong relationships within the Dubuque and Dubuque-area communities, especially with those organizations that serve marginalized populations. For example, the institution actively collaborates with the Multicultural Family Center (MFC) and Americorps with the explicit goal of placing vulnerable, disadvantaged teens on a track toward post-secondary education. In fall 2013, two MFC graduates matriculated at Clarke. Clarke nursing students have provided free blood pressure screenings at the MFC, and the Social Work Department offers an internship through which Clarke students mentor youth being served at the center. Having identified the MFC as its community partner, Clarke was awarded a VISTA grant that enabled the hiring of a staff member to work in Clarke's Counseling and Career Services Center to enhance service learning that responds to community needs.

To so direct the minds of our children we ourselves must be alive to our surroundings in this beautiful world of the visible creation of God.

Mary Frances Clarke 1884

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

The role of service in course and program outcomes is reflected in the end-of-year reports of each academic department. In the section of those reports that addresses how the University's mission is enacted, departments describe the means by which students demonstrate their civic learning. For example, the Athletic Training 2012–2013 end-of-year report stated that the program prepares students to be "socially responsible and globally aware in the athletic training profession at the clinical, professional, research, and educational levels." And in its 2012–2013 end-of-year report, the Psychology Department declared, "Students are encouraged to use the strong interpersonal relationships we build with them as a model for the qualities of respect, caring, and social justice essential to success in their future careers."

Student Life and an Ethos of Service

That a culture of service permeates the Clarke experience also is evident in the Division of Student Life, perhaps most saliently in Student Activities and Campus Ministry. Student organizations that receive funding from the Clarke Student Association (CSA) are required to engage in a service project each semester. As a result, all students who belong to clubs or athletic teams or who participate in student government provide service hours to the University, the Dubuque community, and beyond.

The Office of Campus Ministry offers service trips to economically disadvantaged areas of the country twice each academic year. Each semester, 200 or more members of the campus community go "into the streets" to provide a morning of service to more than 20 nonprofit agencies in and around Dubuque. The residence life staff, in accordance with the 2007–2012 strategic plan, has worked to "enhance the culture of social responsibility and global awareness grounded in Catholic social teaching" that Clarke has consistently upheld, supporting what students learn in their coursework about Catholic social teaching by making connections between campus activities and core educational themes— in particular, the dignity of all persons, the common good, and the preferential option for the poor.

Iowa Campus Compact

To support its commitment to service to the public good, Clarke University is a member of Iowa Campus Compact. The Iowa Campus Compact is part of a national consortium of universities and colleges dedicated to advancing higher education's civic mission by effectively building service learning into campus and academic life. Goals of the Compact are to "strengthen existing community service and service learning, and to develop new civic engagement initiatives and collaborative service efforts among educational institutions, community organizations, and non-profit organizations across the state." During AY2012–2013, Clarke University President Joanne M. Burrows, SC, PhD, served as chair of the board of directors of Iowa Campus Compact, providing evidence of Clarke University's commitment to the work of the organization.

An Ethos of Service: Administration, Faculty, and Staff Contributions

Clarke personnel contribute to service and cultural organizations, to local government, to professional organizations, and to nonprofit agencies. Examples abound:

- President Burrows is a member of several governing boards, including the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC) and Opening Doors, a local provider of emergency shelter.
- Vice President for Enrollment Management Beth Triplett, EdD, serves on the executive committee of the Dubuque Arts Council.
- Dean of Undergraduate Studies Graciela Caneiro-Livingston, PhD, serves on the Board of Directors of Humanities Iowa, the state council of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
- Athletic Training Department chair Melody "Dee" Higgins, PhD, is the current chair of the State of Iowa Board of Examiners for Athletic Training.
- Interim Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies Steven Kapelke, MFA, serves as a peer reviewer, team chair, and member of the Institutional Actions Council for the HLC.
- Accounting and Business Department faculty member Teri Zuccaro, MA, serves as a peer reviewer for the HLC.
- Music Department faculty member David Resnick, MME, is serving a second term as an elected member of the Dubuque City Council.
- Assistant Professor of Social Work Heather Jones, PhD is president-elect of the National Association of Social Workers—Iowa Chapter.

Several members of the faculty and staff are involved in local community theater, and still others serve on boards or are active in their parishes or other community-based committees and organizations.

An Ethos of Service: Inviting In

Residents of Dubuque and surrounding communities are regularly invited onto Clarke's campus where they are provided opportunities for personal and intellectual growth through the University's academic, religious, athletic, and cultural programs. Several examples follow.

- The Mackin-Mailander Lecture Series brings nationally and internationally known speakers to Clarke and the Dubuque community. Presenters have included lawyer and activist Robert Kennedy Jr., journalist Lisa Ling, celebrity health expert Dr. Drew Pinski, and actor Danny Glover. Attendance at these events often surpasses 1,000.
- The Arts at Clarke, a performing arts and lecture series, is a highlight on the Dubuque-area cultural events calendar.

- The Robert and Ruth Kehl Center is available for use by members of the Dubuque community for physical fitness activities.

- Middle school students from Dubuque and surrounding communities learn about the wonders of the human body during Clarke University's yearly Human Body Bee. In spring 2013, the thirteenth year of the Bee, 884 fifth-graders, more than 150 teachers and chaperones, and more than 150 Clarke faculty members, students, and staff participated in this event.

- Pastoral caregivers, nurses, and others have looked forward to the Joy of Caring Conference, co-sponsored by the Nursing and Religious Studies Departments.

- On Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Clarke University was an early voting satellite site for Dubuque County. Casting ballots were 197 persons, including 147 students, 45 members of the Clarke faculty and staff, and 5 members of the Dubuque community. Clarke is a part of a National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) out of Tufts University. The study will provide the University with voting and registration rates of students and presents an opportunity to study the effectiveness of educational programs designed to increase student civic learning.

- Local veterans enjoy the Music Department's annual free Veterans Day Concert, and Clarke University has been designated a "veterans-friendly" institution by *G.I. Jobs* magazine.

- Each term, selected courses are made available for audit by Clarke alumni and friends 55 years of age and older through the Recharge Your Mind program.

An Ethos of Service and Mission Effectiveness

Clarke students acknowledge the efforts of the University in forging their personal commitments to community service. In the 2013 Clarke University Mission Effectiveness Survey, 94% of graduating seniors indicated that their Clarke education offered them opportunities for developing volunteerism and community service, as did 77% of TimeSaver and 88% of graduate student respondents. Additionally, the University won placement on the President's Higher Education Honor Roll for Community Service annually from 2007−2012.

Serving the Common Good in Partnership with Others

As has been demonstrated, Clarke University is a service-oriented institution engaged beyond the borders of its campus. Clarke actively seeks and establishes partnerships with regional health providers, the Dubuque K–12 private and public schools, local businesses, and regional, national, and international institutions of higher education. The University creates these partnerships both to meet the needs of its partners and to enrich students' learning experiences. Some examples follow.

Nursing Department and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Clarke's ability to respond to public need has been recognized by a major grant award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration (HRSA) to support its newly created doctor of nursing practice program. This was described in a press release announcing the grant:

> …The primary goals of the HRSA grant are to help nursing programs improve recruitment and retention of DNP students entering the primary care workforce after graduation and to prepare DNP's who will serve rural areas and underserved communities. "Above all, this effort will substantially benefit rural and underserved populations, and that is very close to the Clarke mission," said Roberta Lavin, PhD, APRN, [former] chair and professor of nursing at Clarke.

Education Department and Dubuque schools

The Clarke University Education Department is noted for its collaborations with the Dubuque Community School District (public) and the Holy Family School District (parochial) in establishing professional development schools (PDSs). The mission statement that guides these partnerships, articulated in 2010, follows.

> Each entity in this partnership has a specific mission; the partnership combines aspects of all individual missions to further enrich learning through a shared interactive community. The mission of this professional development school partnership is to collaboratively enhance the learning of four distinct groups: K-12 teachers, Clarke faculty, Clarke teacher candidates, and most importantly the K-12 students. The partners assume an interdependent responsibility in encouraging all involved to perform to the best of their ability through a rigorous academic curriculum, standards-based instruction, and shared best practices. In addition to learning content and pedagogy, we also promote personal, intellectual, moral and social growth for all.

School administrators involved in PDS partnerships have noted the benefits of this collaboration: one remarked, "The PDS is a strong partnership and a win-win situation for the teacher candidates, students, and me as a principal" and a second commented that "The PDS is a collaborative, open, safe, authentic environment for the teacher candidates and my teachers, too. We all learn together."

Counseling and Career Center and Dubuque businesses

In the Division of Student Life, Counseling and Career Center staff members cultivate partnerships with local businesses and not-for-profit organizations and regularly visit human resource departments in the community to educate them about the mutual benefits of serving as internship sites for University students. In that regard, staff members in the Counseling and Career Center have demonstrated an ongoing willingness to collaborate with students on developing internships that take them into areas that would not be possible within the traditional curriculum.

Internships

Increasingly, Clarke students are taking advantage of internship opportunities, not only locally but also in areas beyond Dubuque and the state of Iowa. For example, Clarke students have interned at the African-American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa in Cedar Rapids; at Philmont Scout Ranch in Limarson, New Mexico; and at the San Francisco Suicide Prevention Center in San Francisco, California. Steadily increasing numbers of students (from 38 in AY2009–2010 to 75 in AY2012–2013) have successfully completed internship study. The expanding nature and geographic range of internship sites give evidence of the collaboration between the Counseling and Career Center and the University's faculty in promoting these experiences.

Clarke University partnerships with other institutions of higher education

Clarke University partners with local, regional, and international institutions of higher learning to expand educational opportunities for its students. Locally, Clarke University, the University of Dubuque, and Loras College allow students enrolled at their respective institutions to cross-register in order to access courses that may not be offered on their own campuses. Regionally, Clarke maintains articulation agreements with five community colleges in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin that allow their students seamless transfer to Clarke.

CONCLUSION

The Clarke University mission, unchanged since 1992, remains vibrant. Rooted in the BVM values of freedom, education, charity, and justice, the University works diligently to ensure that its mission is shared and supported; that it is articulated openly and broadly; and that the spirit of the mission, as it relates to its educational and other purposes, remains at the heart of its operations. The University's programs and the actions of Clarke's faculty, staff, and students give strong evidence that the institution's mission is alive and lived.

At the same time, the University is aware that it can better serve several internal and external communities. It recognizes the following challenges.

- Some older campus facilities are not handicapped accessible. If Clarke is to be a truly inclusive institution, it must resolve accessibility issues and comply with the principles of universal design in its infrastructure so that all—including those with physical and other disabilities—are truly made welcome. Design of the Center for Science Inquiry has improved accessibility of campus facilities.

- The institution continues to be challenged to recruit and retain faculty members of color. To a great extent, this is a function of location and the relative lack of diversity in the Dubuque community. Nonetheless, as the University's student body becomes more diverse, it is incumbent on the institution to continue its efforts to create a faculty that more closely resembles the larger society beyond Dubuque.

- Externally, Clarke University is challenged to deepen its connections with the underserved populations in the Dubuque community. Educational and economic disadvantage prevent far too many promising high school students in Dubuque from considering college as a future goal, and the institution—given its mission and heritage—has a responsibility to confront this very proximate inequality to the maximum extent possible.

- Although many opportunities exist for Clarke students to participate in international study, a relatively small number actually take advantage of the available opportunities, despite strong institutional support. Some faculty members and students have recommended stronger institutional emphasis on study abroad and its educational value.

Criterion Two

Integrity:
Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

CORE COMPONENT 2. A. *The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.*

At Clarke University, policies and procedures concerning institutional integrity are memorialized in documents such as the Clarke University Academic Catalog, the Board of Trustees Manual, the Student Handbook, and the Clarke University Employment Manual. Other documents, such as annual operating budgets and audited financial statements, provide further evidence of an institution committed to a culture of integrity.

Institutional Integrity: Oversight of Financial and Material Resources

Clarke University is a private, not-for-profit organization 501(c)(3) authorized to operate in the State of Iowa. The University's finances and material resources are overseen by a board of trustees, which maintains authority for fiscal oversight of the institution. Chapter IV of the Board Manual describes this authority and responsibility:

> The board of trustees holds the University in trust for the campus community, the sponsoring congregation, and the public . . . . The board insures good conduct on the part of the University in both wise use of resources and adherence to high levels of academic and professional behavior.

While the entire board shares this responsibility, direct board oversight related to finances has been delegated to three committees: the Audit Committee, the Finance and Facilities Committee, and the Endowment and Investment Committee. Each plays a role in assuring that the institution's finances are being used in support of Clarke's mission and with due regard for fiscal responsibility.

- *The Audit Committee.* The Audit Committee, which includes members from the administration and staff, reviews the results of annual institutional audits performed by independent outside auditors. The committee also offers recommendations regarding internal controls to the board and administration where appropriate, based on results of the audit.

- *The Finance and Facilities Committee.* This committee reviews the annual budget as presented by the Budget Committee and makes budgetary recommendations to the full board; in addition, it reviews capital projects presented by the administration to ensure their alignment with both mission and strategic priorities. Upon recommendations from the

> Clarke University's reputation as an institution of higher learning founded on moral principle is one of its most cherished assets, and in support of that reputation, the University has very deliberately set in place a system of policies, procedures, and governance structures that provide the necessary oversight to ensure its integrity.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

committee, the board reviews and approves the development of new academic or other facilities and large maintenance projects to assure that contracts are awarded in a fair and ethical manner, free from fraud and conflict of interest.

- *The Endowment and Investment Committee.* As indicated by its title, this committee bears responsibility for monitoring the institution's endowment and making recommendations regarding the institution's investment portfolio.

Minutes from all full board and standing board committee meetings provide evidence that the board takes seriously its responsibility for fiscal oversight and demonstrate that Clarke University is financially sound and operates with integrity in its financial dealings.

Institutional Integrity: Management of Financial and Material Resources

The institution's finances are managed by the Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance. As the primary operational unit for Clarke's financial and other material resources, the office is responsible for day-to-day management of the annual operating budget and maintaining the integrity of its operations through policies such as those detailed on the University's website. These include policies regarding bids and quotations, fraud, identify theft, and purchasing, among others.

Annual operating budget

The primary instrument governing institutional finance is Clarke's annual operating budget, developed by the University's Budget Committee, which is constituted of the president, the institutional vice presidents, the controller, two faculty members elected by the Faculty Senate, and two staff members from the Staff Assembly. The Budget Committee is the most prominent means by which the faculty and staff provide input to the annual operating budget and serves as an advisory committee to the president and the vice president for business and finance.

The committee's scope of responsibility is wide: It makes broad recommendations on the operating budget, reviews and recommends tuition pricing, and advises on compensation increases. Further, as a means by which to ensure appropriate input from and communication with their respective constituent groups, the faculty and staff members of the Budget Committee are responsible for seeking counsel on budget priorities from the appropriate bodies (e.g., the Faculty Policy Committee and the Staff Assembly) and ascertaining that decisions regarding the budget are communicated back to their memberships.

Comprehensive information on the operating budget and institutional finances is provided in Criterion Five.

Institutional Integrity: Academic Programs

The integrity of Clarke University's academic programs is assured through a network of shared governance, academic policies, internal

and external evaluation, and adherence to the standards set by professional organizations.

As noted in Criterion One, the nature and scope of the institution's academic programs are consistent with its mission and publicized widely and accurately. In addition, the array of faculty professional functions (teaching, scholarship and/or creative endeavor, and service) are described fully and precisely in institutional documents, including the Clarke University Employment Manual.

Role of the board of trustees in assuring integrity of academic programs

Clarke's academic governance system is not uncommon in higher education, consisting of strategic and programmatic oversight by the board of trustees with program development, implementation, and review/evaluation taken on jointly by faculty and academic administration. In this regard, the responsibility of the board of trustees is, appropriately, to "make general judgments concerning the kind and quality of . . . educational programs, insisting that they be appropriate to and consistent with the purposes and resources of the University."

Further, the board is charged with examining "long range plans and major new programs, and reviewing and evaluating performance of academic and nonacademic areas." This charge enables the board to ensure that the nature and quality of Clarke's programs are in alignment with its mission and stated standards while, at the same time, empowering the faculty to maintain its rightful stewardship of the curriculum in partnership with the academic administration.

Primary board oversight in this area has been delegated to its Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee, which meets three times annually prior to board meetings. Minutes from committee meetings provide examples of the means by which changes in academic policy or programming initiatives are communicated to the committee and provide evidence that the committee functions according to its mandate, as articulated in board bylaws.

Role of the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and Graduate Council in assuring integrity of academic programs

Review of new undergraduate academic programs or those going through significant change falls to the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) of the faculty, whose responsibility is to accept program proposals from academic departments and undertake comprehensive review of those proposals. The EPC consists of the provost, the dean of undergraduate studies, the director of general education, faculty members elected by the Faculty Senate, and two students. At the graduate level, this responsibility is that of the Graduate Council, consisting of representatives from each of the graduate programs and the dean of adult and graduate studies. In both instances, program integrity is assured by policies dictating the timely submission of proposals, the material that must be included in the proposal, and the amount of time permitted for the proposal's review. Descriptions of

the authority and responsibility of these committees are memorialized in the Clarke University Employment Manual.

Role of academic advising in assuring integrity of academic programs

To further assure the integrity of Clarke's academic programs, the institution has taken substantive steps to ensure that students receive appropriate counsel regarding their programs of study. To this end, the institution in 2006 formed the Academic Advising Committee (AAC). Since its inception, the AAC has developed a mission, vision, value set, and learning outcomes for both advisors and students as well as an assessment plan for the academic advising program. In the development of the advising construct, the committee used National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) recommendations as well as Standards for Academic Advising developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). More detailed information about the academic advising program is provided in Criterion Three.

Role of departmental program review and outcomes assessment in assuring integrity of academic programs

Internally, Clarke University further assures the integrity of its academic programs through a system of departmental program reviews and a rigorous learning outcomes assessment procedure. These are described in greater detail in Criteria Three and Four; however, as these systems relate specifically to academic integrity, they enable the institution to measure itself against particular quality standards and to use the results to initiate improvement.

Role of institutional self-study and external accrediting bodies in assuring integrity of academic programs

The integrity of Clarke's academic programs is also assured through institutional self-study and the related reviews conducted by the various external accrediting bodies and professional organizations with which Clarke is affiliated. In addition to holding regional accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC), the University enjoys program (or specialized) accreditation from the following accrediting agencies.

- The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- The National Association of Schools of Music
- The Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education
- The Council on Social Work Education
- The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education Programs
- The Iowa Department of Education

Each of these organizations has specific standards that must be met to achieve initial accreditation and, subsequently, to have accreditation reaffirmed. Typically, specialized accreditation assures

programmatic quality, accuracy and transparency of academic standards, and appropriate resource allocation, among other factors.

Role of the Office of the Registrar in assuring integrity of academic programs

The importance of maintaining accurate records of academic progress is central to the institution's academic integrity. This is assured through the work of the Office of the Registrar, which maintains current and accurate records of active students as well as those of alumni. In so doing, the office follows national standards set forth by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Academic transcripts are recorded according to the guidelines in the AACRAO 2011 Academic Record and Transcript Guide.

The Office of the Registrar continues to update and improve its processes. Since the last HLC comprehensive visit in 2004, the online registration process has been significantly upgraded, an online degree audit system has been implemented, and online transcript ordering and secure electronic transcript delivery service has been initiated, providing same day transcript service options for students and alumni.

Institutional Integrity: Student Resources

The Student Handbook is a primary resource for students seeking information about student concerns (e.g., financial aid), providing a comprehensive listing and description of policies governing student rights, roles, and responsibilities. These include a policy on standards of student conduct and more specific policies on, for example, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and discrimination and harassment.

Institutional Integrity: Personnel Policies and Procedures

Clarke University is committed to integrity in its personnel policies and procedures as articulated in the Clarke University Employment Manual, which contains both faculty and staff policies. The Office of Human Resources maintains responsibility for overseeing the policies memorialized in the Employment Manual. As stated on the institution's website, goals of this office include "provid[ing] leadership in the balance of the employer's interest with those of employees; lead[ing] policy application and compliance and . . . administer[ing] resolution processes in a manner that is fair, flexible, and effective; [and] encourage[ing] diversity through equitable treatment . . . ."

Institutional Integrity: Recruitment of Faculty and Staff

Clarke University is committed to recruiting and hiring faculty and staff members who best personify Clarke's educational mission and its values. The Faculty Recruitment Manual presents guidelines for faculty and staff recruitment processes, describes best practices in this regard, and gives examples of internal evaluation forms. The manual also provides examples of legal and appropriate interview questions and appropriate expenses for on-campus candidate visits.

The documents also make clear the responsibility of supervisors and search committees to conduct fair and unbiased searches.

Institutional Integrity: Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

In the interest of faculty development and to ensure fair treatment of all employees, the Employment Manual and other institutional documents, such as the Faculty Evaluation Manual, describe in detail the expectations Clarke has for its faculty and the rights, privileges, and benefits faculty may expect in return.

Personnel policies for faculty

In addition to describing faculty roles and responsibilities, the Employment Manual outlines personnel policies related to faculty rank, promotion and tenure, terms of contract, and compensation policy. For example, the manual articulates the procedures for promotion and tenure, which serve to govern the work of the Faculty Personnel Board (FPB), the academic administration, and the board of trustees as promotion and tenure recommendations are brought forward and determinations are made. Further, the manual delineates the expectations of teaching responsibility with respect to course assignments, course syllabi, academic advising, office hours, and learning outcomes assessment.

Academic freedom

The Employment Manual further articulates policies regarding academic freedom, expected ethical practices, and the roles of faculty members as representatives of the institution. Other policies in the manual include those on scientific misconduct, plagiarism and intellectual property, and the faculty appeals process, among others.

Faculty evaluation

Evaluation of faculty is carried out through processes described in the Faculty Evaluation Manual. The manual states clearly the goals of the evaluation process, the components of evaluation, the data collection timeline, and the responsibilities of all persons and committees involved in the review process.

Institutional Integrity: Staff Rights and Responsibilities

The rights and responsibilities of Clarke University staff members are also described in the Employment Manual (Chapters IV and VI), which includes policies regarding use of various reporting systems, processes for evaluation, a general code of conduct, measures for corrective action, and procedures for appeal and grievance.

Annual review of staff members

Performance review of staff is the responsibility of staff supervisors. The supervisor is responsible for conducting the evaluation and submitting completed reports to the appropriate vice president each year. Staff evaluations consist of a self-report and a supervisor's report, both contained in the same appraisal form. Staff evaluation criteria are founded on best practice and include standards related to quality and quantity of work, initiative, and productivity. To ensure

that the evaluation process is conducted in a fair and ethical manner, the Office of Human Resources conducts training on best practices with staff supervisors; this training is made available annually to ensure currency.

Staff grievance procedures

To ensure that all staff members are treated fairly in relation to their work at Clarke and that their concerns are addressed appropriately, the University has established a grievance procedure. This procedure, found in Chapter VI of the Employment Manual, protects staff members from arbitrary or capricious actions of either a disciplinary or nondisciplinary nature.

Institutional Integrity: Antiharrassment and Antidiscrimination Policies

Clarke University's antiharassment and antidiscrimination policy is published on the institution's website, in the Student Handbook, and in the Employment Manual. The policy defines forms of harassment and discrimination and describes measures to be taken when an individual believes she or he has been the victim of either. The manual further details guidelines that must be followed by the University in its investigation of complaints. As noted in Criterion One, Clarke has identified individuals to serve as equity advocates available to all students, faculty, and staff; advocates work with the Office of Human Resources in resolving harassment and discrimination issues.

Institutional Integrity: Student Consumer Information Report

As indicated earlier in Criterion Two, Clarke University maintains integrity in its operations through a clearly defined system of policies, procedures, and shared governance. The University also maintains integrity in communicating its identity to the public. One way in which this identity is communicated is through the University's Student Consumer Information Report, which aggregates the items in this system for ease of communication and transparency. This information is updated annually and posted online via the University's Financial Aid link. Information regarding degrees, programs of study, faculty and instructional personnel, transfer of credit, and FERPA is included. The report also communicates clearly the cost of attendance via a net price calculator, comprehensive information about financial aid, and requirements for satisfactory academic progress.

Institutional Support Units

Clarke University's support units provide a network of services that enable the institution to function effectively and in compliance with industry standards and internal guidelines. These include the Facilities Management Department, the Office of Campus Safety and Security, and the Office of Information Technology. These units provide the Clarke University community with a safe, well-maintained physical environment and a secure system of digital communication. They contribute to institutional integrity by supporting, through their

operations, Clarke's assertions about the health, safety, security, and general welfare of its constituent groups.

Facilities Management Department

Facilities Management personnel, led by a director contracted through SODEXO & Affiliates, perform monthly building inspections, document the results of each inspection, and create work orders that specify corrective measures to eliminate risk. Further, the department undergoes an annual audit performed by the National Safety Foundation (NSF), which measures safety education programming, documentation of accidents, and monthly safety committee meetings. The quality of the work of the Facilities Management Department is reflected in the perfect scores it achieved between 2010 and 2012. Included among inspection items are sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems (monitored 24 hours per day), portable fire extinguishers, boilers, and HVAC systems.

In maintaining and updating its physical plant, Clarke University contracts with the following outside vendors.

- Otis Elevator
- Simplex Grinnel, which provides 24-hour monitoring of fire alarm systems and annual inspection of all alarms
- All Seasons Heating and Cooling
- BG Brecke, which undertakes preventive maintenance of heating and cooling systems
- Excalibur Laundry, which provides leasing and monthly service on all laundry facilities

These contractual relationships are reviewed on a periodic basis by the Finance and Facilities Committee of the board of trustees, which oversees all matters pertaining to Clarke's buildings and grounds.

Office of Campus Safety and Security

The University's Office of Campus Safety and Security follows established policies and guidelines and, when appropriate, publishes pertinent information on the Clarke website. For example, in compliance with the Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act (PL101–542), the office posts links to its Campus Crime and Fire Statistics Report on the University website. The website also features current information regarding the campus alert system, an emergency response guide, and directives for reporting accidents or other incidents of a serious nature.

Information Technology Department

The Information Technology Department posts its resource policies on the Clarke website. University students have access to 23 computer labs across campus, each of which is governed by resource policies, including policies on acceptable use, wireless networks, and peer-to-peer sharing of copyrighted material. Further, the institution supports the Higher Education Opportunity Act and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act through a policy restricting the downloading of copyrighted materials.

The Datatel Advisory Group, created in 2007 for the purpose of developing and implementing Datatel (currently Ellucian) initiatives on campus, is chaired by the director of information technology and includes representatives from each of the administrative areas using the student information system (e.g., the Office of Financial Aid). Through this inclusive representation, the institution is assured that its student information system serves its wide range of constituencies effectively.

Auxiliary Units

Clarke University's auxiliary units include its three residence halls and the Catherine Dunn Apartments, the Whitlow Campus Store, Food Service, and Conferences and Events. Each of these units is revenue generating and, of course, incurs offsetting expenses. The budgets for these units are not held separately, but are included as budget lines in the University's operating budget, contributing to general operating funds, with expenditures likewise itemized within the larger operating budget. The integrity of these units is guaranteed through the system of controls in force for all the institution's annual operating budget.

The University conducts periodic reviews of its internal controls, and the 2012–2013 review, overseen by the new vice president for business and finance, has identified areas for improvement that are currently being implemented.

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

The qualities of fairness, honesty, and consistency are regarded as fundamental to every policy Clarke University puts into place. In accordance with its mission and its commitment to ethical practices, the institution presents pertinent information clearly and thoroughly to prospective students and their parents, to current students, and to the general public.

Information Regarding Academic Programs

The University provides comprehensive information about its academic programs to prospective and current students and the public. The About Clarke tab on the homepage of the Clarke University website presents salient facts pertaining to the institution's history, academic traditions, and accreditation relationships. The website and the Academic Catalog also contain important information about student-to-faculty ratios, athletic programs, degrees, and major courses of study offered at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The institution's website and the Academic Catalog present a complete list of its undergraduate and graduate academic degrees. These are also provided in various admissions publications, such as the First Look brochure and the Culture Book. The Culture Book is mailed to all prospective students who have inquired about Clarke; in it, all undergraduate academic programs are clearly identified and

detailed. Printed fact sheets about each academic major are available in the Admissions Office.

In support of its firmly held belief that learning is a lifelong endeavor, Clarke University offers continuing education units (CEUs) in the fields of nursing, physical therapy, social work, and religious studies. Professional CEU credit conferences are approved by the Iowa Board of Nursing, the Iowa Board of Social Work, and the Iowa Clinical Education Consortium. Credits for licensure or recertification are kept on file in the Adult and Graduate Studies Office for a minimum of seven years.

To further Clarke University's mission of supporting growth in spiritual values and its commitment to lifelong learning, the Nursing Department and the Religious Studies Department collaborate in presenting an annual professional conference—The Joy of Caring—on faith-based nursing. Information about this conference is published on the University's website; continuing education units in both nursing and social work are available through the conference for those with professional licensure.

Information Regarding Admission to Undergraduate Degree Programs

Although admission procedures for all prospective undergraduate students have common elements, they vary slightly depending on the status of the prospect. Each of these procedures—for traditional first-year students, transfer students, and adult students entering through the TimeSaver Program—is described in detail in the catalog and on the University's website. Requirements for admission also are stated clearly on the University's printed application form.

Nontypical Undergraduate Admissions

The Academic Catalog notes that every application for admission to Clarke University is considered on an individual basis. To this end, the catalog also provides current and accurate information for students whose academic or personal circumstances are less easily generalized, such as international students or home-schooled students. For example, international students seeking admission to Clarke must submit an application for admission along with official high school transcript (translated and evaluated by either the Educational Credential Evaluators or World Education Services). Those whose first language is not English are required to take the TOEFL or IELT and submit their official scores. All international applicants must complete the Certificate of Finance and documentation verifying their financial ability to attend Clarke.

Another form of nontypical admission is to the Clarke University RN to BSN program, which follows a process explained in the Iowa Articulation Plan for Nursing Education RN to Baccalaureate, and which is described in the Academic Catalog in the TimeSaver Nursing section. Because the RN to BSN program is a professional, licensed program, admission criteria are more circumscribed. For example, to be admitted to the nursing major, a registered nurse must submit an application, previous college transcripts recording

completion of an associate's degree in nursing, current registered nurse licensure, current CPR and first aid certification, and documented health records and transcripts demonstrating academic success in specific instructional areas. Background checks and mandatory reporter training are administered by the Nursing Department.

Other Undergraduate Admissions Options

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is an alternative means of earning academic credit for life experience and an option available to adult students only; prior learning credit is certified through the TimeSaver Office. To accommodate prospective students seeking credit for prior learning, Clarke University offers Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES) testing, a credit-by-examination program through which students may earn university credit for knowledge previously attained. To be eligible, applicants must develop a portfolio of documented evidence of prior knowledge with assistance from the Adult Studies and TimeSaver Office in cooperation with the appropriate academic department chair. Clarke also accepts credits earned through the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP). Information about the CLEP, DANTES, and PLA options is published in the Academic Catalog.

Information Regarding Admission to Graduate Degree Programs

As is common in higher education, Clarke's graduate programs have varying admissions procedures and requirements, which are described on the institution's website and in the Academic Catalog. For example, the master of business administration (MBA) program requires a completed application, previous college transcripts verifying a 2.8 minimum GPA, completion of the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) (this may be waived if the student earned a 3.00 GPA in his or her last 60 undergraduate credit hours), two letters of recommendation, a resume, an essay, and a TOEFL score of 550 if English is not the applicant's first language. Some graduate programs may require specific prerequisite courses before applicants are considered eligible for admission; for example, the doctor of physical therapy (DPT) program requires successful completion of undergraduate coursework in physics, biology, and chemistry, as well as 75 hours of observation time in a physical therapy setting.

Information Regarding Academic Degree Requirements

Academic degree requirements are clearly described in the Clarke University Academic Catalog, (published annually), on the institution's website, and in the MyInfo (Clarke's name for Ellucian's WebAdvisor) program evaluation system. Program changes approved by the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the Graduate Council in the prior year are memorialized in each new edition of the catalog.

To ensure broad knowledge of the catalog's content, printed copies are distributed to full- and part-time faculty, including faculty

academic advisors and to administration and staff members in student service areas. Catalogs from previous years continue to be available online as a resource for active students who follow the degree requirements of the catalog assigned when they first enrolled at Clarke.

To further assure that new students are fully conversant with the specifics of their programs of study, first-year undergraduate students enrolled in the CU101 Transitions: First-Year Experience course are introduced to the registration process and program evaluation during an instructional session presented by the dean of undergraduate studies and the registrar. As part of this session, students are apprised of the importance of preparing for the academic advising meeting prior to registration for the next semester and are shown how to access and review their program evaluation. Transfer students who are accepted to the University receive access to their MyInfo account upon acceptance; the account includes details of where their transfer credits are being applied to their program of study.

Information about program evaluation is presented in the Academic Catalog and on MyInfo. Program evaluation requirements are updated annually by the registrar to match those in the updated catalog.

Information Regarding Cost of Attendance

As noted earlier in Criterion Two, Clarke University presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to cost of attendance through the institution's website. Tuition, fees, and other charges for all programs—traditional undergraduate, TimeSaver, and graduate—are posted annually, as are summer session fees. Information about tuition and fees is also provided to all prospective students by the Office of Admissions. A brochure titled "A Smart Investment" describes institutional aid—merit and talent awards—available to first-year and transfer students. The brochure also provides information about federal and State of Iowa grants, need-based funding, loan options, federal work study/campus employment, and Clarke payment plans. The content of the brochure is communicated in its entirety via the University's website, on the Financial Aid page.

In compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, Clarke University launched its net price calculator, available online via the Future Student, Traditional Undergraduate links on the Clarke website. This tool assists families in estimating the net cost of attending Clarke. In calculating this cost, the estimated value of grants and scholarships for which the student is eligible is subtracted from the cost of attendance at Clarke—tuition and required fees, books and supplies, room and board, and other related expenses.

Information Regarding Faculty and Staff

All full-time faculty members and administrative and support staff members are listed in the Clarke University Academic Catalog and on the institution's website. The catalog listing of faculty members displays their academic credentials and degree-granting institutions.

Information Regarding Accreditation Relationships

As noted earlier in this document, Clarke University presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its accreditation relationships by citing all professional accreditations in the Academic Catalog and on the institution's website. Accreditation relationships are also identified in various hard-copy publications, such as departmental and professional program brochures; these publications are mailed to prospective students, provided to those who visit the campus, and distributed at college fairs.

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

Roles and Responsibilities of the Clarke University Board of Trustees

The Clarke University Board of Trustees has the legal responsibility to see that the University fulfills its distinctive mission. To this end, it establishes or approves all policies related to external and internal governance. The board works collaboratively with the president of the University, with input from the president's cabinet, faculty, staff, and students. Board members participate in the strategic planning process and are familiar with the institution's strategic priorities and goals. For example, trustee support for the Center for Science Inquiry resulted from the board's thorough attention to the campus master plan and the strategic priority to enhance instruction in the health sciences.

In addition, the board of trustees works with the president to assure that the Catholic nature and identity of the University are promoted in its capacity as an institution of higher learning. Members of the BVM congregation serve on the board, providing continuity with the institution's rich heritage and sharing their perspectives on the BVM core values that have been assimilated by the University.

The board of trustees holds the University in trust for the Clarke campus community, the founding BVM congregation, alumni, and the public. It seeks to protect and to advance the University's welfare and long-term success, and to preserve its special mission, distinctive history, core values, and strategic vision. The board advocates for the autonomy of the University and the academic freedom of its members and guards against narrow perspectives that may threaten from both inside and out.

Specific tasks of the board of trustees

The board ensures good conduct on the part of the University in both appropriate use of resources and adherence to high levels of academic and professional behavior. In carrying out these responsibilities, members refer to the Board of Trustees Handbook (Chapter 4. 1), which highlights specific tasks with which the board is charged. These include selecting, supporting, and evaluating the president; establishing major policies; reviewing and evaluating performance of academic and nonacademic areas; representing the

University to the surrounding community; supervising financial management, investments, legal affairs, and facilities; encouraging the University to adapt and renew itself so as to avoid stagnation and to ensure continuous improvements that enhance the usefulness and quality of the University's programs and services; and assessing their own performance on a biannual basis.

Structure and communication

The Clarke University Board of Trustees is structured in such a way as to promote exchange between the internal priorities represented by the president and vice presidents and the external perspectives represented by board members on its nine standing committees. Communication within the board and between the board and the administration functions effectively. One example of this is the annual board retreat at which presentations are offered by members of the president's cabinet, selected University committees (e.g., Catholic Identity Committee), and/or external professionals who focus on various trustee roles.

Authority and responsibility

The authority of the board of trustees rests in the board as a whole—not in individual trustees. Each trustee is responsible for serving the University to the best of her or his ability and for carrying out all responsibilities in a manner that will avoid any conflicts of interest; in that regard, each signs a conflict of interest statement annually. All trustees act as ambassadors for Clarke and use their influence on behalf of higher education and of Clarke University. They have the opportunity and responsibility to interpret the University to their communities and regions and to inform the University about how it can best serve and obtain support from those communities.

Trustees as ambassadors

Clarke University trustees serve as ambassadors in many ways. A variety of events have been hosted by trustees in the past three years in support of advancement efforts. For example, in preparation for launching the largest capital campaign in the University's history, seven trustees hosted campaign receptions in their homes or at other sites. The purpose of those receptions was to introduce the campaign to key alumni, community members, and major donors for follow-up solicitations. The board president, the University's vice president for institutional advancement, the event host, and selected faculty members and students had opportunities to speak on behalf of the University to 20–30 guests at each of the receptions.

Also, over the past three years, eight trustees have hosted 15 alumni gatherings in their homes, country clubs, or other venues. These events have been held in places ranging from Dubuque, Iowa, to Naples, Florida, to Washington DC, to Phoenix, Arizona. In many cases, trustees not only hosted these events, but also paid expenses associated with them. The goals of these gatherings are to maintain connections with alumni, to provide University updates to alumni and friends, and—of equal importance—to listen to alumni feedback and input.

The Board of Trustees: Collaborative Leadership

The Clarke University Board of Trustees exemplifies a highly collaborative model of leadership. Their respect for the president and her cabinet of executive administrators is clearly evident in their nonintrusive yet highly visible support. The board has empowered the president to administer the University in such a manner as to fulfill the distinct purposes for which it was established. As policies are approved by the board of trustees, the president is charged with the implementation of these policies and is assisted in this responsibility by her senior administrators.

Various committees within the governance structure also provide faculty, students, and staff with opportunities to participate in the implementation of policies. As noted earlier in Criterion Two, faculty members are responsible for academic policies and programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels through the EPC and the Graduate Council. The addition or discontinuation of academic programs must be recommended by one of these bodies to the board prior to board action.

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

Freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth at Clarke University have their foundations in the words of the foundress of the BVM congregation and the University, Mary Frances Clarke, who wrote to members of her community in 1884: "…we should endeavor to make [students] think." Her words remain integral to Clarke University's mission more than a century later as they illuminate the institution's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Academic Freedom and the Core Values

The first sentence of the 2013–2014 Clarke University Academic Catalog states: "Clarke University is a Catholic, coeducational, liberal arts university known for graduating learners prepared academically, morally, and spiritually to become leaders in our evolving, diverse society." The catalog also refers to the four core values of the BVM congregation that provide the foundation upon which a Clarke education rests: "the University strives to be a community of **freedom** seeking God, a community of **education** seeking wisdom, a community of **charity** seeking communion, and a community of **justice** seeking social justice." These core values reflect well the institution's dedication to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

The Clarke University Employment Manual confirms this commitment in its section regarding academic freedom and integrity. The University's policy on academic freedom is consistent with the American Association of University Professors "1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" (*AAUP Policy Documents and Reports,* ninth edition). In support of Clarke's mission and its stated values, faculty members possess guaranteed rights of

When children come to us for an explanation … we should endeavor to make them think…. This way of teaching … will open their minds ….

Mary Frances Clarke
1884

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

academic freedom in their teaching, research, and creative endeavor. If a faculty member believes his or her rights in this regard have been violated, he or she may pursue the appeals process outlined in Chapter 5 of the Employment Manual.

Academic Freedom in Teaching and Learning

Clarke's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is evident in course offerings such as ENG232 Popular Literature: Gay Literature, RELS222 The Multicultural Faces of Jesus, and EDUC119 Multicultural Education. In recent years, the Clarke University Drama Department produced performances of *Agnes of God* and *Dead Man Walking,* plays whose content reflects Clarke's commitment to freedom of expression. The content of the above-mentioned courses and performances might be considered by some to be controversial; however, such content is consistently discussed across campus in various settings and is reflective of Clarke's adherence to its mission. Perhaps more important than the evidence provided through a list of academic offerings is the general vitality of the discourse within the Clarke community, where academic freedom in the pursuit of knowledge is a given.

CORE COMPONENT 2. E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.*

Oversight of Scholarly Activity

Clarke University provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students in various ways, including established committees such as the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The following extract from the Clarke website describes the role of the IRB:

> The IRB reviews all research proposals to insure protection of both the project participants (e.g., safety and privacy) and Clarke University (e.g., liability). To this end, the IRB reviews each project proposal to consider such issues as possible physical, mental, and emotional risks to participants, invasiveness, and research design.

Information guiding the ethical use of human research subjects in also posted on the University's website.

Clarke University also has in place an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), which "is a federally mandated committee required of all colleges and universities and others who use animals for research. Its purpose is to assure the Federal Government of institutional compliance with the Animal Welfare Act of 1984 as subsequently amended." This committee ensures the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted with animals; more information on the Act and the IACUC can be found on the institution's website.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

Both the IRB and IACUC supply online forms for faculty, staff, and student use. Committees meet as needed to evaluate applications, provide feedback, and make determinations.

Review of Faculty and Student Research

Clarke University ensures academic integrity through review of faculty and student research. As members of a learned profession, the institution's faculty has the acquisition and application of their knowledge measured regularly through peer-reviewed journals, juried exhibitions, and presentations at professional conferences and other scholarly venues. Tenure track and tenured faculty members alike undergo periodic review that includes standards for scholarship or creative work. These standards are memorialized in Chapter V of the Employment Manual, specifically as "those activities in a faculty member's formally recognized area of expertise . . . which contribute to . . . 3. The development of knowledge (research), creative work, or professional practice[:] 4. The dissemination of knowledge in the professional community."

Teaching and Supporting the Ethical Use of Information

Clarke University acts on its firmly held belief that guidance for students in the ethical use of information resources is essential, as it supports the mission and the 2012–2017 strategic plan's emphasis on graduating individuals who are life and career ready. The importance of research literacy is central to this preparation, and the institution has in place supporting policies, services, and initiatives.

Teaching ethical use of information

The Clarke University faculty enforces guidelines governing the ethical use of information resources as those guidelines relate to specific academic tasks. In addition, all course syllabi include the University's Academic Integrity Policy and reference it in relation to assignment descriptions. All first-year Clarke students are introduced to the tenets of information literacy in CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar. More specifically, the issue of academic integrity and the measures the University takes to assure that integrity are an area of focus in GNED111 Cornerstone II, a second-semester skills-based course for first-year students. Cornerstone II faculty members discuss plagiarism and its forms and teach the skills of summary, paraphrase, and direct quotation as these skills are incorporated into the writing of the research paper. Students' skills in the ethical use of information are reinforced throughout both the general education program and departmental majors.

Supporting students' ethical use of information

The Nicholas J. Schrup Library employs a reference librarian who provides several workshops for students each semester on a variety of topics related to the research process and product; in addition, the librarian maintains a library Web page containing links to tutorials providing instruction on standards of and guidelines for scholarly inquiry. The Writing Center, too, helps ensure integrity of students' research and scholarly practice by providing writing workshops

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

throughout each semester of the academic year; at these workshops, students learn to document material they select from their research sources and how to comply with formatting standards governing various disciplines. In addition, they learn to demonstrate respect for intellectual property and to avoid plagiarism by building skills in effective summarizing and paraphrasing of others' ideas.

On the individual client level, Clarke University Writing Center academic coaches—students who have demonstrated proficiency in research writing themselves—teach and reinforce the skills of research-based writing, frequently referencing the center's library of stylebooks, writing guides, and other instructional materials.

In fall 2011, a task force of faculty and staff members was created to review the potential uses of Turnitin, web-based plagiarism detection software. The institution purchased rights to the program, which became available for faculty use in January 2012. This program enhances students' understanding of the ethical use of information resources and provides an effective means for faculty to detect students' violations of intellectual property protections.

Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity

In spring 2012, an Academic Integrity Policy Task Force (AIPTF) was convened to reevaluate the University's policy regarding academic integrity. As a result of this reevaluation, the policy was expanded and clarified, particularly as it aligned with the University's mission. The newly updated policy is published in the Academic Catalog and included in all course syllabi. In addition, program handbooks, such as the Undergraduate Nursing Student Handbook, contain specific sections focusing on academic honesty and integrity.

Procedures to report a violation of the policy on academic integrity are clearly delineated and easily accessed. Faculty members report cases of academic misconduct to the appropriate dean. Consequences for academic misconduct are described in detail in the Academic Catalog. In extreme cases, such conduct may result in dismissal from the University.

Chapter V of the Clarke University Employment Manual makes it clear that faculty members, too, must adhere to policies governing academic honesty and integrity. This section of the Employment Manual describes in detail issues such as scientific misconduct and faculty plagiarism.

CONCLUSION

Criterion Two of the self-study report has provided review and analysis of the features that exist to ensure that Clarke University's financial, academic, and personnel and auxiliary functions operate with due integrity. Further, it presents evidence that the internal policies and external guidelines by which the board, administration, faculty, and staff conduct the institution's operations function as effective mechanisms in this same regard. Evidence put forth in Criterion Two also demonstrates that policies and procedures are in place to ensure the faculty's academic freedom and the responsible

use of scholarly resources by students and faculty. Finally, this segment of the self-study report confirms that the University provides sufficient resources in support of its efforts to ensure the integrity of its academic mission.

Criterion Three

Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

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

CORE COMPONENT 3. A. *The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.*

Committed to excellence in higher education, Clarke University offers programs in the liberal arts and sciences and the fine arts in addition to professional and graduate programs. The nature and quality of the programs and degrees it offers give evidence of their appropriateness to higher education.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

Clarke University offers more than 40 degree programs at the associate and baccalaureate degree levels in traditional and hybrid-accelerated delivery formats. Each of the degrees offered is commonly recognized within higher education. At the undergraduate level, the University offers the associate of arts, the bachelor of arts, the bachelor of science, the bachelor of fine arts, the bachelor of science in nursing, the bachelor of social work, and the bachelor of applied studies degrees.

Graduates of Clarke University earning a bachelor's degree complete 124 credit hours of course work that includes distribution requirements in general education, the humanities, mathematics and the sciences, social sciences, the fine arts, and religious studies. The final 30 semester hours toward graduation must be earned in residence at Clarke University. To be eligible for graduation, a student must have earned a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0.

Credit hour requirements for major and minor areas of study are designed in a manner consistent with the degree awarded. The number of credit hours awarded for completion of each course is consistent with higher education standards as they relate to time spent in both lecture and lab.

Additional information about degree requirements and programs of study is found in the Clarke University Academic Catalog.

Graduate Degree Programs

Clarke's graduate degree offerings include the master of arts in education, the master of business administration, the master of organizational leadership, and the master of science in nursing; at the doctoral level, Clarke offers professional doctorates in nursing (the doctor of nursing practice) and physical therapy (the doctor of physical therapy). Degree requirements for each program vary, as is common in graduate education, and are described in detail in the Academic Catalog. General standards for academic progression, academic standing, and the credit hour policy are also memorialized

Clarke University has in place the means to ensure the quality of its instructional and co-curricular programs. These include structures, policies, and procedures that enable its programs to function effectively; the human resources—well-qualified faculty and staff—who teach and provide support; and the material resources that guarantee students access to the most contemporary technology and facilities.

in the catalog. For example, to maintain satisfactory academic progress, graduate students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in their graduate course work. No grade of less than C is acceptable, and no more than two courses with grades of C or C+ will be applied toward degree requirements.

Learning goals and outcomes for the University's graduate programs, like those of its undergraduate programs, align with the mission and values of the University and are specific to the course of study for each program. However, goals and outcomes are distinct from those established for undergraduate programs. This distinction is evident in the depth, specific focus, and level of rigor in graduate course curricula and in articulated program outcomes and course descriptions.

At the graduate level, analysis and synthesis of information is considered central to successful degree completion as is a greater emphasis on disciplinary theory; to this end, the University's graduate programs require students to participate in extensive individual research and dissemination activities consistent with established standards in their respective disciplines. For example, program outcomes for the doctor of nursing practice degree include the ability to "synthesize concepts and theories from nursing and related disciplines to form the basis for developing and integrating new approaches to nursing practice for the whole/healthy human being . . . ." A comprehensive description of program outcomes is included in the Clarke University Academic Catalog.

Ensuring Quality: Governance and Review of Instructional Programs

The University has a network of governance and review structures in place to help ensure the quality of its instructional programs. Faculty responsibility for and authority over the University's curriculum is a fundamental aspect of the institution's governance system and a means by which the faculty, as a body, ensures both the quality of programming and its appropriateness for higher education.

Typically, curriculum review and revision begin at the departmental level. All new courses and programs move through a preliminary screening process that requires a listing of course/program outcomes and the means for assessing those outcomes. As noted in Criterion Two, all undergraduate curriculum and program changes at Clarke University must be reviewed by the Educational Policy Committee (EPC); in the same regard, graduate curricula are reviewed by the Graduate Council. Changes that have been recommended for approval by the EPC or the Graduate Council are forwarded to the provost, who then shares the recommendation with the president and, where appropriate, the Academic and Student Life Committee of the board of trustees. The multiple layers of review for any curriculum change provide assurance that all issues related to program quality have been addressed and all requirements satisfied.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

Academic program review and assessment of student learning

Included among the procedures the institution maintains to ensure program quality are the academic program review and a vibrant system for assessment of student learning. Every academic department undertakes a comprehensive evaluation of its curricula and operations on a five-year rotation, as determined by the provost in consultation with the Program Review Committee. The program review is essentially a self-study conducted by departmental faculty and reviewed upon completion by the Program Review Committee prior to submission to the provost. Articulated program review goals include "[to] assess and improve the quality of the academic programs" and "[to] Monitor program performance and effectiveness . . . ."

Ensuring Quality: Learning Goals and Course Syllabi

Learning goals for each academic program and department are developed in accordance with standards appropriate to their respective disciplines and are aligned with the mission of the department and the University. Course "leveling," as represented by the University's course numbering system, indicates whether a particular course is offered at the introductory, intermediate, advanced, or graduate level. The syllabus for each course, which is guided by a standard template, specifies the course number and University outcomes appropriate to the particular level, discipline, and area of study, thereby articulating the University's educational standards and values. Each course syllabus also contains specific information that aligns with the master syllabus for either general education or the major program. This ensures also that the University's mission and policies relevant to academic performance are articulated in each course syllabus.

General education and departmental outcomes are memorialized in the Academic Catalog as well as in each program's end-of-year report. General education and departmental syllabi templates are available on the University's website.

Ensuring Quality: External Reviewers

The quality of Clarke University programs is also verified in several disciplines through review by specialized accrediting agencies, as noted in Criteria Two and Four, and by other external measures, such as licensure examinations. For example, the most recent Clarke student pass rates on the National Physical Therapy Exam (NPTE)—97%—fall well within the standards established by the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE); similarly, the Nursing Department boasts a 100% pass rate on the most recent round of licensure examinations.

In addition to the standard instructional programming common to higher education programs, the athletic training, nursing, education, social work, and physical therapy programs at Clarke University require clinical education that meets specific standards established by governing bodies external to the University, as noted above. The University maintains contracts with clinical education sites (all of which have appropriate state approval) in a wide range of settings to

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

ensure clinical experience that meets the requirements of the discipline and the career goals of the student. Feedback from clinical educators—licensed, practicing professionals—provides evidence that Clarke University students perform at or above expected levels, based on their progress in their specific program.

Ensuring Quality and Consistency of Outcomes Across Modes of Delivery

Clarke University offers educational programs in traditional, hybrid, and online delivery formats. To ensure program quality and consistency of outcomes, the multiple levels of review for each new and continuing program are the same for hybrid and online programs as for those delivered traditionally. All courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels must provide evidence that they have established clear educational standards, as represented in the stated learning outcomes, and that they have fashioned clear and effective means by which to measure students' progress in terms of those outcomes. This is true whether the course is delivered face-to-face or online.

For example, programs of study in the Clarke University TimeSaver program, designed to meet the needs of adult and nontraditional students 24 years of age and older, maintain the same learning outcomes as those specified in the same courses offered in the daytime program to traditional-age students and delivered face-to-face. Although TimeSaver courses are delivered in hybrid format, alternating online and classroom instruction, course standards are consistent with those of the same courses delivered traditionally and are reviewed in the same manner. The University's instructional designer assists in the development of the online component of TimeSaver courses and assesses their quality utilizing the Quality Matters™ rubric (a national standard for online course design), assuring that standards for quality are met prior to course delivery.

Ensuring Quality: Transfer of Credit

Clarke University maintains articulation agreements with several regional community colleges related to transfer of credit for students transferring to Clarke. The quality of programs accepted in these articulation agreements has been verified by Clarke University faculty members within the appropriate disciplines prior to the articulations being approved and implemented. These community colleges include Eastern Iowa Community College, Kirkwood Community College, Northeast Iowa Community College, Highland Community College, and Wisconsin Southwest Technical College.

CORE COMPONENT 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.*

Breadth of learning and the acquisition of a wide range of literacies are fundamental to Clarke University's educational mission and its identity as a liberal arts institution. The University prides itself on educating its students for lifelong learning in the most meaningful sense—learning that will lead its graduates to lives of curiosity, exploration, and reflection in whatever endeavors they undertake. Further, the University believes that an education characterized by breadth is fundamental to professional success and informed citizenship.

Breadth of Learning: The Clarke University General Education Program

Clarke University's general education outcomes, as memorialized in the Academic Catalog, are these:

1. An ability to engage in a process of spiritual growth in a dialogue which includes the Catholic tradition
2. Competent use of language in a variety of settings
3. Thinking skills informed by experience, knowledge, insight, and reflection
4. A breadth and integration of knowledge in the fine arts, humanities, math and natural sciences, and social sciences

Viewed broadly, Clarke's general education program provides students with (1) a breadth of knowledge in the liberal arts, (2) a set of essential academic skills and competencies, and (3) a moral and spiritual foundation that is the hallmark of education in the Catholic tradition. The institution does this within a structure of requirements linked to the four specific general education outcomes and foreign language, mathematics, and technology proficiencies.

Clarke's general education program in the BA and BS is a 48- to 51-credit program, consisting of the following.

- Foundational studies (18 credits): 6 credits in Cornerstone, 6 credits in philosophy, and 6 credits in religious studies
- Divisional studies (24 credits): 6 credits in each of the four divisions of humanities, mathematics and natural sciences, social sciences, and fine arts (offerings in each division are integrated around a set of shared divisional outcomes)
- General education electives (6 credits)
- Capstone (0 to 3 credits)

The general education program also involves the completion of

- Proficiencies in foreign language, writing, mathematics, and technology
- A diversity studies requirement

Together, these requirements, with appropriate learning outcomes, structure a learning experience for students that combines broad

> The University prides itself on educating its students for lifelong learning in the most meaningful sense—learning that will lead its graduates to lives of curiosity, exploration, and reflection in whatever endeavors they undertake.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

exposure to the liberal arts (knowledge), the development of a set of essential academic abilities (skills), and a distinctly Catholic formation in the moral and spiritual dimensions of human existence (values).

General Education, the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, and the BVM Core Values

A Clarke education is an intentionally broad, interdisciplinary, and richly intellectual liberal arts education. This is not only because Catholic higher education fosters dialogue between faith and fields of inquiry, which is the Catholic intellectual tradition, but also because interdisciplinary breadth itself is necessary to produce informed, thoughtful members of the world community—an institutional goal that supports the mission of the University.

Education at Clarke orients students to the higher values of care, service to others, justice, peaceful resolution to conflict, respect for individual rights, and social responsibility (personal qualities identified in the mission statement), particularly as these relate to the BVM core values of charity (unconditional love) and freedom (the ability to "live" unconditional love). As an institution deeply influenced by the religious charism of the BVM religious community, Clarke emphasizes spirituality as a practice of self-awareness directed toward personal growth, the cultivation of compassion for others, and dedication to the common good.

General Education Program Development and Review

At the time of the last Higher Learning Commission comprehensive visit in 2004, the current general education program had just come into existence. Developed between 1999 and 2003, the program was inaugurated in 2003, with implementation completed in fall 2007. As a result, Clarke's 2004 HLC self-study presented simply the "blueprint" of the envisioned program. In the intervening years, the general education program has been set fully in place and formally reviewed, with elements of the program modified to ensure quality.

In the early years of the program, efforts centered on building structure: developing new courses, rubrics, curriculum maps, assessment reporting forms and timelines, guidelines for proficiency assessments and academic placement, and annual reports. As implementation proceeded, two elements from the original proposal were dropped (the student portfolio and designated capability courses). But on the whole, the envisioned structure was realized, and the first program review in 2008 noted generally positive support for the program among faculty members.

The director of general education and the General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC), consisting of seven elected division representatives, have provided the nexus of support for the implementation and ongoing review of the general education program.

Role of the General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC)

The GEAC serves three purposes: (1) to promote and ensure the quality of the liberal arts curriculum and its centrality to

undergraduate programs at Clarke University; (2) to serve as a resource for reviewing and making recommendations relative to the Clarke University general education program; and (3) to provide guidance for students and faculty relative to the ongoing implementation of the general education program. The director of general education chairs the committee and in this capacity reports to the provost.

The GEAC works with the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the Assessment Committee. The EPC gives final approval to general education course or policy changes proposed by the GEAC, while the Assessment Committee has a subcommittee that reviews the general education end-of-year report and makes recommendations. Assessment of general education outcomes occurs at the foundational, divisional, and capstone levels. In this manner, the integrity of the program is maintained.

Detailed description and analysis of general education assessment is provided in Criterion Four.

General Education Program Variation: Bachelor of Applied Studies

The one notable variation to the general education program occurs in the specific degree requirements for the bachelor of applied studies (BAS) degree in (1) supervision and leadership and (2) information technology. The BAS degree is not intended to be the equivalent of either the BA or BS degree; rather, the BAS is designed for community college graduates with a technical AAS degree. Students transfer up to a maximum of 64 hours from their AAS degree and then complete 60 hours at Clarke, including 30 hours of general education and 30 hours of major-emphasis coursework.

The two BAS degree programs began in 2008. At the time of proposal, rationale for the appropriateness of the BAS to the mission of the University was noted as follows:

> This program provides access to continuing studies for those students who were previously not entered on a higher education degree path. Traditionally, graduates from technical AAS programs have been able to transfer a maximum of 16 hours of technical credit toward a four-year degree. Most have opted not to pursue further education because this limitation would result in having to begin their studies virtually from scratch.

The BAS proposal enabled students to maximize allowance for their transfer credits and to complete bachelor degrees in a reasonable period of time.

General Education: A Continuous Evolution

In recent years, the University's general education program has continued to evolve. Several noteworthy changes follow.

- Faculty members teaching GNED110 Cornerstone I and GNED111 Cornerstone II, foundational philosophy courses, and foundational religious studies courses have reviewed and refined learning outcomes. Cornerstone set

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

aside outcomes related to student adjustment to university life and the Clarke heritage in order to focus entirely on the development of writing, speaking, and research skills. Foundational philosophy courses increased emphasis on logic and critical thinking to better address articulated thinking outcomes. Foundational religious studies courses began to introduce Catholic social teaching as a result of the emphasis on this in the University's 2007–2012 strategic plan, *Set the Course, Secure the Future.*

- Because of lack of clarity in their original form, the general education spirituality outcome and rubric were rewritten during academic year 2010–2011.

- Concerns over student recruitment and retention led to the development of more flexible policies on acceptance of general education transfer credit.

- The switch to a hybrid delivery mode in the TimeSaver program led to increased emphasis on culture in the content of Spanish language courses.

- Modifications to required general education hours for the two BAS degrees were implemented.

Intellectual Inquiry and Information Literacy

Clarke University recognizes the centrality of intellectual inquiry and information literacy to the goals of higher education. As liberally educated individuals, Clarke graduates are held accountable not only for being able to access sources of information skillfully, but also for being able to interpret the information presented with understanding, to analyze and synthesize it effectively, and to utilize it prudently. All degree programs and most general education courses require students to engage in some form of research-based activity; depending on course and departmental outcomes, this activity occurs at the introductory, reinforcement, or emphasis level.

Intellectual inquiry and information literacy: Introductory level

Cornerstone I and II. First-year traditional age students matriculating to Clarke University enroll in GNED110 Cornerstone I and GNED111 Cornerstone II, a two-semester sequenced course whose outcomes align with two of the University's four general education outcomes: (1) Demonstrate competent use of language in a variety of settings, and (2) Demonstrate thinking skills informed by experience, knowledge, insight, and reflection. Cornerstone I is devoted principally to the development of students' writing and public speaking skills; Cornerstone II focuses on the building of skills essential to the research process and to the creation and presentation of a research-based product. The development of skills related to the effective use of information thus receives attention at the introductory level in Cornerstone II. (Transfer and TimeSaver students, who typically do not enroll in Cornerstone, develop these skills in GNED120 Writing Practicum, discussed later in this section.)

We must wake up their minds by constantly calling into action their powers of observation and reasoning, and incite them to ascertain for themselves.

Mary Frances Clarke
1884

Although Cornerstone II instructors are given appropriate latitude in determining the parameters of the research project they require of students, these must include activities contributing to the development of skills integral to effective research-based writing. Employing the fundamentals of process writing pedagogy, which places a premium on revision as learning, Cornerstone II faculty members require students to produce multiple drafts of their major writing assignments for the course, including the research paper. While writing the research paper takes center stage in Cornerstone II, and while the paper itself is one measure of its author's competent use of language (the third general education outcome), this course also provides students with the opportunity to share their research in oral presentations to their peers.

Honors Cornerstone. The Honors Program's goals of invigorating exceptional students and deepening their love of learning take root in Honors Cornerstone, a course offered in the spring semester of each academic year. Here, students collaborate in carrying out the research process, in writing a research document, and in preparing a presentation to the entire Clarke community, typically scheduled for April. Students declare a topic for research and develop a strategy for carrying out that research and presenting it to the public; the Honors instructor acts primarily as guide and mentor. Students in Honors Cornerstone are held to high standards in the quality of their research, the critical and analytical framework of their piece, and their public presentation. They receive evaluative feedback on their formal presentation from their instructors and from selected audience members using the [General Education Speaking Rubric](#).

Students in Honors Cornerstone also present their work at the annual Clarke University Student Research Conference. This is a venue that offers them additional practice in sharing the results of their research with a broad and diverse audience.

Transfer and TimeSaver students. Transfer and TimeSaver students who demonstrate the need for an intensive writing course to prepare for the demands of research-based writing in their classes enroll in GNED120 Writing Practicum. A major focus of Practicum is the development of information literacy skills: accessing and selecting appropriate resources, weighing the validity and credibility of those resources, evaluating the usefulness of those resources to the selected research topic, and analyzing and synthesizing the information extracted from those sources in self-generated writing.

Intellectual inquiry and information literacy: Reinforcement level

The approach to intellectual inquiry and information literacy at the reinforcement level varies across academic departments, typically within major programs of study. Each department has developed clear learning outcomes, and although outcome statements vary among disciplines, all departments include a research component addressing intellectual inquiry and information literacy. For example, undergraduate students in the Accounting and Business Department must demonstrate the ability to analyze and synthesize data and

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

information and construct cogent arguments that take into consideration numerous factors. Students in the History/Political Science Department must be able to identify, analyze, and interpret primary and secondary historical sources and data.

Department curriculum maps display where learning outcomes are measured at the introduction, reinforcement, and emphasis levels. The Chemistry Department's curriculum map, for example, shows where research skills are assessed at each of these levels. Some departments require students to complete research-specific courses at the 200- and 300-level before the culminating capstone course. Among these are the Nursing Department (NURS322 Nursing Research), the Psychology Department (PSYC320 Social Science Research Methods), and the Religious Studies Department (RELS387 Guided Research).

Intellectual inquiry and information literacy: Emphasis level

At the most advanced level, students demonstrate competence in research/information literacy in departmental capstone courses, where they give evidence of their ability to integrate knowledge from multiple—and sometimes disparate—disciplines. Some academic majors (e.g., art history, biology, history, philosophy, Spanish) require a research project and its presentation in written and oral form as a culminating project. In other majors, the research project and/or capstone product is discipline specific: successful completion of case studies for accounting and business majors; gallery exhibitions for studio art and graphic design majors; a programming/design project for computer information systems majors; documentation of field placements for social work majors. All departments offer students opportunities to share their research with their peers and other members of the Clarke community.

Academic Supports for the Development of Intellectual Inquiry and Information Literacy Skills

In order to meet the need for additional or more focused instruction experienced by some students, faculty members may enlist the services of academic support providers, chief among them the University's reference and instructional librarian, who aids students in locating appropriate sources of information. A second source of support is the Writing Center, where academic coaches offer one-to-one assistance in all phases of the writing process. It is in this setting that many students find answers to questions they have about their paper's focus, organization, and development. It is also here that issues related to appropriate documentation often surface as Writing Center clients learn the variety of ways they might incorporate source material into their writing in a manner consistent with standard practice and within academic integrity guidelines.

Information Literacy: Ongoing Efforts

Clarke University continues to seek additional ways to ensure that information literacy is understood within the institution and is regarded as essential to student learning. In fall 2010, a contingent of

representatives (administration, library staff, and faculty members) attended the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) Conference on Information Literacy with the goals of (1) assessing information literacy at the University and (2) identifying ways to improve information literacy skills within the disciplines. Clarke's participation was triggered by spring [2010 *National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results*](), which indicated that Clarke students wrote fewer and shorter papers than students at comparable institutions—a finding consistent with previous NSSE surveys.

Pursuant to the conference, a task force was formed and charged with gathering data about information literacy at Clarke. The task force presented their findings and recommendations at a faculty assembly; their recommendations, along with current progress toward these goals, follow.

- *Discuss information literacy as a department.* Over the past several years, library staff members have attempted to generate discussion about information literacy at the departmental level. The library director and the reference and instructional librarian have held meetings with several departments with varying degrees of success.

- *Reinforce information literacy skills at each level of undergraduate study.* Library staff members continue to address information literacy by hosting instructional sessions during which attendees are introduced to library resources and taught basic research skills, such as evaluating sources or narrowing topics. The staff continues to provide ancillary instruction in most Cornerstone sections as well as several capstone courses.

- *Consider collaborating with librarians, embedding workshops in classes, and using relevant library tutorials.* The library staff continues to work with the faculty when asked to host workshops tailored to requirements imposed by particular assignments or projects. Ongoing collaboration occurs with some courses (e.g., GNED110 and 111 Cornerstone I and II) and departments (Language and Literature, Music, Philosophy, and Social Work). In addition, various professors have recommended specific library tutorials or embedded completion of such tutorials into their course outcomes.

- *Devote a teaching circle to discussing information literacy and sharing successful practices.* Topics of discussion in teaching circles are determined by members of those circles. To date, no teaching circle has selected information literacy as a topic for discussion.

- *Consider adopting an information literacy rubric aligned with the needs of each discipline.* Most recently, the reference and instructional librarian has worked with the CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar faculty to develop a rubric for the course, one of whose outcomes is to introduce

students to the goals and processes of critical thinking, a component of which is information literacy. Currently, rubrics specific to information literacy are absent in a number of disciplines, and the effectiveness of the rubric is being evaluated.

Breadth of Learning and Diversity

As declared in its institutional outcomes, Clarke University envisions its graduates as persons who believe in and accept "diversity in people and ideas." To this end, a Clarke education prepares students for a world that is increasingly complex and diverse. The University's faculty, staff, and administration—and Clarke students themselves—commonly characterize the climate at Clarke as welcoming and inclusive. This spirit of inclusiveness and hospitality grows out of Clarke's BVM heritage and reflects the sacramental principle of Catholicism that sees the whole of creation, including all the variations of humanity and human culture, as essentially good and valuable.

In that regard, Clarke students are both exposed to the diversity of the world and encouraged to view that diversity in a positive light. This happens in a number of academic and co-curricular areas. The diversity studies component of the general education program, for example, introduces students to diversity in many forms, including culture, gender, race, ethnicity, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, human capacity, and socioeconomic status.

The University's diversity efforts have strong student support: The most recent (2012) Campus Climate Survey results indicated that 91.39% of respondents strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement "I believe that being able to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds will help me after college."

Clarke University diversity requirement

As noted earlier in this report, the Clarke University diversity requirement is described in the Academic Catalog. To summarize briefly, students are required to complete two diversity experiences, which may occur in a curricular setting, a co-curricular setting, or a combination of both. Academic courses approved for the diversity requirement represent several curricular areas and include fine arts (ARHS135 Introduction to World Art, MUSC126 Music in World Cultures), humanities (ENGL231 Literature of Diversity, PHIL250 Asian Philosophy, PHIL270 Philosophy of Women, RELS222 Multicultural Faces of Jesus, SPAN103/104 Intermediate Spanish I and II,) and social sciences (POLI210/HIST210 Modern World Politics, SOC202 Race and Ethnicity) offerings—as well as those in professional programs (e.g., EDUC119 Multicultural Education).

All co-curricular diversity activities must be approved by the director of general education and the GEAC. A minimum five-hour commitment is expected of a student in this type of initiative for the student to satisfy the diversity requirement. A typical co-curricular activity involves the student working in the community, volunteering for or participating in cultural events, or conducting interviews with

community members involved in the activity. The spirit of the requirement is to encourage students to move beyond the boundaries of the campus—and their own life experiences—to apprehend the richness and interconnectedness of human life and to appreciate the breadth of human endeavor.

Clarke University's commitment to inclusivity

It is important to note that the essence of Clarke's commitment to inclusivity is also represented in ways other than programmatic requirements. The fullness of this commitment can be seen in many different aspects of institutional discourse. For example, the University's first general education outcome, which refers to the student's "ability to engage in a process of spiritual growth in a dialogue that includes the Catholic tradition," places emphasis on growth in spirituality as opposed to development of distinctively Catholic modes of thinking and belief. Courses offered by the Religious Studies Department take into account the range of students' religious beliefs; consequently, students engage with the Catholic tradition from whatever perspective they bring to the discourse. This carefully implemented dialectic underscores the powerful truth that openness to and exploration of "difference" is a path to intellectual and personal growth.

Faculty Contributions to Scholarship and the Arts

It is understood that Clarke University, as an institution of higher learning, has as one of its primary foci the creation and sustenance of a research agenda for its faculty. This agenda places great value on traditional scholarship that is widely disseminated, either through presentation at a professional conference or through publication in a refereed journal, and on artistic activity that involves external review, such as a juried exhibition. Many Clarke faculty members distinguish themselves in their research or creative efforts while maintaining their usual teaching load during the academic year. Still others do so during breaks, sabbatical release time, or the summer months. In undertaking research and creative endeavors, faculty members acknowledge and honor their role within the greater community of public intellectuals.

Although their scholarship or creative work encompasses a wide range of subjects and occurs in a variety of forms, faculty members frequently center their efforts on projects that have direct bearing on their professional development as teachers. This scholarship involves the challenging and continuous process of (1) establishing appropriately rigorous learning outcomes, (2) selecting and creating materials that will advance learning, (3) designing and delivering effective instruction, (4) assessing student growth and development in ways that provide meaningful feedback to students and that drive improvement in their skills as educators, and (5) redesigning courses for online instruction. To provide an educational experience wholly characterized by excellence is the University's *raison d'etre* and is at the heart of its mission.

University support for faculty research and creative initiatives

Two budget line items exist to support faculty scholarship and creative activity, one of which is designated specifically for faculty summer grants. Recipients of these grants showcase their accomplishments at least once during the academic year, typically at the Books, Bites, Brilliance program presented during the spring term. The Faculty-Staff Recognition event, also held each spring, gives further testimony to the scholarly and professional accomplishments of faculty during the preceding year and acknowledges those who will undertake research or creative initiatives over the coming summer. Among other supports, the University also provides funds for faculty travel, conference attendance, and payment of membership dues for professional organizations.

Student Contributions to Scholarship and the Arts

An essential part of the University's research agenda is the emphasis on contributions to scholarship and the arts by both undergraduate and graduate students. Undergraduate students' contributions to scholarship in their disciplines are perhaps best evidenced in two venues: the capstone performance (described earlier in this criterion), which is a requirement for graduation, and the Clarke University Student Research Conference held each spring, for which students voluntarily submit entries.

As noted earlier, capstone courses may require students to undertake research, either independently or jointly with a faculty member or other mentor. Students' work undergoes rigorous scrutiny by department faculty before it is accepted—a process that underscores for students the high standards that must be met in the graduate and professional arenas.

The Clarke University Student Research Conference showcases students' contributions to scholarship in a wide array of disciplines. Recognizing that scholarly achievement is not confined to those in the University's graduate and honors programs, conference organizers have opened the event to all students interested in presenting their work. Accepted submissions include research projects conducted by individuals or teams; students can deliver their work formally in an oral program or informally via poster presentation. In spring 2013, almost 100 students presented their research at the conference.

Clarke University's rich tradition of commitment to the arts gives rise to multiple opportunities each year for students to contribute creatively to the cultural life of the campus and the wider community. Student musical performances (e.g., Musical Menus on Broadway and For a Blessed Christmas) fill annual activities calendars. Publications such as the *The Courier* (the student newspaper), *The Catalyst* (a magazine produced annually by communications students), and *Tenth Muse* (a literary magazine produced by students affiliated with the Language and Literature Department), all available in print and online formats, enable students to practice the art of writing for a variety of audiences. Student scholarship in language and literature is given voice in

Streamlines, an annual tri-college event whose history bears a distinctive Clarke imprint and that showcases students' scholarly and creative writing. Art and graphic design students exhibit their work throughout the academic year in the University's Quigley Gallery 1550. Over the past several years, students and faculty in the Drama Department have been invited to perform and merited achievement awards at the Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival.

University support for student research and creative initiatives

The University's support for student research includes the awarding of funds for student travel to conferences and exhibits. The newly formed Student Travel Fund was developed for the purpose of assisting Clarke students with travel expenses for Clarke-affiliated academic and service-related activities; these funds are dispensed through the Office of Institutional Advancement. The Student Travel Fund Committee, consisting of two faculty members, two staff members, and the assistant director of development for annual funds, awards funding four times each year. In addition, a line item in the provost's budget contains funds for student research. During AY2012–2013, for example, this fund supported six nursing students in their attendance at the National Student Nurses' Association Annual Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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

Clarke University employs a highly qualified and dedicated faculty and staff committed to the institution's educational mission, sensitive to student needs, and intent on ensuring the currency and quality of the University's academic programs and student services.

Number, Quality, and Roles of Faculty

As noted earlier in this document, Clarke University boasts a student-to-faculty ratio of 10:1, demonstrating that the institution possesses a sufficient number of faculty members to carry out its educational mission. AY2013–2014 figures showed that, of these, 84 are full-time, 4 are part-time, and 57 hold adjunct status.

Of equal importance is the quality of the faculty. All full-time faculty members are hired as the result of rigorous national searches and according to standards articulated in the Clarke University Faculty Recruitment Handbook; all are evaluated carefully and systematically once employed. In keeping with the University's commitment to faculty stewardship of the curriculum, faculty members determine curricular and program content, strategies for instruction, and student learning outcomes. Individual faculty members assess student learning within their courses. As noted earlier in this criterion, the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the Graduate Council oversee and approve all curricular and program changes.

In addition to their primary role in curriculum design and development, faculty members also serve on policy-making

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

committees and task-related committees for the entire University. They are elected by their peers to serve on two major policy committees related to curriculum and development: the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the Graduate Council. In addition, faculty members serve on the Honors Committee, overseeing the activities of the Honors Program, and the Library Committee, which acts as a liaison between the library and the Clarke teaching, learning, and research community. Faculty members also are involved in advising and professional activity, and participate in the Clarke and local communities through various forms of service.

Standards for Tenure

To ensure appropriate academic and other preparation for its full-time tenured faculty, the institution holds specific standards for tenure appointment eligibility, including possession of a terminal degree. Over the past three years, the percentage of Clarke faculty members who hold the PhD or other terminal degree in their discipline or clinical profession has increased from 64% to 69%. In addition, 13 faculty members are currently pursuing terminal degrees. However, the institution does employ in nontenured positions those individuals without terminal degrees who bring extensive educational or other work-related experience to the academic programs they serve.

Standards for faculty promotion and tenure are described in detail in the Faculty Evaluation Manual.

Evaluation of Faculty Performance

In addition to possessing the appropriate degree or professional experience and licensure, Clarke faculty members are expected to (1) remain current in their respective disciplines, (2) use this currency of knowledge in the interest of the teaching–learning enterprise, and (3) develop a breadth of knowledge that enriches their teaching by making connections to other areas within their areas of expertise or related fields.

Because of the emphasis the University places on effective teaching and the professional activity that sustains it, the faculty evaluation process is comprehensive and rigorous. The Faculty Personnel Board (FPB) is responsible for evaluating and, when appropriate, recommending revision of the evaluation process to the Faculty Policy Committee (FPC). The Faculty Evaluation Manual provides a set of standards in the areas of teaching, professional activity, and service. The manual is available to all faculty members on the University website; forms used in the evaluation process can be downloaded from this site.

The standards memorialized in the manual include a description of the three roles (teaching, scholarly or creative endeavor, and service) established to evaluate faculty and examples of typical activities within these roles. Each faculty member determines the percentage given her or his work in the respective categories in the annual evaluation, within ranges specified by the University and articulated in the Evaluation Manual. The percentages are agreed on in an annual goal-setting process involving faculty members and department

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

chairs. Teaching, by policy, carries the greatest weight within the evaluation system. Performance is evaluated using a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (unacceptable) to 4 (exemplary).

Student input to evaluation of faculty members occurs through use of the *Course/Instructor Evaluation Questionnaire* (CIEQ). This tool provides feedback for comparing individual faculty members to internal subgroups (college, department) as well as to national norms; it also yields data by subscales related to the faculty member's attitude, teaching methods, selection of course content, and level of perceived interest in the course. This information is used in faculty development efforts.

Institutional Support for Professional Development

The value Clarke University places on effective teaching is evidenced by the support it provides its faculty in keeping abreast of research on teaching and learning and in keeping pace with technological advances that affect student learning and instructional delivery. Supporting the faculty in these endeavors is one of the chief responsibilities of the Faculty Development Committee (FDC), whose role is described in the Clarke University Employment Manual. This committee provides support for faculty development through a range of initiatives that includes a mentoring program, teaching circles, and other developmental activities. For example, the FDC plays a significant role in planning the annual August faculty in-service days, scheduling speakers and arranging faculty presentations.

The institution provides financial support directly to faculty members for their professional development in the following ways.

- Funding in the amount of $700 is available annually to each faculty member for attendance at professional conferences and workshops. Additional endowed funding, provided by a Title III grant, is available through the office of the provost.
- Faculty members who teach in the TimeSaver and graduate programs are assisted by the instructional designer in developing their hybrid course(s) in the University's state-of-the-art Faculty Development Center. Each faculty member who works with the instructional designer receives a $2,000 stipend: $1,000 upon completion of course design and $1,000 after delivery of the course.
- A competitive summer grant program funds faculty development and research. Selection of grant recipients is the responsibility of the Faculty Development Committee.
- A sabbatical program provides funds for faculty members each year for the purpose of professional growth, either for one semester at full salary or for one year at half-salary.

In addition to these funded opportunities, nonfinancial or indirect support of faculty development includes numerous opportunities.

- An annual two-day meeting (Opening Workshop) the week before classes begin each August brings the entire faculty

We must acquire a general knowledge… not for our own gratification or pleasure simply,… but to increase our influence and usefulness as a means to accomplish the end of our holy vocation.

Mary Frances Clarke 1884

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

and staff together. In addition to community-building events such as a state of the university report from the president and the introduction of new faculty and staff members, the workshop gives participants the opportunity to hear nationally recognized speakers on topics related to teaching and learning. In recent years, presenters have dealt with such topics as the nature of Catholic identity and effective instructional strategies for millennial learners. At the 2013–2014 introductory workshop, keynote speaker Maryellen Weimer, PhD, Professor Emerita at Penn State Berks and editor of *The Teaching Professor* newsletter, offered insightful responses to the question "What Makes Teaching Learner-Centered?"

Clarke faculty members also share their expertise with each other by leading brief workshops focused on effective instructional delivery and other pertinent topics. Recent opening workshop discussions have updated the faculty on the role and responsibilities of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), new initiatives in academic advising, and the reworking of the general education Spirituality Rubric.

- A mentoring program connects each new faculty member with a seasoned faculty member.

- Teaching circles are organized annually by the Faculty Development Committee for faculty members who wish to gather and share ideas, discuss books, or explore teaching strategies. Title III funding also has been available for faculty members to attend the Teaching Professor Conferences held every year.

- Several workshops on technology-assisted course design, open to all faculty, are held each year. These include working sessions with Moodle, the institution's learning management system.

Accessibility of Faculty

The relationships forged between the Clarke University faculty and its students are fundamental to its educational purposes. Due largely to the institution's culture and the relatively small size of the typical class at Clarke, it is common for strong bonds to be formed between faculty members and students—to see instructors engaged in spirited conversations with students before and after class, in hallways, at a table in the Atrium, or in other areas where students congregate. Full-time faculty members hold office hours for a minimum of eight hours per week; many make themselves available well beyond this minimum. Faculty members are also available by e-mail.

Staff Qualifications, Training, and Professional Development Opportunities

It is an accepted feature of Clarke University's educational purposes that a substantial part of an individual student's learning takes place outside the classroom, studio, or laboratory. In that regard, the

institution's highly qualified staff plays a key role in fulfilling the mission of the institution.

As is common in higher education, the number of full-time and part-time staff members serving Clarke at any one time fluctuates slightly depending on turnover and recruiting. IPEDS numbers for the 2012–2013 academic year indicate that Clarke employed 154 active full-time and 35 active part-time staff members; as of August 2013, 157 full-time and 34 part-time staff members were employed.

Professional or academic qualifications and credentials vary by position, but in every case, Clarke ensures that these requirements are listed on the position posting and that all candidates address them specifically when applying. In general, any position of a direct educational or co-curricular nature requires a minimum of a master's degree. Search and screen procedures are carried out according to the specifications described in the Employment Manual.

Clarke University staff members are supported in their efforts as active learners through development initiatives provided by the institution. The institution offers a range of opportunities in this regard, including webinars, workshops, and other professional development activities. Professional development funding is also available in nonacademic areas of the University. For example, staff members in the Counseling and Career Center have received certification in the *Myers Briggs Type Indicator*, an accomplishment made possible by University funding.

Faculty/Staff Development and Tuition Remission

A key feature of staff development is the University's tuition remission policy, which enables faculty and staff members to enroll in undergraduate or graduate degree programs at no charge. During AY2012–2013, 11 faculty and staff members were enrolled under the terms of this policy. Since 2008, nine faculty and staff members have completed either undergraduate or graduate degrees under this policy; these include two nursing faculty members (with two more in progress) and three physical therapy faculty members.

CORE COMPONENT 3. D. *The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.*

Clarke University's network of support for student learning includes both direct instructional support provided through academic advising and academic support areas such as the MARC, student support services through the Division of Student Life, and a range of material resources that further enable the teaching–learning enterprise. The breadth and quality of these services and resources is further evidence of the University's commitment to a holistic learning environment.

Clarke University's network of support for student learning includes both direct instructional support... and a range of material resources that further enable the teaching – learning enterprise.

The Margaret Mann Academic Resource Center (the MARC)

As noted earlier in this document, the University offers academic support to all students through the Margaret Mann Academic Resource Center—the MARC—located on the upper level of the

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

library. Academic year 2012–2013 saw the inauguration of the MARC as a unified and centralized entity providing academic support. In prior years, supports for students with academic needs were offered by a director of disability services, a learning specialist, and the University's Writing Center—three allied service providers that operated independently. With the hiring of two new staff members in summer 2012, the nature and role of academic support services were recast, leading to a more clearly articulated mission and the establishment of long-range goals and short-term objectives.

In fall 2012, the MARC opened its door as the "umbrella" facility through which all academic support at Clarke is offered. The center is staffed by a director (who also coordinates disability services), a full-time learning specialist, and a full-time director of the Writing Center. Students receive MARC services through self-referral, faculty referral, or advisor referral. Although most of the students who utilize MARC supports are undergraduates enrolled in the traditional daytime and TimeSaver programs, graduate students are welcome and do seek assistance in dealing with the demands of their programs of study.

As a means of assessing client satisfaction with MARC services, students are asked to complete a brief survey at the conclusion of their visit. In AY2012–2013, 305 users completed the survey, with 84.6% declaring themselves very satisfied with services and 13.4% declaring themselves satisfied, for an overall 98% satisfaction rate. Information about the MARC is found in the Academic Catalog and the Student Handbook.

Academic coaching

The MARC's learning specialist assists students in developing strategies for time management, effective study, understanding and interpreting texts, and test taking. The MARC also employs trained academic coaches (peer tutors) who work with clients individually and in small groups, helping them develop strategies for dealing with course-related materials. Coaching is offered in several disciplines, including mathematics, the sciences, nursing, physical therapy, Spanish, and accounting and business. In AY2012–2013, a total of 297 academic coaching contacts were logged in the MARC.

SWAG. The University's supplemental instruction program (Study with a Guide, or SWAG), which also utilizes academic coaching, is coordinated through the MARC under the leadership of the learning specialist, who collaborates with faculty members in developing goals, procedures, and accountability guidelines for the program. SWAG sessions typically occur in the late afternoon and evening hours and historically have been related to the courses regarded by students as highly rigorous: BIOL115 Fundamental Cell Biology and Genetics, CHEM110 General Chemistry I, and MATH220 Statistics, among others. SWAGs have also been conducted for anatomy, microbiology, accounting, and philosophy courses. SWAG sessions are very well attended, and student and instructor feedback has been overwhelmingly positive: In fall 2012, SWAG attendance stood at 381; in spring, SWAG attendance rose to 504.

The Writing Center. The Clarke University Writing Center assists students in the development of effective written expression skills as those skills are applied in the general education, major, and professional programs. Writing Center services are extended to all students at Clarke, including those in the TimeSaver and graduate programs. The center is staffed by the director and a team of academic coaches (peer tutors) who confer individually in real time with clients, offering support in the processes of prewriting, revising, editing, and proofreading. Students may self-refer to the Writing Center, or they may be referred by a faculty member.

According to data collected in the years since the previous HLC visit, Writing Center tutors annually conduct 500 to 750 client interactions; in AY2012–2013, that number stood at 630. Consultations range in length from several minutes to over one hour. Post-conference surveys completed by clients indicate a high level of satisfaction with Writing Center services; many clients return to the center regularly after their first experience there.

MARC-sponsored presentations. As a means of promoting the MARC and extending its services, MARC staff members present to students in seminar format or in the classroom on a variety of topics, including effective reading and study strategies, time management, the basics of writing at the university level, sentence effectiveness, and specific documentation styles used in research writing. In AY 2012–2013, 1,240 student contacts occurred through MARC-sponsored presentations.

Accommodations services. Clarke University complies with federal guidelines in ensuring equal opportunity for academic success to students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities may take advantage of all academic support programs and activities the institution offers. In addition, students with disabilities are allowed reasonable accommodations, which include extended-time testing, distraction-reduced environments for testing, note takers, use of word-processing software for written assignments and examinations, and text-to-speech software.

Academic support and accommodations services for students with disabilities are coordinated through the director of disability services, who also provides information to faculty and staff about educationally relevant disabilities, accommodations rights and responsibilities, and universal design pedagogy. During AY2012–2013, 390 individual contacts with students with identified disabilities were logged by the director of accommodations services.

Support for Students on Academic Probation

Students whose cumulative GPA is lower than 2.0 at the end of a given semester are placed on academic probation. Although the University imposes several conditions on these students—described in the Academic Catalog—substantive measures are in place to assist them in improving academic performance. These include the requirement of developing an academic contract with the assistance of the learning specialist, who works with them throughout the

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

semester and monitors their progress. First-year and sophomore students on academic probation are also automatically enrolled in CU 100 College Study Strategies, a one-credit course that focuses on reading, the development of study and time management skills, and note taking and test-taking strategies. Students on academic warning—those whose semester GPA falls below 2.0 but whose cumulative GPA remains 2.0 or higher—are encouraged to use MARC services.

Academic Support for Student Athletes

The athletic program at Clarke University supports the goal of academic excellence on the part of its student athletes. The Student Athlete Success Program (SASP), instituted in 2009, contributes to these efforts. All first-year and transfer student athletes (regardless of previous academic performance) and all returning athletes with a cumulative GPA lower than 2.8 are automatically enrolled in SASP. Program participants must commit to three hours of study in the Nicholas J. Schrup library each week, either independently or in small groups; these students are also encouraged to utilize services available in the MARC.

In addition to this requirement, students in the program benefit from an electronic reporting system whereby faculty members share pertinent academic information with athletic coaches. The acquisition of Starfish Retention Solutions™ software in AY2012–2013, which allows for convenient tracking and reporting of student progress, enabled the University to integrate SASP into the institution's early alert system; this provides coaches with a system to maintain current information on student athletes' academic performance.

Academic Support for TimeSaver Students

Clarke University TimeSaver students, most of whom are employed during daytime hours, may take advantage of the same academic support systems as students enrolled in undergraduate daytime classes. The admission and advising processes for this population are tailored to the needs of adult students, particularly with respect to personal and professional goals. A representative from the TimeSaver office is available to meet with students on Monday and Thursday from 4:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. (the times when students are on campus) to address individual concerns. In order to provide TimeSaver students access to academic support in the areas of reading, writing, and general study skills, the MARC offers academic coaching during the late afternoon and evening hours Sunday through Thursday. The directors of these centers are available to all TimeSaver students by appointment.

Academic Support for Graduate Students

Graduate students at Clarke are eligible to receive the same academic support as undergraduates. Each graduate student is assigned a graduate advisor, who assists the student in developing her or his academic program. Learning support is provided upon individual student request, although faculty members may refer students to the

MARC. Within the past three years—and coinciding with the inauguration of a doctoral program in nursing—the Writing Center has served increasing numbers of candidates for advanced degrees who seek assistance with challenging scholarly projects requiring professional-level writing.

Other Academic Supports for Student Learning

Nicholas J. Schrup Library

Services and resources provided by the [Nicholas J. Schrup Library](#), immediately adjacent to the Atrium, extend and enhance options for student learning. The library houses more than 100,000 books and 250 hard copy journals, and has access to more than 40,000 full-text electronic journals and 85,000 electronic books through a variety of databases, which include JSTOR, Project Muse, Ebscohost, OVID, and Science Direct. The library also houses a rare books collection containing more than 500 books of significance to Clarke University, including much of the original library collection of Mount St. Joseph Academy, dating back to the nineteenth century. The library features three 20,000 square-foot levels, the newest of which is the Lingen Technology Commons (LTC).

The current library director has effectively transformed the culture of the library, reducing redundancy, increasing digital resources and off-campus access, and encouraging collaborative and social learning. Five full-time library staff members (three holding master's degrees in library science) support faculty and student access to and effective use of library resources. The library's role is first and foremost an educational one, assisting Clarke community members in locating, evaluating, and using information efficiently and effectively through such tools as the self-paced [Searchpath](#) information literacy tutorial. To support classroom instruction focusing on the process and products of research, the facility's reference and instructional librarian regularly conducts seminars or offers classroom presentations on the effective use of library databases and appropriate documentation of source materials.

Lingen Technology Commons (LTC)

Located on the lower level of the library, the LTC houses the University's state-of-the-art, technology-rich classrooms and study areas. The LTC, completed in summer 2012 with funds generated by a Title III Strengthening Institutions Program grant and private donations, was designed with the input of many stakeholders, including students, and reflects a blend of Clarke educational values: the contemporary with the traditional, the sciences with the arts, and the past with the future. The LTC is open during library hours and is staffed by an e-learning specialist and students trained to provide service in e-learning.

Preparing and Supporting Entering Students

Clarke University officially welcomes first-year students to its community in the summer prior to the beginning of fall classes. Recognizing that the transition to university life presents academic,

social, and personal challenges to all first-year traditional-age students, Clarke offers three programs to support them in acclimating to the campus and fulfilling their new responsibilities as independent learners.

- During CORE, entering students register for classes, learn about important student programs and services, and have the opportunity to meet fellow students and interact with members of the faculty and staff.

- The CONNECT program, required of all first-year and transfer students, precedes the start of the academic year. Students arrive on campus several days before classes begin and participate in a variety of academic and social activities.

- A course titled CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar, first offered in AY2012–2013, assists students in developing the attitudes, skills, and behaviors that research has shown to be instrumental in achieving academic success at the university level. Utilizing the seminar format, the course promotes active participation in campus life, assists students in building relationships with members of the Clarke community, and develops critical thinking skills. All full-time first-year students enroll in Transitions.

TimeSaver student orientation

The TimeSaver orientation is different from that of traditional students, befitting their status as adult learners with multiple obligations. TimeSaver students prepare for both classroom-based and online study through an orientation hosted by the TimeSaver staff. At this orientation, students learn how to navigate Moodle, how to communicate with their instructors most effectively, and how best to access campus service providers. The TimeSaver orientation also provides an opportunity for the staff and faculty to offer strategies for balancing the demands of study, employment, and family.

Addressing Academic Preparedness of Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate students enter Clarke University with a wide range of academic preparedness. To address issues that arise from this, the institution has set in place a number of measures to assist under-prepared students. For example, all first-year traditional-age students and all transfer students are required to take a University-designed writing assessment prior to the start of classes. First-year students who demonstrate substandard writing skills on the assessment are required to enroll in a one-credit course, GNED010 Writing and Skills Lab, during the fall semester to address their writing deficiencies. Transfer students earning substandard scores are required to enroll in GNED120 Writing Practicum.

Similarly, students who demonstrate need in mathematics or computer skills are provided with opportunities to remediate, either through specially designed preparatory courses (such as a developmental mathematics course) or through online tutorials. These are described in detail in the Academic Catalog.

Assuring Preparedness: Foundational Courses

The four Clarke University general education outcomes undergird foundational courses in speaking, writing, thinking, and spiritual growth. These courses prepare students for the increasingly complex demands of university-level study. Students must successfully complete six foundational courses: GNED110 and 111Cornerstone I and II, two courses offered by the Religious Studies Department, and two courses offered by the Philosophy Department. These are described in more detail in the Academic Catalog.

First-year students at Clarke University enroll in Cornerstone I and II, described earlier in Criterion Three. Focusing on the development of essential writing and speaking skills, Cornerstone lays the foundation for all other courses in the general education program as well as for the academic major and professional programs. Two general education courses, GNED120 Writing Practicum and GNED123 Speech, provide TimeSaver and transfer students with a strong foundation in writing and speaking as these skills are employed in meeting course outcomes throughout their program of study.

Aligned with the general education outcomes related to thinking, foundational courses in philosophy help lay the groundwork for students' becoming thoughtful, critical students and citizens. Religious studies courses are meaning- and values-based, and while course content is not confined to Catholic thought and teaching, it broadly reflects the Catholic tradition.

Academic Advising at Clarke University

Fundamental to Clarke University's commitment to a student-centered educational environment is the nature and quality of the academic advising that students receive during their program of study. The Academic Advising Committee (AAC), formed in spring 2006, oversees academic advising at the institution. The purpose of the AAC is fourfold:

1. To review the current advising program at Clarke University; to articulate its mission statement, goals,and outcomes; and to develop an assessment plan.
2. To conduct evaluation of the advising program to determine whether and to what degree its mission, goals, and outcomes are being met.
3. To make recommendations relative to the advising program in order to ensure its quality.
4. To articulate clear advisor responsibilities, and provide training and appropriate professional development opportunities.

Since its inception, the AAC has developed a mission, identified learning outcomes (for both advisors and student advisees), and crafted an assessment plan for the advising program. In the formulation of those key components, the committee took into account National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) recommendations as well as the Standards for Academic Advising

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS).

Grounded in teaching and learning, the advising process is approached from a developmental perspective in which students' diverse backgrounds, interests, and abilities are considered and respected. The program helps students navigate their Clarke University education in alignment with their personal, academic, and career goals while becoming self-directed, lifelong learners. Stated advising program values follow.

> *Grounded in teaching and learning, the advising process is approached from a developmental perspective in which students' diverse backgrounds, interests, and abilities are considered and respected.*

- The academic advising program is individualized and student centered; as such, it fosters student responsibility and self-reliance.

- Advising is a learning process that assists students in understanding Clarke's general education and major programs and how the two complement each other.

- Advising takes place in a caring environment. Therefore, each student is treated as a unique individual; the student's personal development and self-esteem are very important to academic advising.

- Academic advising creates a type of relationship that involves trust between advisor and student; both need to be active participants in this process.

To further faculty members' understanding of best practice in student academic advising, the institution provides a range of professional development opportunities. New faculty members receive initial training in effective academic advising prior to the start of fall classes. Ongoing training is offered to all faculty members each summer, prior to CORE, to help them update their skills and to provide new information about advising resources. Currently, an advising "course"—ADV101—is posted on Moodle for faculty reference.

Supporting Teaching and Learning: Infrastructure and Resources

Advancements in infrastructure and technology at Clarke University have always been guided by the needs of faculty, staff, and students. Keeping pace with emerging technologies and infrastructure needs requires careful stewardship of current resources and a collaborative process of information gathering and planning to determine what is needed for each program and facility.

Since the last HLC comprehensive visit, the institution has implemented significant technology infrastructure advancements, responded to rapidly changing student expectations, and supported faculty and students in transformative uses of teaching and learning technologies.

- Built in 1965, Catherine Byrne Hall (CBH) houses the athletic training and physics laboratories, communications lab, physical therapy and nursing classrooms, and a language laboratory in addition to multipurpose classrooms.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

A staged Smart Classroom installation initiative has been completed, resulting in all teaching classrooms being outfitted with ceiling-mounted digital projectors, dedicated teaching computers and speakers, wired and wireless Internet access, and wireless keyboards and mice.

- The Lingen Technology Commons (LTC), described earlier in Criterion Three, has substantially improved the University's instructional technology resource base.

- Quigley Gallery 1550, adjacent to the Atrium, hosts art exhibits throughout the academic year, featuring works by faculty, students, and guest artists from around the world.

- Eliza Kelly Hall (EKH) houses art studios, a graphic design studio, faculty offices, music studios, and practice rooms. Sculpture facilities feature a new kiln installed in 2012 and an outdoor sculpture court. EKH also boasts updated safety features, including a dedicated electrical equipment room for saws, sanders, and other equipment used in three-dimensional work.

- Jansen Music Hall, which seats 225, features state-of-the-art audio and video technology and superb acoustics to support music department productions, cultural events, lectures, and music classes.

- Terence Donaghoe Hall (TDH) houses a 700-seat theater in which the Clarke University Drama Department presents its productions. Recent audio, video, and rigging upgrades provide a professional experience for both audience and actors. TDH is also used for other campus gatherings throughout the year.

- The Robert and Ruth Kehl Center is a 54,000-square-foot sports/recreation complex. The center contains training rooms, classrooms, a conference room, and offices. Recent improvements include the creation of a fitness facility featuring free weights and strength-training equipment. A separate cardiovascular fitness area has been added, providing treadmills, stationary bicycles, elliptical machines, and other cardio equipment. All spaces are outfitted for sound and video.

- Staffed by a full-time instructional designer, the Faculty Technology Center (FTC), located in the upper level of the library, provides technology and support services for faculty members as they design effective learning environments and create engaging digital content. The Faculty Technology Center houses three Apple computers with Windows and Mac operating systems; the Apple iLife Suite to create and edit photos, podcasts, movies, and other media; Raptivity software to create interactive flash-based learning tools; a flat-bed scanner; Camtasia screen capture software; HD video cameras; DVD/VHS conversion and

Clarke UNIVERSITY

digitization hardware and software; microphones; headsets; Livescribe pens; and large graphic tablets.

- The Office of Audiovisual Services recommends, installs, and maintains audio and video equipment on campus in support of classroom instruction and on-campus events. Training and technical assistance is available to instructors and club advisors who utilize the technology in classrooms and other facilities across campus. Audiovisual services provides duplication and conversion services, video and audio recording, and repairs and technical support for all audiovisual technology on campus.

- Significant operational technology advancements at Clarke since the last HLC self-study include the following:
  - New network core and edge infrastructure, providing standardization on the Brocade platform, 10/100/1000 MB speeds, and 99.9% average uptime
  - A standardized campus network environment with Microsoft Windows, Exchange, and Active Directory
  - A new telephone system that, along with other improvements, has provided unified communications, mobility, and teleconferencing capabilities
  - Industry-leading fundraising software, Blackbaud® Raiser's Edge, which provides a system that is easy to use, along with tight integration with Microsoft Office and Outlook calendaring and user-friendly reporting tools

Center for Science Inquiry

Inadequate health and life science teaching and research facilities have been among the most serious academic barriers to recruitment and retention at Clarke University. In response to this need, a new state-of-the-art science facility, the Center for Science Inquiry, opened in fall 2013. The three-story building seamlessly integrates lecture and laboratory spaces in a flexible, modern structure that fosters collaborative, hands-on learning. The new facility creates a learning environment that aligns well with the exceptional quality of the University's science and health science programs and that will enable the University to meet its goal of preparing science practitioners who take leading roles in their respective fields.

Guiding Students in Effective Use of Information Resources

In a global environment characterized by easily accessed and increasingly sophisticated sources of information, Clarke University recognizes the need to continue to be forward thinking about incorporating information literacy skills into the criteria by which students' work is evaluated. As noted earlier in Criterion Three, the University demonstrates commitment to information literacy—that is, the appropriate and most effective use of research materials— through its academic programming and other resources available to students and faculty. These skills and the critical thinking at their core

are introduced in GNED110 and 111 Cornerstone I and II and other 100-level courses, and students' advanced level competency is assessed in their capstone courses. These direct instructional efforts are supported by the academic support facilities and resources, most notably the library and the MARC.

CORE COMPONENT 3. E. *The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.*

An Enriched Environment: Co-Curricular Programs and Services

Co-curricular programs and services at Clarke University engage students in understanding, building, and improving both the campus community and the larger communities of which the University is a part. As such, these programs and services contribute significantly to student learning. The institution regularly collaborates with community-based organizations to provide experiential education opportunities for students. These initiatives also contribute to that element of the 2012–2017 strategic plan that identifies "career-... and life-ready" graduates as one of its primary goals.

Service Learning

The University regards service learning as an "instructional moment" that combines community service with academic instruction to focus on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility. All service learning experiences under Clarke University's aegis have articulated instructional goals and serve the real needs of the community. Many academic programs at Clarke work directly with community-based organizations or through the Division of Student Life to identify existing volunteer and community needs. By participating in one or more of these opportunities, students develop academic skills, a sense of civic responsibility, and a commitment to the community.

In that regard, Clarke University is a member of Iowa Campus Compact, a member of a national consortium of universities and colleges dedicated to advancing higher education's civic mission by effectively building civic learning into campus and academic life. Goals of Iowa Campus Compact are to strengthen existing community service and service learning and to develop new civic engagement initiatives and collaborative service efforts among educational institutions, community organizations, and nonprofit organizations across the state.

Student Life Contributions

Many meaningful co-curricular programs and services at Clarke University are offered through the Division of Student Life, some of which are addressed in other parts of this self-study. These are described in the Student Handbook. Examples include the following.

Intercollegiate athletics

The intercollegiate athletic program at Clarke University plays a key educational role in the lives of its student athletes by integrating the learning that takes place in athletic participation and competition with

For the moral training of our pupils we are n[o] less responsible than for their physical.

Mary Frances Clarke
1884

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

the academic and social life of the University. The program reflects the mission of Clarke and the philosophies of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), the Midwest Collegiate Conference, and the Mid-America Men's Volleyball Intercollegiate Association (MAMVIC). The University strives to promote an environment that fosters discipline and leadership in a spirit of sportsmanship. Clarke fields intercollegiate teams in baseball, basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, soccer, softball, track and field, and volleyball. Participation in the intercollegiate athletic program has increased from 174 students in 2006 to 284 in fall 2012.

Significant areas of growth and accomplishment in athletics over the last five years include adding assistant coaches and initiating junior varsity (JV) programs in baseball, men's basketball, and women's volleyball; adding a men's and women's bowling program; earning the NAIA Gold Star Champions of Character Rating each year of the award's existence; developing the Student Athlete Support Program (SASP); and creating a Clarke University Athletic Hall of Fame. The athletics program also initiated webcasting of athletic competitions, increased the athletic training staff, and was rated first in its conference for academic performance in AY2011–2012 after finishing second the two years prior to that.

Intramural program

The Clarke University intramural program offers structured sports competition and recreation for all members of the campus community. The wide range of activities provides students the opportunity to stay active, maintain physical health, practice good sportsmanship, and, most importantly, have fun. The intramural program has grown steadily from 254 participants in AY2008–2009 to 451 in 2012–2013.

Campus Ministry

Campus Ministry welcomes students, faculty, and staff of all faiths. It endeavors to support the spiritual life of students, to increase and empower the faith community on campus, and to keep alive the vision of the Catholic Church. Students, staff, and faculty join campus ministry staff in serving the University community through Sunday and holy day liturgies, spiritual enrichment experiences, service opportunities, faith sharing groups, social justice programs, global awareness opportunities, and ecumenical prayer, among other programs. Such efforts contribute to Clarke's holistic approach to education and further the ministerial work begun by the institution's foundress. Many Campus Ministry initiatives, especially those proffering service, qualify as diversity studies experiences.

Several Dubuque organizations (among them Hope House, Maria House, the Dubuque Boys' and Girls' Club, Hospice of Dubuque, and parish religious education programs) consistently seek Clarke student volunteers to assist their respective ministries. Service opportunities sponsored by Clarke include <u>Into the Streets</u> (offered twice annually), <u>service learning experiences</u>, and mission trips to such locations as New Orleans, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Holly

Springs, Mississippi. Retreats include Antioch (a weekend retreat during which participants reflect on their relationship with God and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in today's world), and Journey (a 24-hour reflective retreat for students who wish to take what happens on Antioch to a deeper, more personal level). The Busy Person's Retreat, sponsored in partnership with representatives from the Dubuque Area Vocation Association, offers participants the chance to deepen their relationship with God and to balance different aspects of their lives.

Community service hours reported by students, faculty, and staff grew from 6,900 in AY2009–2010 to 8,612 in AY2012–2013. Independent volunteer diversity experiences that meet the University diversity studies requirement through Campus Ministry activities numbered 38 in AY2009–2010, 64 in AY2011–2012, and 36 in AY2012–2013.

Counseling and Career Center

The Clarke University Counseling Center and the Office of Career Services were consolidated in 2010, forming the Counseling and Career Center. In addition to providing individual counseling, counseling staff members make referrals to outside professionals when necessary, work with students experiencing adjustment issues, offer substance abuse education and referral, provide education about time and stress management, and advise clients on relationships of all kinds.

Career services staff assist students with job shadowing, internship, and service learning opportunities; provide instruction and resources related to resume and cover letter writing and interviewing; offer graduate school application assistance, and collaborate with faculty in implementing the one-credit course, CSC101 Career Edge I, which combines on-campus employment with academic coursework. Career Services also participates in an annual career fair with other institutions of higher learning in the Dubuque area. Through its efforts, Career Services plays a significant role in helping the University prepare students who are life and career ready.

Health Services

The Office of Health Services promotes health in body and mind, thereby assisting students in achieving academic success at Clarke University. The office is staffed by a registered nurse from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. Monday through Friday; nurse practitioner services are available by appointment. In the past three years, more than 5,000 student visits to the office have been logged.

Since 2008, the office has surveyed students with the intent of learning whether the education provided during visits enables students to advocate for themselves by practicing preventative health. Survey results have led to new partnerships with nurse practitioners and more service offerings, including Pap tests, STD testing, laboratory studies in partnership with United Clinical Lab, immunizations, and comprehensive physical examinations.
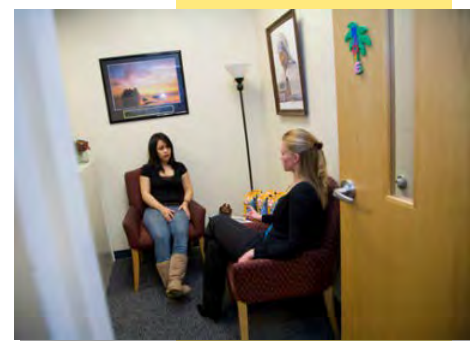
Residence Life

Living in campus residence halls plays an integral role in students' intellectual, social, and emotional development. Communal living provides opportunities for learning to balance one's rights as an individual with his or her responsibility to contribute to a respectful, engaged, and courteous living environment. When students sign their housing contracts, they agree to abide by a certain set of expectations that are necessary for the safe and smooth operation of the halls and for the development of an environment conducive to learning.

Clarke University residence halls are overseen by the director of residence life and are staffed by assistant directors (ADs) of residence life, senior managers, and student resident assistants (RAs). RAs live on the residence hall floors for which they assume responsibility; they are selected based on their leadership characteristics and knowledge of the resources on campus. RAs are responsible for helping create a strong sense of community and ensuring that community standards are upheld. Senior managers are undergraduate students who work closely with an AD to assist in community development, safety and security, mentoring and growth of the RA staff, and the administrative processes that are necessary to a positive living environment.

The Office of Residence Life has conducted a quality of life survey each year since 2009 with the intent of creating and maintaining a welcoming, respectful, and interactive community on each floor. Survey results over that span of time have indicated that students are generally satisfied with their residential experience. Five areas for improvement were targeted based on data yielded by this survey and have been successfully addressed.

1. As a result of student interest in more weekend programming, the number and variety of weekend activities were increased. Residence Life reports have noted that the consistent average of students who have remained on campus during the weekends from October 2009 to May 2013 ranged from 77% to 85%.
2. Students expressed greater satisfaction with residence hall facilities in AY2011–2012 than in previous years because of consistent improvements to those facilities.
3. Emerging wireless Internet issues were addressed with a new policy that bans personal wireless routers and printers.
4. In response to students' needs and preferences, the institution initiated new dining service options that included extended hours of operation, changes to the flex dollar program, and changes to meal plan organization.
5. Students desired more learning-based activities. Consequently, the University increased focus on programming related to social issues, including multiculturalism, alcohol, drugs, sexual violence, time management, and study skills.

Student Activities

The University sponsors 25 student organizations that provide a range of opportunities for students. The Office of Student Activities enhances student learning by promoting participation in social,

cultural, intellectual, and recreational programming. For example, students take part in annual activities and traditions such as Convocation and Tree Planting, Family Weekend, Homecoming, Crusaders for Justice Week, Christmas Dinner, Passport Dance, May Daze, and the Honors Banquet. The Clarke Activities Board (CAB) serves as the official campus-wide programming organization that selects, promotes, and produces entertainment programming for the Clarke community.

Participation in clubs, organizations, and groups provides substantive opportunities for students to develop leadership skills. Every student who pays a student activities fee is a member of the Clarke Student Association (CSA). The CSA is led by a senate, composed of four executive board officers and all class officers, that meets regularly during the academic year. Students serve on various campus committees including the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the Arts at Clarke Committee.

Other Co-curricular Programming

The University offers co-curricular programs through collaboration of faculty and staff. These include fine arts programs, lecture series, and student publications.

The fine arts

Clarke University's fine arts departments present high-quality performances and exhibitions throughout the academic year, contributing to the institution's mission to educate the whole person. Monthly exhibitions of fine art and/or design work are presented in Quigley Gallery 1550. Students and faculty of the Drama Department and Music Department present public performances each year in the University's two performance facilities, Jansen Music Hall and Terence Donaghoe Hall as well as in other campus areas.

Lecture series

Each year, Clarke University sponsors a variety of lectures on subjects of academic and social interest.

- The Mackin-Mailander Lecture series, established through an endowment by two Clarke alumnae (Mary Mackin '34 and Verna Slattery-Mailander '20), features a prominent outside speaker, a faculty lecturer, and an alumni lecturer. The series presents programming on both academic and general subjects.

- The Mary Murphy Lecture in Biology, established in memory of former Clarke faculty member Mary Murphy, BVM, is a venue through which noted scientists present annually on a biology-related issue or topic.

- The annual Danielle Pierce Memorial Lecture, established in memory of Clarke biology major Danielle Pierce, is delivered by an expert in mental health issues.

Clarke UNIVERSITY

Student publications

Three Clarke University student-produced publications—*The Courier* (the University's newspaper), *The Catalyst* (the University's annual magazine), and *Tenth Muse* (the University's literary magazine)—provide venues through which the educational environment of the institution is enhanced.

Honors Program

The institution also engages students in enrichment experiences related to its mission through the Honors Program, which takes an interdisciplinary approach to learning. Honors courses fall within Clarke's general education curriculum and include a variety of topics. Courses are designed to be participatory and often include opportunities to meet outside of the classroom for activities such as concerts, film festivals, public lectures, and service-learning projects. Each year the Honors Program sponsors the Clarke Student Research Conference, described earlier in Criterion Three.

International study opportunities

Several academic departments, including Accounting and Business, Language and Literature, Art and Art History, Music, Education, and Nursing, sponsor educational trips to other countries. In addition, Clarke University students have the opportunity to choose from an approved list of programs sponsored by institutions affiliated with Clarke for study abroad purposes. These programs allow students to study in different countries, including Spain, Austria, the Netherlands, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Japan. Clarke honors students are eligible to study abroad in a unique program at the University of Glasgow.

CONCLUSION

Evidence provided in this section of the self-study document demonstrates that the University has in place institutional structures, policies, and the essential human and material resources to ensure quality of learning in both instructional and co-curricular areas. Evidence further demonstrates that the institution is committed to identifying areas where challenges have emerged and is meeting those challenges through its commitment to institutional improvement.

- Although the majority of full-time instructors are supportive of the general education program, several question its relationship to their departmental program of study. In this regard, the University's academic advising model, in which almost all advisors are faculty members, has been helpful in creating better understanding of the outcomes and requirements of general education, thereby assisting faculty buy-in.

- Assessment of the general education spirituality outcome presents challenges related to the difficulty of measuring student growth in this area. To address those challenges, members of the Assessment Committee and the Catholic Identity Committee revised the original spirituality rubric

and presented it to the faculty during informational sessions. Despite these efforts, the rubric continues to be underutilized.

- Faculty members teaching general education courses must report results of their outcomes assessments on the Assessment Reporting Tool (ART). However, the quality of the report lacks consistency across departments and instructors. To improve the quality of reporting, the General Education Advisory Committee revised the ART reporting forms and, in spring 2013, presented those revisions to faculty members teaching in the program. It is expected that the introduction of Campus Labs, which will require reporting of assessment data across disciplines, including general education, will result in greater faculty awareness of the importance of collecting and analyzing data.

- Although the University has made significant improvements in ascertaining that its graduates are able to access and employ information effectively, challenges still exist in this area. Important first steps in addressing these challenges may be discussions among faculty and learning support staff regarding the term *information literacy* itself; a shared understanding of the meaning of the term can be instrumental in designating those skills that hallmark the "informationally literate" Clarke graduate. Recognizing the importance of competency in a variety of literacies, the University is committed to enhancing its efforts in this area.

- MARC staff members are aware of the unique circumstances of the TimeSaver population, most of whom are employed during daytime hours and visit campus only once weekly. Efforts are underway to (1) identify specific learning supports needed by TimeSaver students and (2) develop strategies whereby those needs can be met effectively and efficiently, both in real time and through available technologies.

Criterion Four

Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

CORE COMPONENT 4. A. *The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.*

Evaluation of Clarke University's academic and co-curricular programs has progressed and improved each year since the previous HLC visit in 2004 and the subsequent focused visit in 2008. The institution's faculty, the academic administration, and the student life staff each play a role in the ongoing evaluation of student learning within the dual contexts of academics and co-curricular endeavors. Information gleaned from the University's multiple levels of evaluation and assessment is employed in making decisions that ensure a lively and rigorous educational environment and continuous improvement of the University's programming.

The Continuous Improvement Model

Clarke University has adopted a model for continuous improvement in academic and student life programming in which ongoing evaluation plays a central role. In this model, program review is not only continuous but systemic: it occurs on multiple levels, involves multiple segments of the University community, and drives constructive and necessary change. In utilizing the continuous improvement model, Clarke (1) ensures quality in all its programs and educational offerings, (2) serves the common good in terms of its identity as a center of learning in the twenty-first century, and (3) lives its mission to encourage personal and intellectual growth, promote global awareness and responsibility, and deepen spiritual values.

Assuring Quality of Educational Programs: Academic Program Review

Academic program review is one of the primary means by which the University analyzes its educational offerings and the operational support for them. The Program Review Committee, chaired by the director of assessment, represents the seven academic divisions of the University: business and technology, education, fine arts, health sciences, humanities, math and natural sciences, and social sciences. The Program Review Committee is responsible for evaluating 40 academic programs contained within all departments and the general education program.

To prepare for program review, which takes place on a five-year rotation, each department chair receives a program review binder containing templates for the necessary documentation one year in advance of the scheduled review. Required documents include description and analysis of the department's philosophy and mission, curriculum, personnel, students, assessment procedures, market

> *Clarke University demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its academic and co-curricular programs, learning environments, and support services through an effective and integrated evaluation system linked to the institution's mission and its educational purposes.*

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

trends, and five-year department goals aligned with the University's strategic plan.

Program reviews are submitted to the provost on October 1 in the fall semester or February 1 in the spring semester and forwarded to the Program Review Committee. Each member of the committee reads the portfolio and completes a program review evaluation form. A subcommittee consisting of a division chair, representatives from a department reviewed the previous year, and representatives from a department that will be reviewed the following year lead the evaluation discussion. Through a consensus process, committee members complete a final evaluation. Evaluation results provide information about the size, stability, and vitality of a program, student demand, adequacy of resources, and contributions to the University mission. Results guide the institution in making decisions about academic direction and resource allocation to ensure ongoing academic excellence. Examples of recommendations to various academic departments from program reviews occurring in 2007–2012 follow.

- Conduct employer satisfaction surveys to determine student job preparedness (Art/Art History, Athletic Training).
- Conduct market analyses to determine need to expand and explore new programs (Art/Art History).
- Differentiate assessment reports between graduate and undergraduate programs (Accounting and Business, Nursing).
- Engage in articulation agreements with community colleges (Athletic Training).
- Increase collaborative research projects involving students and faculty members (Biology).

Departmental responses to recommendations are included in the subsequent departmental end-of-year report, as represented in the following example from the Language and Literature Department.

PROGRESS REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM LAST PROGRAM REVIEW		
Recommendations	**Actions Taken Relative to Recommendations**	**Timeline**
Submit proposal for a literary magazine at Clarke (University president)	Faculty created a proposal and submitted it to the University president and provost, April 22, 2010. The first issue of the publication, named *Tenth Muse,* was released spring 2011, and the second issue was released at the end of the spring semester this year.	**Completed**
"**Department should continue working toward a more explicit link to the spirituality outcome of the college.**" (Board of Trustees Response)	English faculty had the opportunity to pilot a new cultural sensitivity rubric, which connects more closely with the spirituality outcome, and would like to pilot it for another year, collect data, and then draw conclusions. The Spanish faculty finalized a revised	**Spring 2014**

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

	rubric for cultural sensitivity in spring 2012 and will pilot its use in fall 2012, when it will also be assessed departmentally at the reinforcement level.	
Create a task force to examine study abroad and second language acquisition at Clarke. (University president)	In spring 2011, the president's cabinet identified members of the Study Abroad Task Force and asked Evelyn Nadeau to chair the task force. The task force met from fall 2011 through the end of February 2012. In the spring, the Strategic Planning Committee presented a plan that would impact study abroad, so the members of the task force decided to suspend further work until such time as the new direction for study abroad is established.	**Completed**

Although this system of program evaluation has worked well, the University recognized several years ago that manual management of data was inefficient, particularly in regard to tracking data and identifying trends over time. Consequently, a subcommittee of the Assessment Committee was created to analyze five different electronic data management systems to determine which would best meet Clarke's needs. In 2012, Campus Labs Compliance Assist and Baseline programs were acquired and introduced to faculty members and Division of Student Life staff. These modules provide a centralized online system for outcomes assessment and facilitate the reporting and management of data in meaningful ways.

Beginning in spring 2013, semester data were collected and tracked within this system for institutional, academic, and student life areas. Evaluation and assessment reports generated through Campus Labs are disseminated through the Clarke assessment Web page, which was designed by a subcommittee of the Assessment Committee in spring 2012. Assessment Web pages became available for public access in summer 2013.

Assuring Quality of the General Education Program

The Clarke University general education program was described in detail in Criterion Three of this document. To assure the quality of the program, the four general education learning outcomes described in Criterion Three are rigorously assessed, and the program itself is included in the academic program review rotation.

The goals of the program are to assist students in developing broad-based knowledge and skills and to offer opportunities for integration and synthesis of that knowledge and those skills. These goals are aligned with the mission of the University to deepen spiritual values and to promote personal and intellectual growth, global awareness, and social responsibility.

The [four general education outcomes](#) are embedded in a three-tiered curriculum design, with courses offered at the foundational, divisional, and capstone levels, and with assessments appropriately distributed across the curriculum at the introductory, reinforcement, and emphasis levels. The ability to communicate knowledge and

demonstrate skills as identified in specific learning outcomes is a primary focus of general education foundation-level courses. These outcomes are reinforced at the divisional level and emphasized at the capstone level. Curriculum maps display where learning outcomes are measured at each level across general education courses and also across major and minor courses.

Faculty assess student work using the general education writing, speaking, thinking, and spirituality rubrics in courses selected from religious studies, philosophy, fine arts, humanities, math and natural sciences, and social sciences divisions. Use of these rubrics provides consistent data on student achievement of general education outcomes. Data are reported via the Assessment Reporting Tool (ART). The director of general education receives reports from each academic department responsible for teaching general education courses.

Data are reported in annual end-of-year reports and every five years in the general education program review. Recommendations noted in the 2004–2009 program review included (1) applying interrater reliability practices during scoring of student artifacts; (2) collecting baseline data on student achievement of writing, speaking, and thinking outcomes; (3) implementing a cycle for assessing outcomes at the introductory and reinforcement levels; and (4) simplifying procedures for reporting data at the divisional level. The next general education program review is scheduled for spring 2015.

Student achievement in general education writing and critical thinking outcomes is also evaluated through the *Collegiate Learning Assessment* (CLA). Since AY2009–2010, the CLA has been administered to all first-year undergraduate students and to graduating seniors who volunteer for the test. Scores on this measure are interpreted as indicating "value-added" skills development occurring between the first and fourth years of study. The University's institutional researcher analyzes CLA test scores and prepares an annual report for submission to the president, provost, deans of undergraduate and graduate studies, director of general education, and Assessment Committee.

The Assessment Committee analyzes CLA data for the purpose of planning Assessment Day activities that address areas where student performance is below expected levels. For example, 2009–2010 CLA results indicated Clarke seniors ranked in the 38th percentile when compared to all participating schools on the make-an-argument prompt. Assessment Day activities in spring 2011 included the brainstorming of strategies for improving students' argumentation skills as demonstrated in their written expression.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

2009-2010 Clarke Senior Means Compared to Participating Schools' Senior Means				
Item	Clarke Senior Mean Score	Clarke Senior Percentile Rank	Participating Schools' Senior Mean Score	Number of Participating Schools
Total CLA Score	1186	47	1191	159
1. Performance Task	1148	45	1156	159
2. Analytic Writing Task	1226	47	1226	159
Make-an-Argument	1189	38	1215	159
Critique-an-Argument	1270	59	1235	159
Entering Academic Ability	1067	51	1071	159

Assuring Quality of Academic Major Programs: Department End-of-Year Reports

All department chairs complete end-of-year reports on mission, departmental goals, and the three-year assessment cycle for collecting outcome data with analysis and action plans for improving student learning. Additional information includes *Course/Instructor Evaluation Questionnaire* (CIEQ) faculty evaluation data, recommendations for faculty development, student and faculty achievements, and societal and economic trends affecting the discipline.

The director of academic assessment completes an analysis of each end-of-year department report, which is then sent to the department chair with recommendations for improving assessment practices. Consultation with individual departments is offered where appropriate. The impact of systematic collection of assessment data is evident in the decisions departments have made in the past three years, which include the following.

- Changed sequence of core courses in curriculum (Art/Art History)
- Defined and honed finer details of course outcomes (Language and Literature)
- Identified gaps in curriculum maps of assessments at introductory, reinforcement, and emphasis levels (Chemistry)
- Improved analysis of student work through peer review (History/Political Science)
- Improved capstone projects to demonstrate authenticity (Art/Art History)
- Increased the number of writing and speaking opportunities to improve student skills (Athletic Training)
- Infused higher-level technology skills to better prepare students for the workplace (Drama)
- Redesigned rubrics to reflect rigor at introductory, reinforcement, and emphasis levels (Computer Science, Art/Art History)

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

- Utilized rubrics to guide instruction (Mathematics)

A summary evaluation of end-of-year report is completed by the director of assessment each year. This report is submitted to the provost, who meets with each department chair to discuss in detail the end-of-year report. This summary report is also reviewed by the Assessment Committee and is instrumental in the planning of Assessment Day workshops.

Assessing Student Learning: Departmental Three-Year Assessment Cycle

Each academic department's end-of-year report contains a detailed plan for a three-year cycle of assessment and reporting of student achievement relative to departmental outcomes. The three-year plan includes information about how and when institutional and departmental outcomes are assessed, the tools that will be employed for assessment purposes, and the specific courses in which data will be collected.

Assuring Quality of Academic Programs: Role of the Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee, initiated in 2004, is composed of the director of academic assessment, the executive director of academic technology, the director of institutional research, the deans of undergraduate and graduate studies, the provost, representatives from the Division of Student Life, and one faculty member from each of the academic divisions. The committee reviews annual summary-reports regarding general education, academic majors, student life, and institutional assessments to ensure continuous improvement across all programs, and offers counsel to administrators in academic affairs and student life. Trends in student learning and engagement across the institution are studied, analyzed, and communicated to appropriate University personnel. These results also are communicated to faculty and staff members on Assessment Days held each semester and at Faculty Senate and Staff Assembly sessions.

Assuring Quality of Academic Programs: Specialized Accreditations

As described in some detail earlier in this report, six of the institution's academic programs carry professional or specialized accreditation. Each must follow program and curricular standards established by the accrediting body. These curriculum standards are reflected in the departments' courses, documented in their curriculum maps, and assessed (including recommended actions to improved deficiencies) in their end-of-year reports and program reviews.

Information about the accreditation schedules of these six programs and other means by which they evaluate the success of their programs follows.

Athletic Training Department

The Athletic Training Department was awarded its initial accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic

Training Education (CAATE) in 2003. The program was last reviewed in October 2007 by CAATE. The next accreditation visit will take place in 2017.

The Athletic Training Department follows CAATE curriculum standards. Students take the Board of Certification (BOC) examination for licensure in preparation for which the department conducts review sessions and clinical orations. Pass rates for 2010 through 2012 are presented here.

Year	2010	2011	2012
Overall Pass Rate	100%	100%	100%
First-Time Pass Rate	72%	91%	100%

The increase in first-time passing reflects the department's efforts toward more structured and intensive board exam preparation. Review for board exams has been moved to the fall semester prior to the actual examination, which allows for additional preparation time.

Education Department

The Education Department was last reviewed in October 2011 by the Iowa Department of Education. The next review is scheduled for AY2018–2019.

The Education Department has ten standards/outcomes that align with the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards. InTASC standards are employed within all coursework, are the basis of assessment for four portfolio reviews completed by education students, and are used for assessment of student teaching. The department's curriculum map also aligns with InTASC standards. Education majors must pass Praxis I for admission to the department. In addition, they must take and pass two Praxis II tests (one content based and the other pedagogy based) in order to receive teaching licensure.

Music Department

Clarke University offers the only bachelor of arts degree in music and music education accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) at a Catholic college or university in Iowa. The Music Department has held accredited status with NASM since 1977. The department was last reviewed by the NASM in February 2004. The department follows the curriculum standards set by NASM as outlined in the NASM handbook. The next NASM accreditation visit is scheduled for spring 2014.
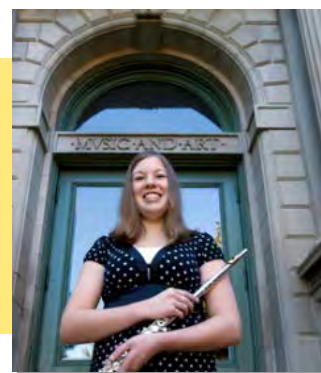
Nursing Department

Clarke University offers nursing programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. The bachelor of science (BSN) in nursing program, accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), graduated its first students in 1983. The most recent program review by CCNE occurred in 2010; the next review is

slated for fall 2020. The BSN program also is approved by the Iowa Board of Nursing (IBON).

To assure quality in the nursing program, all undergraduate students take the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX). Pass rates have increased steadily in the past five years, with the latest results at 100% for first-time test takers.

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Pass Rate	72%	82%	82%	95%	100%

To address the low board scores from 2008 to 2010, the department initiated use of the Assessment Technology Institute's (ATI) NCLEX-preparation materials. This change has led to a 100% pass rate within six months for first-time test takers. An added advantage to the use of ATI resources is that examination results are accompanied by detailed item analyses, enabling the nursing faculty to revise curricula and learning activities in ways that improve student learning in targeted areas.

A master's program in nursing (MSN), established at Clarke University in 1997, also is accredited by the CCNE; the last CCNE accreditation review took place in 2005, and the next review is expected in 2015. The MSN program also is approved by the Iowa Board of Nursing (IBON); the last IBON reviews took place in 2004 and 2010, with the next anticipated review to be held in 2016.

The University's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program admitted its first students in 2011 and underwent its first accreditation review by CCNE in September 2013. The DNP has interim approval from the Iowa Board of Nursing (IBON)—granted in February 2011—with the formal review date in spring or fall 2014. Both CCNE and IBON grant full approval only after the program graduates its first class. The Higher Learning Commission conducted an initial review of the program in 2011, granting approval. The DNP program aligns its learning outcomes with competencies set forth by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Facilities (NONPF).

Physical Therapy Department

The physical therapy program was last reviewed in October 2004 by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). The next review is scheduled for spring 2014. The program follows standards established by the American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) Normative Model curriculum. In order to be licensed in physical therapy, graduates must pass the National Physical Therapy Examination following graduation. Pass rates for 2008 through 2012 are presented here.

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Pass Rate	100%	95%	96%	93%	87%

Although PT licensure pass rates are well within the acceptable range, PT faculty members have expressed concern about the declining scores for first-time test takers. There has been a 10–15%

difference between first time and ultimate pass rate on the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) exam. Data analysis has revealed that the two areas of student performance that are of greatest concern are clinical application of foundational sciences and interventions. The PT faculty is committed to identifying methods that reinforce this content and that help students retain this information. Although curriculum-based assessments have determined that students have learned required content in most cases, the PT faculty has implemented several interventions to strengthen pass rates.

Social Work Department

The Clarke University bachelor of social work program (BSW), established in 1975, was originally a cooperative venture with Loras College, another institution of higher learning in Dubuque. In 2009, the bi-college program was discontinued, and each institution assumed full authority for its respective program. Following a four-year process, the first review of the current Clarke social work program by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) took place in fall 2012; accreditation was awarded the BSW program in June 2013. Currently, the institution is in the planning stages for the implementation of a master of social work degree (MSW) program, which, if approved, will begin in the fall 2014 semester. The CSWE sets national curriculum standards for social work education.

Assuring Quality of Educational Programming: Preparation for Advanced Study and Professional Employment

Clarke University assures that its degree or certificate programs serve as preparation for advanced study or professional employment. In addition to preparing students for licensure examinations (as described in the preceding section), for all its 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 competitive programs such as the Peace Corps and Fulbright Foundation programs.

The University maintains records of graduates' post-graduation plans. This information is gathered from a survey conducted during the last weeks before graduation and from phone calls and mass mailings after graduation. All academic departments contact their alumni as part of the five-year program review, requesting that respondents evaluate their education at Clarke. Qualitative and quantitative results are analyzed by department faculty, and any deficiencies are addressed in the action plan of the department review.

Other measures of program effectiveness include exit interviews with graduating students (such as those conducted by the Nursing Department), employment rates for graduates, alumni surveys at one- and five-year post-graduation intervals, employer satisfaction surveys, and program attrition rates. Representatives from the area's major

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

employers also serve on departmental advisory boards and provide feedback on graduate performance in the workplace.

Internships

Internships are important components of several academic programs at Clarke University and are broadly promoted. For example, 10 student internships are highlighted annually through "Intern of the Month" posters displayed throughout the campus, publicizing the internship for credit program. Some academic departments require internships, and many departments strongly encourage students to pursue internship opportunities. Internship sites are carefully evaluated; Career Services staff members conduct visits for all internships in the Dubuque area, and internship sites outside the Dubuque area are contacted by telephone. The number of students participating in internships has increased each semester for the past three years, from 38 in AY2009–2010 to 75 in AY2012–2013. Student internships are a key feature in those parts of the 2012–2017 strategic plan that call for the integration of coursework and experiential learning as a means of establishing career and life readiness.

Assuring Quality of Co-curricular Programs

Because Clarke University views student learning as holistic in nature, the Division of Student Life and the Division of Academic Affairs seek ways to work together to create effective co-curricular programming. Residence life programs, service learning, athletics, campus ministry, and counseling and career services programs all employ this developmental model and are grounded in the Division of Student Life mission statement:

> In accordance with the University's mission, the Division of Student Life strives to foster the exploration and understanding of genuine human values to prepare students to occupy a productive and meaningful place in society. This is accomplished by providing facilities, services, information, and models that challenge and support students in reaching their fullest potential.

In each of the respective student life departments, student outcomes are assessed and reported by appropriate program directors.

Review of student life programs

Student life programs undertake systematic evaluation every four years. Each year, a predetermined number of programs complete self-studies, which are ultimately reviewed by the president's cabinet. Student life program reviews assist long-range planning by providing information about the vitality of a program, resources and student demand, equipment and facility needs, and contribution to recruitment, retention, and the mission of the University. The goals of program review self-studies are (1) to assess and improve the quality of student life programs, (2) to monitor program performance and effectiveness, (3) to provide guidance for strategic planning, (4) to ensure the availability of resources for continued excellence, (5) to

prioritize and redirect funds when necessary, and (6) to create a three-year plan for the program.

Student life program review as an internal process is both meaningful to the program being reviewed and closely aligned with planning and budgetary decisions of the University. Reviews are initiated at the beginning of the fall semester and completed by April of the academic year. External reviewers may be requested to assist in program review. The Office of Institutional Research provides assistance with surveys and other statistical reports on pertinent data (IR data). The Program Review Committee compiles a report that highlights program strengths, concerns, observations, and recommendations. Completed reviews are submitted to the vice president for student life, who reports program review summaries and three-year plans to the Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee of the board of trustees.

Assuring Quality of Academic Support Services

The Margaret Mann Academic Resource Center, described in more detail in Criterion Three, has been in existence for a decade, and during that time it has steadily expanded services for students seeking support, adapting programs and staffing responsibilities to meet changes in student academic needs. The center is staffed by a learning specialist, the director of the Writing Center, and the director of disability services—a team that reflects the diverse services the MARC offers and the fall 2012 consolidation of learning support services into one entity.

The following table displays the number of student contacts for the three support service areas for academic years 2009–2013.

MARC Support Service	2010	2011	2012	2013
Academic Coaching	651	730	787	1,596
Writing Center	671	677	679	630
Disability Services	275	196	160	390

In 2012–2013, in conjunction with the center's re-envisioned identity (the MARC) and the addition of new staff, an effort was made to collect more comprehensive data regarding student use of academic support services. As in preceding years, usage levels were counted, but data were also collected regarding classroom presentations by MARC staff, number of faculty interactions with staff members, and levels of student satisfaction with MARC services. In 2012–2013, a total of 305 students completed the MARC satisfaction survey on changes introduced in the fall semester of 2012. Survey results overwhelmingly indicated that students have reacted positively to changes in staffing, processes, and services: 84.6% were "very satisfied" overall with the services they received, while 13.4% indicated they were "satisfied." The MARC satisfaction survey also provides opportunities for qualitative user feedback. This feedback is

evaluated during MARC staff meetings and informs decisions for future MARC planning.

Assuring Quality of Educational Programs: Evaluation of Credit

Clarke University evaluates all credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning and other forms of prior learning. The institution follows best practices as recommended in the *Academic Record and Transcript Guide,* published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO).

The registrar is authorized to issue official transcripts, certify enrollment and attendance of students, and award degrees and other matters of record. The Office of the Registrar maintains student transcripts, which reflect all credits students have earned at Clarke and those that have been accepted in transfer. Clarke follows AACRAO recommendations on the transcription of experiential learning, credit by examination, study abroad, and military and advanced placement (AP) credits.

Evaluation of transfer credits

The Office of the Registrar evaluates all transfer credits, referring to transfer articulation agreements that have been reviewed by department chairpersons and the director of general education. The University subscribes to CollegeSource as a conduit through which to access course information from other institutions. The official determination of credit acceptance is made by the Office of the Registrar in consultation with the director of general education and department chairpersons as needed. Students wishing to transfer to Clarke receive access to their official credit evaluation in MyInfo upon acceptance to the University. Current and future students may use the College Source Transfer Evaluation System to determine how transfer credit will be equated. Students must complete transfer course approval forms and receive approval from academic advisors and/or department chairpersons to ensure courses will transfer to Clarke and meet degree requirements.

Clarke University assures the quality of transfer credit through polices outlined in the 2013–2014 Academic Catalog and found on the institution's website at the Transfer Student link. Students may apply for transfer credit from previous college or university study and/or nationally standardized tests, including the *College Level Examination Program* (CLEP), the *Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support* (DANTES), and *Prior Learning Assessment* (PLA) portfolio assessment. Clarke's transfer policies are consistent with best practices as defined by AACRAO and are supported by the Clarke faculty.

Clarke University accepts transfer credit earned with a grade of C- or better from two-year community colleges, four-year universities, or universities accredited by any one of the six regional accrediting bodies. The University specifies the maximum number of credits that may be transferred depending on institution type (64 credits from two-year associate degree programs, 90 from baccalaureate

institutions, with a combined total not to exceed 90 credit hours). The final 30 hours of credit must be taken in residence at Clarke University. Students must complete a minimum of 15 credit hours in their majors in residence at Clarke and fulfill all department requirements to be eligible for graduation.

Institutional Exercise of Authority: Course Prerequisites

To assure quality of the undergraduate and graduate curricula, Clarke University requires prerequisites for most mid- to advanced-level courses. Prerequisites are listed in the Academic Catalog, the online course schedule, and in course syllabi. Prerequisites for courses are determined by each academic department. When a new course is proposed, the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) evaluates/affirms the level of the course along with its prerequisites to determine how the course fits within the department's curriculum design.

Institutional Exercise of Authority: Academic Rigor

Clarke University's academic governance system serves to ensure the rigor of its instructional program. The faculty bodies responsible for monitoring course and program rigor are the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) at the undergraduate level and the Graduate Council at the graduate level. The institution employs an extensive preapproval process for new courses or programs and a detailed course approval application process for both undergraduate and graduate courses. In the preapproval process, the department completes a study with preliminary data and analysis of potential impact of the course in consultation with the provost or the dean of adult and graduate studies. After the provost grants preliminary approval, the department chair proceeds with the formal application process. The course approval process includes the requirement that each course demonstrate connection to the institution's mission, outcomes, and assessment procedures.

   Department chairs oversee the rigor of courses offered by their departments through consultation and discussion with faculty. As part of their portfolio, which is reviewed annually by their department chair, faculty members are expected to include samples of content from two courses (e.g., assignments and assessments, multimedia projects, rubrics, review and study guides, midterm and final examinations, and scoring keys). General oversight of overall program quality is monitored through the program review process, which occurs on the five-year rotation described earlier in Criterion Four. In addition to their internal five-year program review, programs accredited by professional or specialized accrediting bodies undergo accreditation review by external agencies whose academic standards must be met.

Institutional Exercise of Authority: Expectations for Student Learning

Expectations for student learning are clearly stated on department Web pages, and explicit department program outcomes are included in each department entry in the Clarke University Academic Catalog.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

Individual course outcomes are included in each course syllabus for the University's undergraduate, graduate, and TimeSaver programs, along with statements aligning course content with departmental and institutional missions. Additionally, each course syllabus lists instructional activities, projects, and products that will be employed to determine if students have satisfied specified outcomes and the corresponding assessment strategies that will be used to evaluate student performance. To assist faculty in constructing their syllabi, the University provides a standard template that is easily accessed online.

Each student receives a syllabus for every course in which she or he is enrolled at the beginning of the semester; syllabi may be printed in hard copy or posted on Moodle, the University's learning management system, or both. Every semester, all faculty members submit a copy of each of their syllabi to their department chair and to the provost.

Expectations for student learning and the TimeSaver program

It is important to restate that courses offered in the University's TimeSaver program, described earlier in this report and delivered in hybrid format, specify the same expectations for student learning as their counterparts in the institution's traditional daytime program. Clarke ensures the quality of online delivery by ascertaining that the online components of hybrid courses comply with the nationally standardized Quality Matters™ Rubric.

The transformation of the TimeSaver program from classroom-based instruction to the hybrid model was completed in fall 2011. The following spring, TimeSaver program administrators collaborated with the dean of adult and graduate studies, the institutional researcher, and the Title III grant administrator to develop a survey in which students were asked to assess their learning experiences in the hybrid format. Survey questions were related to navigation, faculty/student and student/student interaction, academic rigor, instructional methodologies, learning outcomes, and overall satisfaction with the delivery format. Survey results and the executive summary were shared with all faculty and staff members associated with the hybrid delivery model.

Institutional Exercise of Authority: Faculty Qualifications

Standards for faculty evaluation, promotion, and tenure (described in Criterion Three) are published in the Clarke University Faculty Evaluation Manual. The institution exercises authority over such matters through the Office of the Provost and, where appropriate, the Office of Human Resources. Hiring policies ensure that new faculty members have appropriate qualifications for the positions they hold; all credentials for new hires are verified by the Office of Human Resources, which also conducts criminal background checks. The University maintains a Faculty Recruitment Handbook that features explicit guidelines for the hiring of new faculty; once hired, faculty members are subject to the evaluation procedures described in the Faculty Evaluation Manual.

Institutional Exercise of Authority: Dual Credit Programs

Clarke University currently does not offer dual credit programs for high school students. However, through the state-mandated Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Act, Dubuque and Dubuque-area high school seniors may enroll in selected University courses for which they are eligible to receive university credit. Registration normally is limited to courses at the 100 level in which space is available. If a student wishes to take a course at a higher level, a written request must be submitted to the dean of undergraduate studies who, in consultation with the department chair, makes the final determination regarding admission.

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

Institutional student learning outcomes are clearly stated in the Clarke University Academic Catalog. These serve as the foundation for the outcomes articulated for each course in the instructional programs and memorialized in course syllabi. Course learning outcomes are assessed through a carefully conceived and rigorously applied assessment program, the results of which strongly influence determinations regarding curricula and program quality.

Assessment of Student Learning at Clarke University

Since the previous HLC visit in 2004, the University has made a concerted and intensive effort to improve institutional practices in learning outcomes assessment—all within the framework of academic quality and institutional improvement. This has been, at times, an arduous process involving experimentation, trial and error, and missteps—all of which have been weighed in an attempt to arrive at a valid and reliable measure of student achievement at the institutional level. In a number of cases, the institution has employed survey data extracted from reliable instruments created by external organizations, such as the *National Survey of Student Engagement* (NSSE) and *Collegiate Learning Assessment* (CLA) to provide baseline information. These efforts have borne very positive results in the system of learning outcomes assessment employed today.

   With the adoption of outcomes-based assessment, Clarke University recognized the need for designing a structured process for closing the assessment feedback loop at the institutional, program, department, and course levels. These processes begin with assessment of student achievement of department- and course-level outcomes. Departmental faculty members maintain responsibility for design of curriculum, establishment of learning outcomes, and assessment of student learning in relation to those outcomes. The integral role that the faculty plays in assessment of student learning is reflected in annual faculty portfolio reviews, conducted in spring by department chairs. In the portfolio, the faculty member must include artifacts that demonstrate assessment methods she or he used during the preceding academic year.

Student Learning Outcomes and Departmental Curriculum Maps

All academic departments at Clarke University share a common system for curriculum mapping. Although each department creates its own curriculum map, the basic design of this map is consistent across departments. Departmental outcomes are identified in a grid, along with all courses offered in the department. A coding system is used to determine which courses align with which outcomes. An *I* designation signifies that a departmental outcome is addressed at an *introductory* level in a course, an *R* indicates that the outcome is addressed at a *reinforcement* level, and an *E* signifies that the outcome is *emphasized*.

Each department is asked also to demonstrate the relation between departmental and institutional outcomes. For example, the Physical Therapy Department articulates its departmental outcomes in the following way.

Institutional Outcome	Departmental Outcome
• Community involvement • Acceptance of diversity in people and ideas	Display attitudes and clinical skills to optimize their role as a physical therapist member of the health care team and community
• Intellectual rigor • Critical analysis • Informed decision making	Critically interpret research related to the field of physical therapy

Student Learning Outcomes and Course Syllabi

The institution's commitment to consistency in its emphasis on institutional and departmental learning outcomes is further demonstrated by its expectation that faculty members employ a standard template in creating syllabi for both general education and department courses. Use of this template ensures that all relevant information specific to a particular course is communicated to students taking that course and that consistency in syllabus format occurs across departments. In addition to basic information such as course title, number and section, catalog description, credit hours, and prerequisites, the template, as noted earlier, includes a table in which faculty members (1) list specific course outcomes, (2) link those outcomes to general education or department-level outcomes, (3) identify what students will do to demonstrate achievement of each course outcome, and (4) identify the tool or measure that will be used to evaluate student performance. The following example illustrates how the syllabus template is used in one class.

COURSE OUTCOMES Students will:	GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES	PRODUCT/ PROJECT for achieving course outcomes	PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (e.g., rubrics)
Define and explain psychological concepts from the various theoretical models which attempt to account for psychological phenomena	Demonstrate competent use of language in a variety of settings (GEO 2)	As a key terms quiz, students will write a three-term integrative essay on multiple occasions.\n\nStudents will answer enhanced multiple choice questions based on course content with opportunities to further elaborate on answer rationales.	Holistic writing rubric\n\nSelected response assessment: pass/fail grading scale
Examine learning goals, commitment to the learning process, cultural awareness, and personal awareness of career-related associations with general psychology applications	Demonstrate thinking skills informed by experience, knowledge, insight, and reflection (GEO 3)	Students will write a modified K/W/L (Know/Want to Learn/Learned) self-reflective essay	Selected response assessment: pass/fail grading scale

The syllabus template also calls for faculty members to present their policies governing attendance at and participation in classes, missed examinations and late assignments, academic integrity, ADA accommodations, and grading scales and standards. All Clarke syllabi include a statement regarding the minimum standard for instructional and student time-on-task.

Assessing Experiential Learning

Multiple data collection methods are used to gather information about student learning at Clarke. Traditional instruments for assessing student learning—examinations, quizzes, essays, oral performances, and research papers—are, of course, employed. However, more authentic modes of assessment also are utilized, such as the objective structured clinical examination employed by the Nursing Department and the Physical Therapy Department.

In this model, students are asked to demonstrate effective patient care, clinical prevention, and grasp of relevant scientific data through simulated patient evaluations conducted in a standardized format. Students rotate through 15-minute stations, completing all stations on a circuit. Because these evaluations are standardized, peer-to-peer comparisons can be made. Faculty members, students, and "patients" each rate student performance on a scale of beginner-to-expert practice. Results of evaluations are analyzed by department faculty and then used to inform necessary modifications to instructional programs.

Assessing Student Learning: Mission Effectiveness Survey

Clarke University's Mission Effectiveness Survey, which is conducted annually, provides another means by which the institution broadly assesses student learning and the effectiveness of its academic and

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

co-curricular programs. In the 2012 survey or graduating seniors, respondents indicated that the University provides effective opportunities for students to develop critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and communication skills. However, survey results also pointed to cultural awareness and appreciation outcomes as areas of challenge for the University, as noted earlier in this document.

Assessing Student Learning: External Instruments

To assist in making decisions about student performance relative to the University's expectations, the institution has employed reliability-tested assessment instruments from external organizations.

Collegiate Learning Assessment

Because of the difficulties encountered in assessing students' writing and thinking skills via internal measures and procedures, the University contracted with Collegiate Learning Assessment Services in 2009. The *Collegiate Learning Assessment* (CLA), which the University now administers to all first-year and volunteer senior students, requires participants to perform tasks demonstrating their ability to think critically, reason analytically, solve problems effectively, and write clearly and persuasively. As noted earlier in Criterion Four, CLA results from 2010 prompted spring 2011 Assessment Day activities related to teaching the skills of effective argumentation.

The *National Survey for Student Engagement* (NSSE)

The *National Survey for Student Engagement* (NSSE), administered biannually to first-year students and seniors, yields information about how students engage with their college experience and their perceptions of what they have gained from that experience. Clarke University utilizes NSSE results to gauge the effectiveness of academic programs and activities and to help establish directions for improvement.

For example, AY2011–2012 results indicated that Clarke students were more likely than their peers at other institutions to make classroom presentations (2.74 compared to a mean of 2.34 on a 4.0 scale) and to work on projects during class (2.78 compared to 2.41). In the same year, Clarke students were more likely than their peers at other institutions to communicate frequently with their instructors (3.57 compared to 3.32) and to see their advisors for help with career plans (2.75 compared to 2.23). Positive comments have also been given on the NSSE with regard to the relationship between students and faculty: Faculty members have been described as "friendly and welcoming," "available," "helpful," and "sympathetic," and students have indicated that they are likely to develop "lasting and meaningful relationships" with them.

Conversely, 2011 NSSE results indicated that Clarke students were less likely than their peers at other institutions to have serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity (2.26 compared to 2.71), or with persons whose religious beliefs or political values were different from their own (2.32 compared to 2.83). In response to these data, the University enhanced its diversity

requirements and has taken other steps to create a more inclusive campus, as noted in Criterion One of this self-study report. However, issues related to diversity and the inherent value of "difference" continue to be a challenge.

The *Beginning College Student Survey of Engagement* (BCSSE)

The *Beginning College Student Survey of Engagement* (BCSSE), which collects data regarding first-year college students' level of engagement with their high school academic and co-curricular programs, is also administered to first-year Clarke University students. BCSSE results help identify students in the lowest 25% of their high school population in terms of engagement level; this information assists the University's programmatic efforts to optimize student learning during the first year.

The Assessment Committee

Clarke University's commitment to educational improvement through the use of assessment data is perhaps most prominently evidenced by the formation of the Assessment Committee, referred to earlier in Criterion Four. This committee provides counsel to the director of assessment, the academic deans, the vice president for student life, and the provost by (1) conducting a thorough review of annual assessment summary reports and processes, (2) analyzing and articulating trends emerging from student learning and engagement assessments across the institution or in major areas of the University, and (3) making recommendations for continuous improvement across the institution and aligning initiatives with strategic priorities. The Assessment Committee reviews academic end-of-year report summaries, student life end-of-year report summaries, selected components of program reviews (e.g., alumni surveys), results of the CLA, and data yielded by surveys such as the BCSSE and the NSSE.

The role of the Assessment Committee expands throughout the academic year as information about student learning and engagement is gathered. The committee's annual flowchart illustrates the yearly goals and outcomes assigned to it.

Assessment of Academic Advising

In Criterion Three, this report describes in some detail Clarke University's academic advising system. Because of the direct link between student learning and the effectiveness of academic advising, the institution has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of its academic advising practices. The goals and outcomes of the advising program are summarized here.

Program Goals	Advisor Learning Outcomes	Student Learning Outcomes
The academic advising program is	*Advisor Outcomes Related to Process/Delivery*	*Student Knowledge, Skills, and Values Outcomes*
Intentional	Academic advisors are knowledgeable about academic policies, procedures, and requirements.	*Skills*—Students will be able to navigate the University website and find relevant information in the Clarke University Academic Catalog. *Knowledge*—Students will be familiar with academic policies, procedures, and requirements as stated in the Clarke University Academic Catalog.
Responsive to the diverse needs of the individual student	Academic advisors provide students with informed, supportive feedback regarding students' achievement in relation to their personal, educational, and career goals.	*Knowledge, values*—Students will comprehend the role of their academic advisor in helping shape their educational and career plans.
A multi-dimensional process grounded in teaching and learning	Academic advisers engage in dynamic, evolving relationships that meet students where they are and assist them in becoming what they might and can be.	*Skills*—Students will be able to locate the appropriate resources to assist them in their academic and personal goal setting. *Values*—Students will develop responsibility and self-reliance in their goal setting as lifelong learners.

Students' achievement of advising outcomes is measured directly through the Academic Advising Survey, conducted annually, and indirectly through retention rates, graduation completion rates, and degree completion times. Some external assessment instruments currently used by Clarke, such as the Student Opinion Survey (SOS) and the NSSE, include questions on academic advising.

The academic advising program has achieved several objectives in the area of student learning that are qualitative rather than quantitative in nature. One such objective is that a culture change has occurred that emphasizes students' responsibility for their role in the advising process, resulting in higher expectations for students on the part of their faculty advisors and the students themselves. Evidence of this shift in responsibility is the requirement that students respond appropriately to the "Are You Registration-Ready" screen before they register for courses.

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

Clarke University's Commitment to Educational Improvement: Optimizing Opportunities for Student Success

Clarke University's commitment to educational improvement as measured through persistence and graduation rates is consistent with its goals related to student development and institutional

improvement. Whereas the factors of persistence and graduation are useful in measuring an institution's ability to move students along the higher education continuum (admission through graduation), Clarke centers its efforts on the overall quality of the student experience, achievement of learning outcomes, level of engagement in educational activities, and other desirable student outcomes. In this sense, optimizing opportunities for student success better represents the efforts that result in increased student satisfaction and, as a byproduct, in higher persistence and completion rates.

The term *student success* reflects Clarke University's approach to student retention more accurately than the terms *persistence* and *degree completion*. While structures and processes are in place to monitor persistence of individual students and groups, the University is clearly focused on providing students with quality educational experiences in and beyond the classroom.

Promoting Student Success: The Retention Committee

The purpose of the Retention Committee is to monitor retention at Clarke University, to analyze factors that affect student engagement, and to raise campus awareness of the importance of retention. The vice president for enrollment management serves as chairperson; other members are appointed by the president from among the faculty, staff, and administration.

The focus of the Retention Committee has shifted in the last several years as a result of a change in leadership. Until 2008, its attention was centered on the collection and analysis of data with the goal of improving the experience of students more likely to leave the University. The retention plan for 2008–2011, drafted in spring 2008, outlined specific goals for the committee and the institution as a whole. The first goal called for an increase in the retention rate of full-time first-year students to reach at least the midpoint between "selective" and "traditional" four-year private colleges based on ACT Institutional Data on retention, which would translate to a retention rate of about 80% for Clarke by fall 2011–2012.

Although subsequent work by the committee did not focus on the 80% retention goal set in spring 2008, the altered approach has had positive results. First-year fall-to-fall student retention rates in the last 10 years show steady increases: The first-year-to-sophomore retention rate climbed to 80% in AY2010–2011 and increased to 81% in 2011–2012. This marked the first time since 1997, and only the second time in 22 years, that Clarke showed consecutive retention rates at or above 80%. The chart below provides a more comprehensive schema of the fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall retention rates since AY2002–2003.

> *The term* student success *reflects Clarke University's approach to student retention more accurately than the terms* persistence *and* degree completion. *While structures and processes are in place to monitor persistence of individual students and groups, the University is clearly focused on providing students with quality educational experiences in and beyond the classroom.*

| ENT YR | YEAR ONE | | | YEAR TWO | |
	Fall Sem 1	Spring Sem 2		Fall Sem 3	
	N	N	% F RET	N	% F RET
2002	170	156	92%	132	78%
2003	167	153	92%	134	80%
2004	204	183	90%	162	79%
2005	158	148	94%	116	73%
2006	162	148	91%	115	71%
2007	187	170	91%	150	80%
2008	139	126	91%	108	78%
2009	146	130	89%	107	73%
2010	176	165	94%	140	80%
2011	163	151	93%	132	81%
2012	155	143	92%	118	76%

The 2008 retention plan also identified certain groups of students whose retention rates showed significant difference in relation to the overall student population. According to data, males, nonrecipients of merit scholarships, nonathletes, minorities, students whose high school GPA was below 2.75, and those with an ACT composite score of 20 or lower were less likely to persist to graduation than other groups.

The Retention Committee and first-year student success initiatives

Efforts of the Retention Committee resulted in the creation of two first-year programs designed to assist specific populations of new students in their transition to university life: Smart Start and Advantage.

Smart Start. Smart Start, first implemented in fall 2007, was designed to address the needs of academically at-risk students—those whose high school GPA was below 2.8 and whose ACT composite score was 20 or lower. The course provided those students with opportunities to connect with various campus support services, learn time management and study strategies, and participate in community-building activities with peers. A team of faculty, staff members, and selected peers guided students through a three-day program immediately prior to the beginning of the first-year program and continued to work with them during the fall semester. Data gathered in regard to the course revealed positive results in both retention and academic performance.

Advantage. The generally positive results of Smart Start provided impetus for the development of a second one-credit course, Advantage, piloted in 2008. Incoming first-year students with the

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

highest academic scores in their cohort, as determined by high school GPA and ACT scores, participated in Advantage; the goal here was to give those students the tools to collaborate with equally motivated peers while adjusting to university life.

Evaluation of both the Smart Start and Advantage programs indicated that participating students had knowledge of and relative comfort in utilizing campus resources and were, overall, satisfied with the programs.

Easing the transition to university life: From deposit to orientation

The success of the Smart Start and Advantage programs, which targeted specific populations, led to revision of the University's orientation program for all new students. Several of the most effective elements from Smart Start and Advantage were incorporated into the revised orientation. Revision and expansion of the orientation event occurred as the Retention Committee changed its focus and membership in fall 2009 under leadership of the vice president for enrollment management. The focus for the committee in AY2009–2010 became the comprehensive first-year experience and its impact on first-year-to-sophomore retention. Results from the NSSE and the Documenting Effective Educational Practice project (DEEP), which research "conditions that matter" for student success in higher education, served as a framework for this new focus.

The Retention Committee determined that its chief goal for the academic year would be to "review the main components of the first year, identify gaps, and recommend solutions to groups/offices who may act upon them." Every step in the student experience—from the moment of admittance to Clarke until the first day of classes—was reviewed, including communications with prospective students and their parents, CORE activities, the flow of information from the time of deposit until opening weekend, and the new student orientation program.

Reinvigorating new student orientation at Clarke University: CONNECT

Until fall 2008, Clarke University's new student orientation program (known as Welcome and Orientation Weekend, or WOW) extended over the three days immediately preceding the onset of fall semester classes and was strongly recommended for all first-year students and open to new transfer students. In response to student feedback, the program included an academic component: Students were given the opportunity to attend a session on academic advising as well as presentations by faculty members on topics such as academic majors, improving writing skills, planning for study abroad, and following a pre-law career path. For fall 2009, the program was renamed CONNECT to better reflect its purpose, although its content remained the same.

In 2009, with strong input from the Retention Committee as well as from students, the CONNECT Committee incorporated some of the academic components of Smart Start and Advantage into new student orientation, resulting in a comprehensive revision of format

and content. Orientation was extended to five days (from Wednesday through Sunday), three of which included breakout sessions on topics that would help students lay the foundation for the development of basic college skills: interpreting course syllabi, maximizing benefits of the advisor–advisee relationship, managing time, and utilizing electronic resources. In fall 2012, CONNECT became a requirement for all first-year students as part of the CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar course.

Participants in CONNECT evaluate their experience via survey, and each year the CONNECT Committee plans revisions to the program based on survey results. For instance, the program was shortened to four days in fall 2013, after a majority of students rated the program "too long." Survey results from 2010 to 2012 show improvements in satisfaction with the program's effectiveness in providing relevant information regarding academic and social expectations and available resources, as well as campus activities and programs. In 2012, 70% of students participating in CONNECT agreed that the experience helped them understand academic expectations at Clarke; 78% stated the program provided useful information about academic requirements; 83% and 85% respectively indicated they received useful information about academic advising and resources. Greatest satisfaction with the program was in the areas of understanding social expectations (83%), receiving useful information about campus activities and programs (95%), and learning about available resources for adjusting to the institution (86%). In general, 76% of survey respondents rated the CONNECT experience as "excellent" or "good" in 2012 compared to 68% in 2010 and 62% in 2011. Although these results show room for improvement, student satisfaction with the program has shown an upward trend.

Monitoring for at-risk students during CONNECT. An At-Risk Monitoring Group was formed in August 2010 to address transition and retention concerns that surface during the CONNECT experience. By being proactive in identifying students who act in a disengaged manner, exhibit symptoms of homesickness, or fail to develop relationships with peers or staff, the group seeks to prevent early and unnecessary attrition. The At-Risk Monitoring Group consists of the dean of undergraduate studies, the assistant athletic director, the director of residence life, the director of student activities, and the CU101 Transitions: First Year Seminar coordinator.

The group meets each morning during CONNECT to review communication submitted by various campus constituents regarding students who are of particular concern. Each of these students is discussed, and an appropriate strategy is implemented to address concerns, where possible. Red flags include missing sessions, emotional outbursts, and statements or actions that show high levels of anxiety. Response strategies include residence life staff conversations with distressed students, provision of support by coaches, increased attention and affirmation by resident assistants or

orientation leaders, and an occasional meeting with a counselor for those students experiencing severe homesickness.

CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar

A subcommittee of the Retention Committee recommended the creation of a first-year seminar course to promote a successful transition to college life for all first-year students. A First-Year Seminar Task Force was charged with crafting the course, building on two outcomes from the discontinued Smart Start and Advantage programs: (1) develop effective and appropriate interpersonal relationships; and (2) identify, seek, and use appropriate resources. A third outcome—improve critical thinking skills—was added in response to 2009–2010 *Collegiate Learning Assessment* (CLA) results indicating that Clarke seniors ranked lower than their peers (38th percentile when compared to all other participating schools) on the make-an-argument prompt. CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar, introduced in fall 2012, is required of all new first-year students.

   Faculty members from several academic departments teach CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar; they are led by the course coordinator, a faculty member who was involved in teaching and coordinating the course predecessors, Smart Start and Advantage. Classes meet twice weekly: One session takes place in small, seminar groups led by a faculty member who serves as students' instructor and mentor. The second weekly session, or colloquium, is led by a topics expert in areas such as social media, career exploration, and acquisition of college-level study skills.

Evaluating the effectiveness of CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar

Measuring the effectiveness of the Transitions course in terms of student learning relies on assessment of student work and feedback from instructors and students. A rubric was used to assess student progress in the development of critical thinking skills, particularly in the areas of accuracy, clarity, relevance, and significance. Assessment results show that students are near the established benchmark for the sort of writing and source assessment Transitions requires by the end of the first semester of college-level study. Students performed least well in the areas of clarity and significance and did best in terms of accuracy and relevance.

   Transitions faculty and students also have offered feedback regarding the course. Students completed an evaluation instrument indicating ways that their critical thinking, use of resources, and academic relationships were addressed through instructional activities. Student feedback indicated a need for architects of the course to (1) continue to offer faculty training to ensure common understanding of course outcomes and design; (2) review the process for including current events content for the critical thinking projects; (3) review the organization of the course and the desired content of the colloquium; and (4) increase input to staff in charge of presenting colloquium content.

The Retention Committee and Academic/Co-curricular Scheduling Initiatives

As a long-term objective, the Retention Committee spearheaded the creation of an Academic/Co-Curricular Scheduling Task Force, separate from the Retention Committee, to study conflicts with scheduling and to develop strategies to maximize time as a resource. The task force was composed of representatives from a number of constituencies, including academic affairs, food service, student life, safety and security, the registrar, the bookstore, and the student body. The task force met throughout the 2011–2012 academic year and presented a tentative proposal for a new academic schedule to academic department chairs in December 2011.

The task force collected feedback from academic departments and put forth the following six recommendations to be implemented in conjunction with the new academic schedule: (1) reconsider times of the year when courses are offered, (2) obtain or build larger athletic facilities, (3) utilize scheduling software, (4) create a centralized schedule that includes outside requirements for academics and athletics (such as attendance at performances and presentations by outside speakers), (5) extend food service hours, and (6) increase communication among all departments and offices on campus.

The task force continued its work during AY2012–2013, and a modified proposal was presented to department chairs in January 2013. Subsequently, Ad Astra scheduling software was recommended for purchase and will be installed for use by fall 2014.

The Retention Committee and Initiatives Related to Residence Life

Retention Committee efforts to create a more robust campus environment have served as a catalyst for change among the various residence life departments and offices. The community development model has been more purposefully implemented, with each resident assistant (RA) being required to facilitate resident student participation in sixteen programs or activities each semester. To increase the number of students who remain on campus during weekends, the Office of Student Activities and the Office of Residence Life each offer one program every weekend. Residence hall door access is tracked to document the percentage of students who remain on campus each weekend. For two-day weekends, the percentage of students who remain on campus varies from approximately 75% to 90%. Although comparison data are not available (data on students remaining on campus during weekends were not collected prior to 2010), the University is confident that new residence life initiatives are making a positive difference in the robustness of campus life and the quality of the Clarke experience for both resident and nonresident students.

Take Charge

In 2011–2012, a subcommittee of the Retention Committee recommended development of a new student leadership program. Take Charge, co-sponsored by the Clarke University Future Young

Professionals (FYP) organization and the Division of Student Life, was launched in fall 2012 during CONNECT. Although the program is open to all Clarke students, it is a requirement for recipients of the VIEW scholarship, who must attend a minimum of two events during the fall semester. Incentives for participation in the program include a reception at the home of the president of the University at the end of the semester.

Assessing student satisfaction with campus life

The Retention Committee routinely gathers data regarding student satisfaction with campus life. In the fall semesters of AY2010–2011 and AY2012–2013, the committee organized administration of the ACT's Student Opinion Survey (SOS) to undergraduate students in the day and TimeSaver programs. AY2010–2011 student comments on the survey were considered in determining the agenda for the committee. For example, a significant number of resident students reported dissatisfaction with the meal plan options offered by the University. Analysis of data also revealed incongruence between dining hours and student schedules; many students had classes or extracurricular commitments preventing them from eating in the cafeteria.

In 2011–2012, a consultant was hired to study options to renovate the dining hall, which would enable the University to offer different dining and meal plan alternatives. Unfortunately, options provided by the study were too costly for implementation; however, in fall 2012, dining hours were extended to provide students more opportunity to use their meal plans. In addition, the University's Budget Committee agreed to consider funding to further increase food service hours. To offer students access to varied and healthy meals regardless of their class, athletic, and work schedules, lunch and dinner entrees from the cafeteria are now packaged and made available at the Crusader Café.

According to results of the 2012–2013 SOS, Clarke University students would like to see improved academic and athletic facilities. Such improvements have high priority in the 2012–2017 strategic plan and have been addressed, in part, through the renovation of CBH, the construction of the Center for Science Inquiry, and the purchase of an off-site athletic practice facility.

Promoting Student Success and Persistence from the Beginning: CORE

To assist the University in promoting student success and persistence, all new undergraduate students in Clarke's daytime program, both first-year and transfer, are required to attend CORE— described earlier in this self-study document—prior to their first semester at the University. This day-long program offers informational sessions about campus culture and describes resources for both parents and students; it also enables the institution to administer placement evaluations to ensure that all incoming students are situated appropriately in their academic programs. First-year students take the writing assessment to determine whether they will need some form of writing remediation—by registering for

GNED010 Writing and Skills Lab in addition to the required Cornerstone courses—while transfer students take it to determine either placement in writing courses or satisfaction of the writing proficiency requirement. Placement decisions for math courses are made based on a student's ACT math subscore and/or previous math coursework. A technology assessment, also required of all undergraduate students and administered within the first two weeks of the semester, determines whether they have met proficiency in this area or if additional coursework is needed.

For most students, the culminating activity of CORE is an appointment with their academic advisor. Prior to this meeting, the advisor receives a student advising folder, which contains, among other documents, a student success plan. This document, which each student completes with his or her advisor, includes questions about the student's perceived strengths, career goals, and interest in academic and co-curricular activities; the advisor then adds comments and recommendations. At the end of the advising appointment, the student has registered for classes and leaves with a better understanding of his or her academic program, including general education requirements.

Promoting Student Success and Persistence: Spark

Admissions decisions are critical to the retention of students. Whereas Clarke can be categorized as moderately selective in its admissions decisions, a key aspect to student retention is ascertaining each student's "fit" with the institution in terms of her or his academic skills and career and life goals and expectations held by the University. Clarke's admission requirements are based on high school GPA and ACT/SAT scores. While these indicators provide some information about a student's ability to perform academically, their predictive capacity is not always unequivocal: Some students for whom academic success may seem to be assured fail for a variety of reasons, while others achieve that success despite limitations.

Aware of this fact, Clarke University admits two to three academically underachieving students per year into its Spark program. Spark students are required to sign a contract stipulating conditions for their acceptance; these stipulations include having an "open" major, not being able to participate in athletics, working with a "Spark team" during their first year, attending weekly meetings with a learning specialist, and registering for prescribed courses during their first year.

Because of the newness of the program and the small number of participants, it is too early to draw conclusions about its effectiveness. During its first year, AY2010–2011, two students enrolled in the program; both left after the first year, one in order to transfer to a more selective university after meeting its admissions standards and the other after failing to meet entrance requirements for a selected academic major. All three students who enrolled in Spark for AY 2012–2013 have registered for fall 2013 classes; all but one of the three are in good academic standing. Three new students have been admitted to Clarke through Spark for AY2013–2014.

Promoting Student Success and Persistence: Starfish

Clarke University has employed an electronically delivered early-alert system since 2006, when faculty began submitting online warning notices about academically at-risk students in their classes. Although the system did provide an early alert to these students so that they could remediate their situations, it did not enable follow-up reporting, which the faculty considered essential. After exploring different systems to enhance its early-alert program, Clarke purchased Starfish Retention Solutions™ in summer 2012 and began program implementation the following fall for academic year 2012–2013.

Starfish Retention Solutions™ software assists with student tracking, early alert, and online appointment scheduling. Via the system, students in need of attention are "flagged" by their instructors; the process of flagging notifies the student and his or her personal "network" of campus faculty and staff members of the instructor's (or instructors') concerns, and processes ensue that result in the student's being referred to appropriate services. The system also facilitates contact between students and their support networks through electronic appointment scheduling and easy access to resources.

Early results of the University's use of the Starfish Retention Solutions™ system are very promising: In the fall 2012 semester, instructors recorded a total of 812 tracking items; 702 were recorded in spring 2013. In fall 2012, faculty members scheduled 162 appointments via Starfish; in spring 2013, that number increased to 430. In addition, Starfish reporting capabilities provide a wealth of retention and intervention data that can be used to inform improvements in programming and services across campus.

Promoting Student Success and Persistence: Meeting the Needs of Students on Academic Probation

Although Clarke offers multiple academic support systems, not all students succeed academically. At the end of each semester, a relatively small number of students are dismissed from the University and others are placed on academic probation. As part of their probationary status, this latter group must agree to certain conditions outlined on their academic contracts for that semester. These conditions may include weekly meetings with the learning specialist in the MARC and completion of a one-credit-hour course focusing on college-level study strategies taught by the learning specialist.

The antecedent to the current study strategies course was first offered in spring 2007. At that time, the course was crafted to help first- and second-year students on academic probation understand the reasons leading to their status, to assist them in developing effective study strategies, and to familiarize them with campus resources. The course was offered every spring semester between AY2006–2007 and AY 2011–2012. A total of 53 students enrolled in the course during that time, 58% of whom persisted to the following semester. It is worth noting that enrollment in the course was limited

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

primarily to first- and second-year students who had experienced major struggles leading to their probationary status.

To meet the needs of first- and second-year students on academic probation more effectively, the University implemented a new course, CU100 College Study Strategies, in spring 2013. Course outcomes and activities built on those that are the focus of CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar. The MARC's learning specialist taught the course, which included activities in a range of developmental learning and study areas, all within the context of courses in which students were currently enrolled. Of the nine students served by the course, eight were removed from academic probation at the end of the semester, translating to an 89% success rate.

Besides being required of first- and second-year students on academic probation, CU101 College Study Strategies is recommended for students whose performance the previous semester puts them at risk. It is also available to other students who may benefit from learning the skills upon which academic success at the university level is built.

Promoting Student Success and Persistence: The Student Athlete Success Program (SASP)

The Student Athlete Success Program (SASP), implemented in fall 2009, electronically tracks and monitors the academic work of each student athlete. The goal of the program is to promote student athlete persistence by helping this population achieve academic success and thus maintain eligibility for participation in athletic programs.

All new student athletes are automatically enrolled in SASP, as are all returning student athletes whose cumulative grade point average falls below 2.8. The program has a tracking component and a study-time requirement. Until spring 2013, faculty members were asked to complete a report every three weeks about the status of SASP students enrolled in their classes. Coaches received report results and discussed them with their athletes. In spring 2013, the SASP reporting program was integrated into the Starfish Retention Solutions™ system, allowing for enhanced tracking, reportage, and communication among faculty members, student athletes, and coaches.

All students enrolled in SASP must complete a minimum of three hours of study per week in the Nicholas J. Schrup Library. This provides a consistent opportunity for quiet study, group work, or meetings with MARC staff members to assist student athletes in improving their academic performance. In SASP's second year, 2010–2011, a record 64 student athletes were named to the spring 2011 dean's list. In AY2011–2012, the Athletic Department reported a mean GPA of 3.17 among student athletes, with 59 earning a place on the dean's list. These numbers represent an improvement over the first semester of implementation, when student athletes' mean GPA

was 3.04. The average GPA for student athletes in AY2012–2013 was 3.19.

Collecting Retention, Persistence, and Completion Rate Data: Other Practices

As indicated at the beginning Criterion 4C, Clarke University systematically collects quantitative data on first-year student persistence and graduation rates. Data on other student groups are collected and analyzed as the need arises. The Retention Committee's actions to improve or develop programs and services that enhance the student experience have been based on information collected from different sources, such as NSSE and SOS results, and from focus groups on specific topics. In addition, the University systematically collects qualitative data from current and exiting students. Information collected in this way assists in identifying potential attrition factors. Some of the venues for collecting this kind of information are exit interviews, first-year parent calls, and feedback from new student dinners at the president's home.

First-year parent calls

Each year, a team composed of faculty and staff members contacts parents of first-year students during the final week of October and through the first week of November. The purpose of these calls is to solicit parental input regarding student satisfaction with Clarke University. The vice president for student life collects the information derived from the calls and coordinates follow-up calls to address specific questions or concerns expressed by parents. Changes that have been informed by parent calls include improvements in the way information is shared during CONNECT, the expansion of food options and hours in the dining hall and Crusader Café, and the creation of a partnership with the Dubuque public transit system to make it more convenient for students to use public transportation.

Dinner with the President

During the first six weeks of the fall semester, the president hosts a dinner in her home for new first-year students, new transfer students, and CU101 Transitions: First-Year Seminar faculty members. The purpose of this gathering is to help new students feel welcome at the University. During a portion of the evening, the president inquires about students' experiences in transitioning to Clarke. By personally engaging new students in this way, the president ensures their feedback is valued. The vice president of student life summarizes attendees' responses and shares them with appropriate departments, requesting a plan for addressing each negative comment. This assists the University in removing barriers that negatively influence students' experience and in reinforcing the positive aspects they identify. Examples of issues that have been addressed as a result of these dinners include improvement in water temperature in the residence halls, installation of additional bike racks in strategic locations, and enhancements to Internet connectivity.

Exit interviews

The dean of undergraduate studies performs exit interviews for day-time undergraduate students who leave the institution. The purpose of these interviews is to gain an awareness of students' reasons for departure in order to better ascertain causes and possible trends in student attrition. Although the ultimate goal of the exit interview is to identify patterns that lead to attrition, there are some inherent challenges in the practice that are common to many institutions of higher education. The relatively small number of departing students and the combination of factors precipitating exit alleged by each student (e.g., career aspirations inconsistent with their academic programs) make it difficult to identify trends.

Reporting Retention, Persistence, and Completion Rate Data

Clarke University follows a well-defined procedure for the reporting of retention, persistence, and completion data. The director of institutional research submits first-year student persistence and graduation data to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) every year. This allows Clarke to compare its performance in these areas with that of peer and other institutions.

A comparison of Clarke University's first-year-to-sophomore retention rates for full-time, first-time students to those of peer institutions indicates that Clarke rates are above or near the peer average.

1st-Year to 2nd-Year Retention Rates				
Institution Name	2009 Cohort	2008 Cohort	2007 Cohort	2006 Cohort
Aurora University	0.73	0.75	0.73	0.73
Benedictine University	0.76	0.74	0.78	0.79
Briar Cliff University	0.68	0.65	0.64	0.63
Carroll University	0.75	0.77	0.73	0.72
Clarke University	**0.73**	**0.78**	**0.80**	**0.70**
Coe College	0.78	0.82	0.80	0.79
Concordia College at Moorhead	0.84	0.84	0.83	0.79
Edgewood College	0.78	0.76	0.76	0.69
Grand View University	0.68	0.70	0.67	0.67
Loras College	0.78	0.73	0.74	0.79
Mount Mercy University	0.82	0.83	0.81	0.70
University of Dubuque	0.66	0.71	0.67	0.61
Viterbo University	0.71	0.66	0.69	0.74
AVERAGE	**0.75**	**0.75**	**0.74**	**0.72**

As the following table indicates, Clarke University's six-year graduation rate has remained consistently between 64% and 71% since 2006 and is consistently higher than the average rate for its peers. Data for 2010 place Clarke in the third-highest position among its 12 designated peer institutions.

Completion Rates Within 150% of Normal Time (Columns Mark the 6th Year After Start Time for the First-Year Cohort)									
Institution Name	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Aurora University	0.54	0.49	0.47	0.45	0.5	0.53	0.52	0.49	0.43
Benedictine University	0.52	0.54	0.62	0.6	0.55	0.51	0.51	0.53	0.53
Briar Cliff University	0.56	0.47	0.54	0.45	0.49	0.52	0.52	0.56	0.44
Carroll University	0.58	0.68	0.55	0.56	0.59	0.61	0.58	0.61	0.6
Clarke University	0.64	0.65	0.64	0.71	0.67	0.59	0.58	0.67	0.62
Coe College	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.67	0.71	0.73	0.65	0.7	0.67
Concordia College at Moorhead	0.67	0.66	0.05	0.69	0.7	0.63	0.65	0.66	0.69
Edgewood College	0.57	0.52	0.47	0.47	0.53	0.5	0.49	0.45	0.38
Grand View University	0.44	0.48	0.48	0.39	0.4	0.36	0.36	0.37	0.31
Loras College	0.61	0.69	0.6	0.64	0.64	0.69	0.69	0.64	0.65
Mount Mercy University	0.62	0.65	0.61	0.58	0.61	0.61	0.66	0.61	0.64
University of Dubuque	0.46	0.38	0.43	0.44	0.43	0.3	0.31	0.37	0.4
Viterbo University	0.49	0.5	0.46	0.48	0.48	0.5	0.47	0.5	0.47
AVERAGE	0.57	0.57	0.51	0.55	0.56	0.54	0.54	0.55	0.53

CONCLUSION

Evidence provided in Criterion Four demonstrates that Clarke University has a robust, comprehensive, and effective system of program review and learning outcomes assessment. Further, evidence confirms that the institution collects, analyzes, and employs relevant data in making decisions about its curricula, its student life programs, and its admission and retention practices. A review of these practices and the changes they have generated and continue to generate attests to Clarke University's commitment to ongoing improvement. At the same time, the self-study process has identified several challenges facing the University in this regard.

- Student participation in the advising survey is limited. Results of the survey indicate that either extremely satisfied

115

or dissatisfied students are more likely to respond than other students. Increased survey participation would provide the institution with more data as to which advisors could benefit from additional training. Also, because relatively few surveys are completed, sharing results with advisors jeopardizes student anonymity, and, as a result, feedback to advisors is limited.

- There has been a perceived lack of incentive for effective advising. While the faculty evaluation program is effective in rewarding faculty members who excel in teaching, the same is not true for those who excel in advising. In spring 2012, the Academic Advising Committee presented a proposal to the Faculty Policy Committee recommending consideration of advising as part of teaching activities, as advocated by NACADA—or, at a minimum, the listing of advising as the top category in the area of service. The FPC opted for the latter recommendation, and advising is now the first of several optional activities listed under service.

- While Clarke University's procedures for collecting, interpreting, and using data are generally very effective, the institution would benefit from the implementation of a systematic method for collecting and analyzing data on student persistence based on set characteristics such as gender, participation in athletics, and academic program at entrance. By collecting and analyzing data on the same student characteristics every year, the University would be able to draw conclusions about which groups of students it retains and where increased retention efforts are needed.

- Limited participation by seniors in the *Collegiate Learning Assessment* makes comparisons to the results from first-time students difficult. The institution is considering various means to address this, but has not yet identified what it believes will be the most productive.

5

Criterion Five
Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

CORE COMPONENT 5. A. *The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.*

In keeping with the priorities articulated in its mission statement, Clarke University emphasizes its educational, co-curricular, and student support systems in the allocation of human, material, and financial resources. This is evident in the priority given to educational programming in the development of the institutional budget, in additions to and maintenance of the physical plant, and in the hiring and development of faculty and staff. Although the University is not a wealthy institution, careful planning in regard to its needs and expenditures combined with an increased emphasis on fundraising has enabled it to continue building on an already solid resource base.

A Stable and Strong Resource Base

Clarke University's financial situation is stable and continues to improve. The institution's annual audits, annual operating budgets, and financial ratios all attest to the strength of its financial picture. The Statement of Activities shows substantial improvement, specifically in net tuition revenue (which has increased by 81% since 2004, averaging 9% per year), which includes compensations for an increased discount rate—part of a targeted plan to increase enrollment.

Total operating revenue depicted in the Statement of Activities is stable, increasing by 68% since the last HLC comprehensive visit. The nature of total revenue growth during this time is characterized by a number of factors, most notably substantial swings in market values of the University's investments, which have resulted in negative returns in four of the past nine years. The largest decrease occurred during the financial instability of 2009, creating a loss of over $5 million.

The decline also is the result of several other factors: (1) the onset of a capital campaign, (2) embezzlement in the Whitlow Campus Store, (3) the cyclical nature of grants and government contracts, and (4) the planned phasing out of contributed services. (Since the start of President Burrows's tenure, she has made an effort to reduce the institution's dependence on contributed services, primarily from BVM religious. At one time, a large percentage of a sister's salary was returned to the institution as contributed services. Recognizing that this practice was not sustainable, the president directed that contributed services no longer be booked as revenue.) However, even with these substantial negative factors, the University continued to increase revenue.

The institution has experienced two deficits in unrestricted accounts during the past 10 years. The first, just over $60,000, was

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

the result of an irregularity in the Whitlow Campus Store, where it was discovered that more than $300,000 had been embezzled, $200,000 of which was associated with FY2012. Without the campus store anomaly, FY2012 would have seen an operating surplus of $140,000. The deficit in 2009 resulted from the decline in market values of the University's investments. The discovery of the embezzlement prompted the Business and Finance Department to revisit policies and procedures, focusing on the addition and verification of new vendors.

Annual Operating Budget: An Overview

As noted in Criterion Two, the main operational vehicle for financial control at Clarke University is the annual operating budget, which is overseen and approved by the board of trustees, developed and recommended by the Budget Committee, and managed by the vice president for business and finance. The University's Budget Committee (described in Criterion Two) consists of the cabinet (the president and all vice presidents), two elected faculty members, two elected staff members, and the controller.

The committee begins its work in the fall of each year by examining enrollment projections and reviewing tuition rates, fees, and residential expenses of peer and competing institutions to determine where the University should position tuition pricing for the upcoming academic year.

At the same time, the Budget Committee undertakes a comprehensive review of all revenue sources to determine incremental revenue that will be used to support the operating budget for the coming fiscal year. In that regard, the University's investment policy enables the institution to draw from the endowment, for operations, a percentage of the previous 12 rolling quarters, calculating the allowable percentage in December of each year. To date, the spending rate stipulated by the board of trustees in 5%. The Annual Fund contribution to the operating budget is determined by the vice president for institutional advancement and his or her staff and is exclusive of bequests.

The Budget Committee reviews institutional priorities as established by the strategic plan and solicits input about resource needs—both operating and capital—from the University community for the coming fiscal year. Typically, this input is channeled to the committee through the institution's vice presidents, who set priorities for presentation. Resource allocations that fit within the predetermined revenue projections are approved after consideration of nonnegotiable expenses (increase in health insurance program, grant matches, debt service, etc.). Reallocations are made when appropriate within and across departments. The University pays particular attention to the allocation of depreciation, making every effort to fund it at 100% to provide for capital projects and maintenance of the campus infrastructure, the recommendations for which also come forward from the vice presidents to the cabinet.

Monitoring Revenue and Expenditures

Clarke University has a well-developed process for monitoring revenue and expenditures. The vice president for business and finance prepares monthly operating statements that are reviewed by the Budget Committee. These reports provide comparison to revenue and expenditures for the prior year and study any unusual deviations. Quarterly financial statements are prepared for the Finance and Facilities Committee of the board of trustees and subsequently are shared with the full board for review and comment. If revenue does not meet projections at any time during the year, budget review becomes a major agenda item for cabinet meetings. Adjustments to any approved budget are crafted by the cabinet and then communicated to the board of trustees.

Overall Financial Growth of the Institution

Clarke University's financial position report provides a more complete long-term snapshot of the overall growth of the institution. From 2004 to 2013, the University accrued nearly $30 million in net assets; this translates to an increase of more than 66%. Growth is the result of an increase in unrestricted assets and investments, including a $10 million gift in 2007–2008 and continual increases in temporarily restricted assets. The institution's net assets also have been enhanced by a concomitant 182% increase in liabilities, which occurred in 2013 with the new bond issues. Prior to the bonds, liabilities had been reduced 15% since 2004.

The University typically relies on a line of credit (currently $4 million) during the summer months, which is repaid immediately in the fall. Credit is used primarily for operating expenses, but a significant portion is allocated to capital projects completed in the less-hectic summer months. For example, in 2012 the institution constructed the Lingen Technology Commons and a new parking lot and replaced a chiller and cooling tower in Catherine Byrne Hall. Although the line of credit is a booked as a liability, the University had a zero outstanding balance on its FY2011 and FY2012 balance sheets.

Spring 2012 Bond Issue

A significant portion of the institution's liabilities results from the execution in 2012 of a $16 million bond issue—$8 million in Series A and $8 million in Series B—to fund the construction of a new science building (the Center for Science Inquiry) and retire its existing Series 1998 bonds. Clarke chose to issue the debt as a private placement with a financial partner—US Bank, through the Iowa Higher Education Loan Authority (IHELA)—to reduce the cost of issuance when compared to public bond issues. The bond rate is based on covenants related to the institution's liquidity-coverage ratio. The liquidity ratio measures the amount of outstanding debt with the quasi-endowment and liquid assets. Series B carries a variable interest rate and is repaid with capital campaign donations on a quarterly basis.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

Investment of Endowment Funds

In an effort to strengthen Clarke University's financial core, a number of changes have been made in the manner in which it invests endowment dollars. In 2007, the University received notice of an upcoming $10 million gift designated to the endowment. Prior to this time, a majority of the endowment was invested in mutual funds and did not provide sufficient rate-of-return to offset the institution's spending policy. The board of trustees, on advice from the Endowment and Investment Committee, hired a professional investment advisor to develop and maintain a diversified asset portfolio in a more intentional manner. The investment advisor consults the Investment and Endowment Committee on a quarterly basis, reviewing risk, returns, and the financial manager's performance relative to chosen benchmarks. Despite the unstable market conditions of 2009, Clarke University's endowment has grown to $32 million.

Planning and Institutional Advancement Initiatives at Clarke University

Clarke University has long recognized the importance of fundraising in sustaining the health of the institution, and during the past five years systemic changes have been made in the Division of Institutional Advancement that have resulted in more targeted and effective fundraising efforts. These changes include personnel additions and improved data collection.

Institutional Advancement personnel additions

Shortly after her tenure began, President Burrows and her cabinet made the decision to commit additional resources to the Division of Institutional Advancement. As a result, the staff has grown from seven members in 2007 to a professional staff of 13, adding a major gift officer, a director of advancement services, two grant writers, a copywriter, an assistant director of the Annual Fund, and, most recently, an alumni relations coordinator. In addition, Catherine Dunn, BVM, PhD and president emerita, volunteers her service to the division and works in an advisory capacity with development officers. Many additions to staff were made in preparation for the public phase of Clarke's capital campaign, which began in 2012.

Institutional Advancement data collection improvements

The University's alumni/donor database is now managed through Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge software—the nationally recognized "Cadillac" of the industry. The director of advancement services and the database administrator have helped direct the design of the University's system in an effort to customize it to the institution's specific needs. In that regard, data have been bifurcated to better separate donors into two categories and, specifically, to identify the 10% of donors who contribute 90% of all gifts—a circumstance commonplace in major gift giving.

   Also, to identify the University's top donors, Institutional Advancement recently conducted an extensive alumni survey. Of the

4,100 Clarke alums contacted, more than 1,000 responded, for a 26% response rate. Findings from this survey will help the institution better segment and identify top donors for both Annual Fund and capital campaign purposes.

In addition to creating more effective data systems and improving donor identification processes, Institutional Advancement has implemented a comprehensive reporting system for the president, the vice president for institutional advancement, the president emerita, and major gift officers for monitoring major donor activity. These reports list and describe contact information for major donors. As a result of the wealth-screening process, the institution can now identify these donors and develop individualized strategies to cultivate and eventually solicit those with the greatest potential to make substantial gifts.

The Annual Fund

Annual Fund efforts have also concentrated heavily on donor segmentation: Donors are being solicited based on prior giving patterns or on the timing of their annual gifts. For example, during the annual phonathon, which takes place in autumn, specific contact periods are designated for contacting nondonors, lapsed donors, and current donors. Annual Fund performance for the past five fiscal years is shown in the following table.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	$795,651.18	$798,397.14	$781,512.06	$696,840.64	$647,503.45	$667,444.95
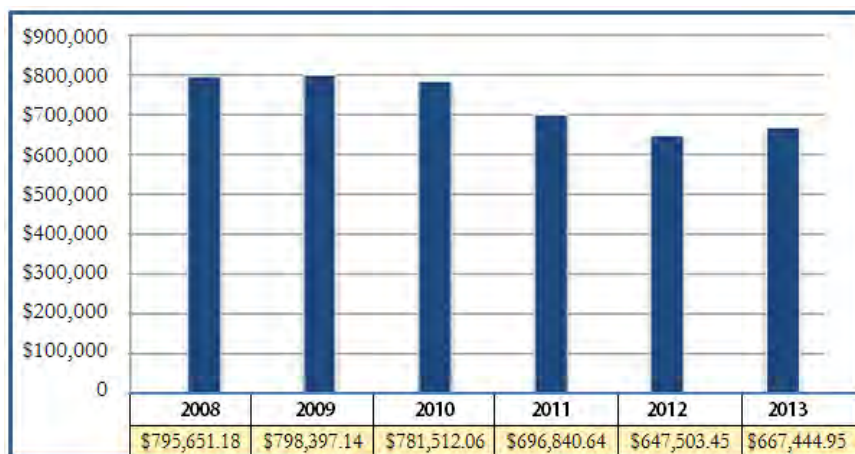
Over the past six years, contributions to Clarke have increased dramatically. The total raised in FY2008 was $1,530,682; in FY2013, that amount rose to $3,645,202—an increase of nearly 140% resulting in large measure from contributions to the capital campaign. The campaign has, however, caused the Annual Fund to plateau somewhat: This is a common occurrence during major campaigns and one the institution anticipated and for which it has made adjustments. Another major factor in overall Annual Fund performance has been the removal of bequests: From FY2008 to FY2011, the University gradually phased out its practice of including bequests with Annual Fund totals. FY2012 was the first year in which bequests were not recorded as part of the Annual Fund.

In an attempt to improve Annual Fund giving and to provide incentive for donors with the potential to make larger gifts, a new

Founders' Recognition Society has been established. The Society is reserved for those who give $1,000 or more to the Annual Fund. Over the past year, the Society has grown by 12% to 174 members. The goal for the next five years is for 1,000 alumni and friends to give $1,000 or more to the Annual Fund every year.

Clarke has also strengthened its stewardship efforts through a new gift acknowledgment program. Each donor now receives a personalized, handwritten note acknowledging her or his gift from the gift officer who has worked with her or him in securing the gift. Similarly, President Burrows now personally signs a thank-you letter to donors who have given gifts of $1,000 or more. This process has helped to cultivate donor relationships, in some cases leading to donors making more than one contribution in a given year.

The Capital Campaign

In May 2012, Clarke University publicly announced the largest capital campaign in its history. Initially, the campaign's goal was set at $33 million; later, it was increased to $34 million as a result of increased costs associated with construction of the Center for Science Inquiry. During the quiet phase of the campaign, two years prior to its public announcement, trustees and other major donors were cultivated and solicited. When the campaign was made public, the University had already reached approximately 49% of its goal. At this writing, that percentage has increased to approximately 54%.

Strengthening the Institution for the Future: The Campus Master Plan

Clarke University's resource allocations are aligned with its plans for improving and strengthening the institution for the future. During 2009, Clarke embarked on a campus-wide master planning effort. At that time, President Burrows directed the vice president for business and finance to co-chair with the chair of the board of trustees and an external consultant a committee charged with developing a 20-year campus master plan. The committee engaged the board of trustees, the faculty and staff, students, and alumni in identifying campus facility needs to advance the mission of the institution. The purpose of the master plan was twofold: (1) to determine the number and types of facilities that would be required to reach the University's strategic goals, and (2) to provide a guide to the orderly development of the physical campus for the foreseeable future.

The plan, currently in place, defines the location of new facilities, the pattern of future land uses, the organization of pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and the form and character of the campus landscape. The plan was prepared with an awareness of the institution's building renewal and infrastructure improvement needs, and it is understood that the University will develop separate action plans for these elements. Campus residence facilities were, likewise, recognized as requiring attention through a separate residence life planning exercise to define the goals and quantify the requirements for future student residences. Future infrastructure, building renewal, and student residence plans will each require integration with the
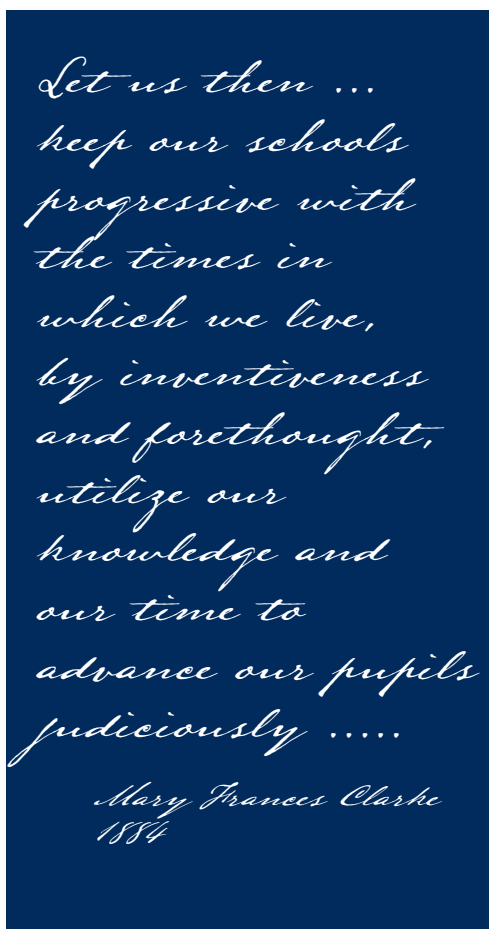
campus master plan. Currently, the institution has room for enrollment expansion with existing student housing.

One noteworthy result of the campus master plan is the University's new science facility, the Center for Science Inquiry (CSI), which opened in fall 2013. The building is designed to enhance instruction in the sciences and preprofessional programs. State-of-the-art classrooms, well-equipped laboratories, and versatile gathering areas for students are major features of the new facility. It is anticipated that the CSI will assist recruitment of new students in the sciences and professional programs as well as contribute to retention of current students.

Facility Capital Action Plan

Clarke University, like many institutions of higher learning, has a backlog of deferred maintenance items. As part of its efforts to improve its physical plant, the institution has developed and implemented a facility capital action plan addressing deferred maintenance needs and capital renewal needs over a 20-year period; the plan provides a view to the future with regard to capital spending. Each year, the plan is reviewed by the facilities management staff and the cabinet to inform resource allocation decisions, as the institution seeks to address deferred maintenance issues as well as provide for capital replacement and renewal.

Clarke University's Technology Resource Base

Clarke University continues to make significant improvements in its technological resource base.

Title III grant

In 2009, the institution received a five-year Title III grant in the amount of $1.9 million from the U.S. Department of Education to create a technology-rich teaching and learning environment on campus. The grant has enabled the faculty to more purposefully and creatively use new and existing instructional software and technologies in the development of discipline-specific materials that prepare students for life and work in a global society. The grant also has funded the creation of a faculty studio for course development and assisted with the equipping of the newly constructed Lingen Technology Commons (LTC), which offers state-of-the-art technology for teaching and learning.

Allocation of operating resources for technological improvements

Technological resources at Clarke have taken a major leap forward in the last few years not only as a result of the Title III grant, but also because operating resources have been allocated to provide extensive enrichments across campus in the areas of hardware, software, and human expertise.

The institution has moved to a virtual server format, reducing the number of servers and maintenance contracts and relieving funds to enhance the bandwidth on campus and increase the number of wireless access points in all areas. To maintain up-to-date computers,

the University in 2010 developed a leased rotation process for faculty, staff, and labs that allows for rotation of all computers every four years. Because of leasing, information technology (IT) staff members have been able dedicate more of their time to servicing and educating end users. Currently, there are 23 computer labs across campus containing 345 computers, providing ample resources for students, faculty, and staff.

Clarke's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system is Colleague by Ellucian, formerly Datatel. Ellucian provides the institution the ability to input and employ data from a number of academic and administrative areas. In that regard, a Datatel users group was formed in 2010, consisting of representatives from admissions, financial aid, academic affairs, the business office, student life, and IT to discuss, prioritize, and implement Colleague initiatives on campus. In 2011, a power users group was formed for the purpose of providing a knowledgeable resource at department and unit levels to move utilization of the Colleague system forward, thereby reducing reliance on the IT staff.

The power users group decided to replace the University's learning management system, Blackboard, with Moodle when results of a pilot program revealed that faculty and student satisfaction was much greater with Moodle. Moodle has allowed Clarke to meet its online educational goals by increasing student satisfaction (while reducing student frustration) and providing better online pedagogical tools for faculty.

The addition and maintenance of hardware and software would not be successful without adequate staff support. The IT Department has nearly doubled in size over the past seven years. Additions include report writers, programmers, and help desk personnel.

Clarke University's Human Resources

Clarke University's people are its most important asset. The quality and dedication of its faculty and staff are integral to its ability to develop and sustain its instructional programs.

Human resources: Faculty

The University currently employs 84 full-time faculty members, 69% of whom possess terminal degrees. In any given semester, the University also employs approximately 60 adjunct faculty members, depending on enrollment distribution. When faculty positions come open as a result of retirement or resignation, they are immediately filled, except in circumstances where a review of departmental and program needs indicates that a position is better utilized in another instructional area. The important point here is the emphasis given to faculty hiring and development and the institution's commitment to its faculty resource base. As noted earlier in this report, this commitment has enabled the institution to maintain a student-to-faculty ratio of 10:1. Some departments have expressed concern about the size of their full-time faculty contingents relative to the number of majors or graduate students in their areas. These concerns are being addressed as financial resources permit.

Human resources: Professional staff

Clarke University's professional staff, like its faculty, is highly qualified and deeply committed to the institution and its mission. As noted earlier in this report, the credentials for staff positions vary, but typically any position that provides direct instructional or co-curricular support requires the minimum of a master's degree; currently, 52 members of institution's staff hold graduate degrees. As its instructional programs change and grow, the University continues to add academic and other support staff to the existing cadre: Clarke's IPEDS data show an increase in the number of staff members from 139 to 154 between spring 2009 and spring 2012. As with faculty positions, staff openings are carefully allocated to provide the greatest support for the University's educational programs.

In 2008, in response to the financial downturn, a business practice was instituted by the cabinet that is still in place today: Any vacant position is reviewed by the cabinet prior to being advertised or filled. The purpose of this exercise is to determine whether the position is needed or whether it might be reallocated to another area in the institution. Pursuant to this change, some positions have been reallocated from staff to fill needed faculty positions.

Professional development for faculty and staff

Funding for professional development in the amount of $700 annually is made available to all full-time faculty members; each faculty member decides how to use these funds in support of his or her development activities (e.g., attendance at conferences, purchase of resources, research). In addition, the provost has discretionary funding—primarily through endowed Title III matching funds—available for faculty development where appropriate. Funding for professional development for staff members is made available to respective vice presidents, who provide development funds to staff members on an as-needed basis.

Many forms of professional development for faculty and staff take place within the institution itself. Opportunities include guidance in the use of online instructional support, workshops on effective pedagogy led by nationally noted educators, and initiatives such as Assessment Day, which takes place once every semester and allows faculty members to exchange ideas and information about their assessment procedures.

Compensation of staff

In 2008, the University retained the services of a consultant to create an equitable compensation plan for staff. Recommendations of the consultant formed the basis for salary banding by detailing the minimum and maximum salary for each staff position. Although the variance was too large for Clarke to incorporate all at once, the institution is slowly working toward a universal system.

The institution continues to establish salary and wage schedules by using information garnered from Iowa Workforce Development data for the Dubuque metro area, the Iowa Independent Colleges and

Universities, and CUPA HR's data on private religious institutions with enrollments of less than 1,300. These data enable Clarke University to stay competitive in the recruitment and retention of staff. The work of the aforementioned consultant also guided Clarke in establishing a living wage standard for the Dubuque area that, over a two-year period, enabled the University to ensure that all full-time employee salaries were at or above living wage.

CORE COMPONENT 5. B. *The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes.*

Shared Authority and Decision Making

Clarke University is committed to the belief that governance is best accomplished when authority is shared by campus constituencies, and its governance policies and procedures promote appropriate engagement by internal constituencies in decision making. Reflecting this belief, the Employment Manual asserts:

> Effective decision-making for the entire community must involve the participation of each group insofar as that group's experience and expertise can contribute to a more informed direction for the University. Within this framework Clarke University has developed a mode of governance involving all segments of the community. The membership of the Clarke University Community shall include the Board of Trustees, the members of the administration and staff, the faculty, and all students.

The Employment Manual also describes the University's institutional governance structure, comprising the board of trustees; the president and the president's cabinet; committees for educational policy, faculty policy, and financial aid; the Faculty Senate; and a variety of task-oriented committees charged with decision making for functional issues such as assessment, budget, general education, retention, faculty development, strategic planning, research practices, and arts and cultural programming. Descriptions include purpose, membership, and procedures of the board, cabinet, policy committees, and task committees.

A Bicameral Board

The bylaws of the Clarke University Board of Trustees specify that the board is composed of two "chambers": the board of corporators and the board of trustees.

The board of corporators

At the time that Catholic religious orders were decoupling their educational institutions' governance from their congregations' governance, several mechanisms were employed to provide the congregations with continuing influence or control in the governance of their respective institutions. In most cases, congregations reserved specific powers and thus maintained control over certain aspects of the institution they viewed as critical to its character.

In Clarke's case, however, the BVM congregation adopted a bicameral (two-chambered) governance model to provide a vehicle to *influence* rather than *control* the institution's affairs. The composition of the board of corporators reflects this purpose, with a membership of four members from the founding religious congregation, three members from the lay community, and the presidents of the congregation and the University as ex officio members. All members of the board of corporators are also members of the board of trustees.

The board of corporators is self-perpetuating and elects its own members and officers. Its authority reflects its purpose and is limited to (1) adoption, alteration, amendment, or repeal of the bylaws of the corporation, (2) exercise of the power of disaffirmation of decisions and actions of the board, and (3) exercise of such other powers as it may reserve to itself. In the history of its existence, the Clarke University board of corporators has limited its actions to approving changes to the bylaws advanced by the board of trustees and electing its members; it has never exercised its power of disaffirmation or reserved new powers to itself.

The board of trustees

The second and primary chamber of the governing board of Clarke University is the board of trustees. The board is a self-governing and self-perpetuating entity that is organized around the bylaws and that has adopted board policies and procedures that ensure its effective operations and ability to oversee the University's financial and academic affairs and meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The board currently consists of 29 members who represent important constituencies, including alumni; the business, healthcare, and education communities; and the founding religious order.

The board employs a committee structure to carry out its responsibilities and activities. Currently, the board has committees that address academic affairs and student life, the annual audit, board development, endowment and investments, enrollment management, finance and facilities, and institutional advancement. An executive committee composed of the board chair and co-chair, six committee chairs, the University counsel, and the University president functions on behalf of the board in limited ways as outlined in the bylaws.

The Clarke University Board of Trustees: Committed, Informed, Knowledgeable

The board of trustees of Clarke University is strongly committed to the mission and values of the institution and to ensuring Clarke's viability and vitality in the present and into the future. The University benefits from the stability and institutional knowledge provided by a number of long-serving trustees. Term limits instituted in 2005 also have created an opportunity to strengthen the board through the recruitment of new members from additional geographic areas and with needed expertise. Through the evaluation processes and in conversation with board leadership, trustees examine their

commitment to board service and make decisions about continued service before accepting a new term.

New trustee orientation

An orientation program for new trustees provides an introduction to campus leadership and to the various elements of the entire enterprise, the strategic plan, and the institution's mission and history. Each new trustee is provided a trustee mentor to be a welcoming presence and guide through the first year, and is invited to join the board committee that best aligns with his or her interests and expertise. All trustees receive a subscription to *Trusteeship*, the AGB bimonthly magazine on issues of university governance, have online access to the *Chronicle of Higher Education,* and are given the option to receive daily *Chronicle* updates.

Board meetings

The board of trustees meets three times annually and employs a two-day structure (Thursday through Friday) that allows time for input and discussion, decision making, and socializing. The Thursday afternoon component is dedicated to educational and strategic issues and involves presentations, activities, and discussions led by administration, faculty, and staff members who are conversant with or involved in the issues or projects being reviewed. A review of board agendas for the past five years reflects the range of topics that have been addressed: These topics have included emerging issues such as risk management and accountability mandates, operational concerns such as new program planning and in-depth examination of the budget, and extensive visioning and conceptual work for the most recent strategic plan.

Trustees are able to access the materials distributed at all committee meetings on the board's Moodle site in advance of the meeting. To avoid information overload, materials most pertinent to the board as a whole are placed in a separate file on the site in advance of each meeting. The University president provides a written narrative each fall providing a data-based assessment of the state of the University and the major issues for the coming year. The chief financial officer provides an annual as well as a quarterly financial report to the board that gives a clear, concise, and accessible summary of the University's financial status.

Annual retreat

The board of trustees holds an annual retreat focusing on major strategic issues. In recent years, the annual retreat centered on review and approval of the campus master plan and on providing vision and conceptual input for the University's 2012–2017 strategic plan. In March 2009, Clarke University partnered with Loras College and the University of Dubuque to sponsor a joint retreat with Harvard professor and noted board governance expert Richard Chait. Input from Professor Chait has had a significant impact on how trustees prepare for meetings, on how actual meeting time is utilized, and on the quality of board discussions.

Other opportunities for board involvement with the University

Board members also learn about Clarke University through their encounters outside of board meetings. Trustees are involved appropriately in the day-to-day aspects of the institution by hosting donor events in their homes, participating in donor solicitations, serving on advisory committees, assisting with cabinet-level searches, auditing classes, and serving as guest lecturers. Many trustees attend arts and cultural events, sporting events, and other activities on campus. Board meetings are intentionally scheduled for times when trustees can attend events such as donor recognition galas and commencement. Trustees receive the University's magazine, *Clarke,* three times a year along with an array of other electronic communications and are included in the periodic updates that the president sends to the campus community throughout the year.

Structure of Governance at Clarke University

The president

The board of trustees empowers the president to administer the University in such a manner as to fulfill the distinctive purposes for which it was established. The president is charged with implementing the policies approved by the board of trustees and is assisted in this responsibility by the president's cabinet.

The president's cabinet

The president's cabinet, consisting of all institutional vice presidents, serves as the University's primary decision-making and planning body. The structure and nature of the cabinet facilitate its interaction with all institutional constituencies. The cabinet's planning role is enhanced by its familiarity with all functions of the University, ensuring both a knowledgeable and an integrated perspective. The cabinet meets with the president weekly and is charged with ensuring the long-term stability and success of the institution, consistent with its mission, core values, and strategic plan.

Policy-making bodies

The Educational Policy Committee, the Graduate Council, the Faculty Policy Committee, and the Financial Aid Committee are the legislative bodies for initiating/revising policy in these respective areas, subject to the right of disaffirmance of the board of trustees.

  The Educational Policy Committee. The Educational Policy Committee (EPC) is the policy-formulating body for all matters of an academic nature pertaining to undergraduate studies. Five full-time faculty members are elected at large by the Faculty Senate. Two non-voting students are selected for membership based on faculty recommendations. The provost and the director of general education are ex officio members. Academic policy changes are forwarded via the provost to the president for concurrence and recommendation to the Academic Affairs Committee of the board of trustees for board approval.

The Graduate Council. The Graduate Council is the policy-formulating body for all matters of an academic nature pertaining to graduate programs. The Graduate Council is composed of the dean of adult and graduate studies, chairpersons of departments with graduate programs and/or the department graduate coordinator, and two graduate faculty members elected for two-year terms. Graduate students and other University faculty and administrators are consulted as needed. Graduate academic policy changes are forwarded via the dean of adult and graduate studies to the provost, who forwards it to the president for concurrence and recommendation to the Academic Affairs Committee of the board of trustees for board approval.

The Faculty Policy Committee. The Faculty Policy Committee (FPC) is the policy-formulating body for policies relating to the faculty. The faculty is represented by five full-time faculty members, two of whom must be tenured. The Faculty Senate elects the faculty voting members for two-year terms. The administration is represented by two nonvoting members: the provost and the vice president for business and finance or her or his designee.

Proposals may be submitted in writing by any faculty member or administrator. Proposed policy changes supported by the committee are presented to Faculty Senate. If approved, the FPC submits the ratified policy change, in writing, to the provost, who forwards it to the president. In consultation with the vice president for business and finance (or designee), the FPC prepares salary and benefits recommendations for the next academic year.

The Financial Aid Committee. The Financial Aid Committee reviews policies and allocations for institutional financial aid in order to maximize net revenue and enrollment. Members of the Financial Aid Committee are appointed to one-year terms by the vice president for enrollment management and represent the expertise and interests of admissions, financial aid, and athletics. The vice president for enroll-ment management has final authority in making recommendations and determining policy for institutional aid (within the context of the budget). The committee's work is shared with the cabinet and president.

Forums for Faculty and Staff Input to Policy: Faculty Senate and Staff Assembly

Faculty Senate

Faculty Senate is the forum through which the faculty is informed about and has an opportunity for discussion of any matters (academic or nonacademic) that involve changes in policy or new emphasis that affect faculty members in their functions as faculty members or in terms of their employment at Clarke. The Senate is not a policy-creating body per se, but it is responsible for voting on matters forwarded to it by the Faculty Policy Committee or other policy-making committee as specified by policy.

The Senate is responsible for conducting elections to fill faculty positions on policy and task committees. Voting members are full-time faculty members with rank, all department chairs regardless of teaching time, and full-time administrators with academic rank who have released time to teach at least one course during the academic year. Nonvoting members include part-time and adjunct faculty with rank of instructor, professors emeriti, and executive administrators. The Faculty Senate reports to the provost on all matters relative to the faculty.

Staff Assembly

Staff Assembly is an advisory body that provides a forum for communication across administrative areas on issues, interests, and concerns relevant to the staff in general. Staff Assembly establishes standing committees to address such issues, interests, and concerns. All full- and part-time staff members are members of Staff Assembly, are encouraged to serve on standing committees, and are eligible to stand for election to the executive board of that body.

Collaborative Decision Making: Task Committees

The University promotes broad faculty, staff, and student participation in decision making and policy recommendations through a variety of institutional task committees. The import and impact of the task committees vary by purpose and scope. Several key task committees are described in the section that follows; the 26 established Clarke University committees, their purpose, and their membership are outlined in the Employment Manual.

The Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee plays a central role in creating, monitoring, and communicating the University's strategic planning function. In addition to monitoring key environmental influences, the committee works with the board, administration, and campus community to identify priorities and top strategic opportunities for the University. The committee reports to the president of the University.

The Budget Committee

The Budget Committee is an advisory body responsible for developing the annual operating budget based on directions and priorities set by the board of trustees and the administration. Working with the president and vice president of business and finance, committee members assist in establishing budget parameters and priorities, develop the annual operating budget, and communicate as appropriate with their respective constituencies.

Other academic task committees

Several University task committees address academic matters. Chief among them are the Assessment Committee and the General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC), both of which are described fully in Criterion Three. A third committee, the Faculty Personnel Board (FPB), carries out responsibilities related to faculty

promotion, tenure, and midcourse and septennial reviews. The FPB conducts a systematic review of all full-time faculty members and communicates its findings and recommendations to the provost. The FPB also recommends updates to the Faculty Evaluation Manual to the FPC for its consideration.

Student Involvement in University Governance

Clarke students have the opportunity for involvement at many levels of University governance. Student representatives work with faculty members and administrators on selected policy and task committees that focus on academic and student life matters. Two students, selected by faculty members serving on the EPC, are nonvoting members of that policy-making committee. Other task committees with student membership include the Arts at Clarke Committee, the Multicultural Issues Committee, the Honors Committee, the Library Committee, the Athletic Advisory Committee, and the International Study Committee.

Clarke University Student Government

Student government at Clarke University is embodied in the Clarke Student Association (CSA). The CSA plans activities and represents the student voice with the administration and on committees. Every student who pays a student activities fee is a member of the CSA. Leadership of the CSA rests with the Student Senate, which represents the CSA in matters requiring deliberation and vote. The Student Senate consists of the four CSA officers and the officers of the first-year, sophomore, junior, and senior classes.

The executive board, consisting of the four CSA officers, is the executive branch of the Student Senate. It is empowered to carry on Senate business when the full Senate cannot meet. The duties of the executive board include coordinating goal setting, calling meetings, confirming standing committee appointments, and preparing the annual budget. The CSA president appoints student representatives to standing committees as needed.

Student Clubs and Organizations

Student clubs and organizations are another vehicle for students to be involved in decision making while at Clarke University. The CSA currently has 25 student clubs and organizations and provides assistance to students who wish to start new groups. The Office of Student Activities provides a variety of services to student organizations, including program planning, leadership, contracts and negotiation, publicity and promotion development, talent acquisition, and financial management. The director of student activities assists all student organizations and serves as the staff advisor for the CSA and the Clarke Activities Board (CAB). The CAB serves as the official, campus-wide programming organization that selects, promotes, and produces a variety of quality entertainment and involvement opportunities for the Clarke community.

CORE COMPONENT 5. C. *The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.*

As with any institution of higher education, the continued viability and success of Clarke University is greatly dependent on the quality of its future planning. The ability to integrate strategic goals with operational priorities and available resources remains a salient feature of the institution, as evidenced in its history of strategic planning.

The 2007‑2012 Strategic Plan

The 2007–2012 strategic plan triggered substantive and positive change in several key areas. As noted earlier in this document, the plan established goals grounded in the Clarke mission. Additionally, it identified five priorities:

1. Promote a culture of personal, intellectual, and spiritual growth.
2. Enhance a culture of social responsibility and global awareness grounded in Catholic social teaching.
3. Ensure excellence in design and delivery of academic and student life programs.
4. Optimize enrollment and retention to support college operations and future plans.
5. Strengthen college resources and services to advance the mission.

These priorities clearly connected to the mission of the University. Each was further delineated with a series of goals that became the focus of the institution-wide in-service and training agenda, committee work, departmental goal setting, grant writing, and budgetary priority setting.

2007‑2012 planning priority: A technology-rich learning environment

The 2007–2012 strategic planning priority to ensure excellence in design and delivery of academic and student life programs was accompanied by a subgoal: "[to] Provide a technology-rich, student-centered learning environment." Since AY2008–2009, technology to support learning has been a major area of planning and investment; the following major initiatives, undertaken since the last HLC visit, are representative of the technology-related advances that support student learning at Clarke.

- The University hired an instructional designer to assist faculty members in crafting strategies and materials that utilize technologies shown to be effective with today's learners.

- A technology resource center (described in Criterion Three) was established to provide faculty members support in designing effective online learning environments and creating effective digital content.

- Technology has been infused into Clarke's adult education TimeSaver program, which moved to a hybrid delivery format as described earlier in this document.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

- The Lingen Technology Commons, a recent manifestation of the University's commitment to the goal of creating a technology-rich learning environment, includes classrooms and collaboration spaces featuring state-of-the-art technology resources.

In addition to the above-named initiatives, improvements to the institution's technological resources include upgraded computers and projectors in classrooms; the introduction of online registration systems and reporting forms and guidance for faculty and students in their use; the move to a wireless campus; and increase in bandwidth to accommodate faster service.

2007‑2012 planning priority: A culture of personal, intellectual, and spiritual growth

A second example of how Clarke University's planning flows from and supports its mission is evidenced in the 2007–2012 strategic planning priority to promote a culture of personal, intellectual, and spiritual growth. Subgoals for this priority included emphasizing the University's Catholic identity, identifying ways to promote Catholic identity and the core values upon which the University is founded, and exploring ways to communicate and maintain the BVM heritage that distinguishes Clarke from its competitors.

In that regard, there has been a concerted effort to engage the Clarke community in promotion of and discussions about the institution's Catholic heritage and mission, demonstrating how that mission impacts planning and resource allocation. A Catholic Identity Committee was formed, and the campus community committed to ongoing study of and reflection on its Catholic heritage and mission. A number of campus-wide outcomes have evolved.

- An annual spirituality retreat for faculty and staff has been initiated. Prior to the first of these retreats, held in fall 2009, faculty and staff members read Thomas Groome's *What Makes Us Catholic: Eight Gifts for Life*. Mr. Groome also spoke at the opening workshop of the 2009 retreat.

- In 2010, the Religious Studies Department faculty offered a series of sessions for the faculty and staff to share several of their course outcomes and materials for RELS100 Foundations of the Spiritual Life, an undergraduate requirement for all students. The Philosophy Department offered similar sessions in fall 2012.

- A BVM heritage course—PHIL200 Our BVM and Catholic Heritage—has been offered through the Philosophy Department on a regular basis since 2007.

The 2012‑2017 Strategic Plan

During the 2010–2011 academic year, President Burrows appointed a planning committee, composed of faculty and staff and chaired by the vice president of business and finance, to explore bold and forward-thinking ideas that could have merit for the 2012–2017 strategic plan. This committee, with the help of several

subcommittees, investigated several ideas, including (1) adding desirable academic offerings (e.g., an occupational therapy major), (2) increasing enrollment by adding football to the athletics roster, (3) increasing vibrancy by adding music ensembles, and (4) establishing a center for study abroad and internships. The committee invited faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the board of trustees to provide input to their work through surveys, and after analyzing data yielded by the surveys, the committee presented its recommendations to the cabinet for further consideration.

Following this initial phase, a strategic planning committee was formed in AY2011–2012. Under the direction of the vice president for enrollment management, chair of the committee, members researched trends in higher education, business, and organizational behavior and conducted an extensive SWOT analysis as well as a PEST analysis. In addition, members gathered input and information from the board of trustees, faculty, staff, students, and alumni by various means, including formal meetings and small-group sessions. This information and idea-gathering process, reflective of the Clarke ethos of collaborative decision making, resulted in a large amount of data the committee analyzed for recurring ideas or themes that would help the University set its course for the future.

After identifying themes and determining ways in which they might be translated into action via strategic planning, the Strategic Planning Committee created a draft document to share with stakeholders in small, open sessions. At these sessions, the committee also solicited feedback as a means of refining and clarifying components of the proposed plan about which questions had been raised.

The completed 2012–2017 Clarke University Strategic Plan was presented to the board of trustees at its May 2012 meeting and was approved by unanimous vote. The plan includes several supporting documents, including a [timeline, budgetary considerations](#), and [key performance indicators](#). The Strategic Planning Committee continues to meet regularly to monitor progress toward goals articulated in the plan.

Other Evidence of Systematic, Collaborative, and Integrated Planning

The work of the University's strategic planning committees for 2007–2012 and 2012–2017 offers testimony to the institution's commitment to systematic and integrated planning. It also testifies to the value the University places on collaboration and the weighing of diverse perspectives in the decision-making process. Like strategic planning committees, other committees at Clarke (the Financial Aid Committee, the Catholic Identity Committee, and the Educational Policy Committee, to name several) are structured in such a way as to promote collaboration among various internal constituencies: They have diverse membership that is both elected and appointed, and often their work requires collaboration with other committees of equally diverse composition.

Use of External Groups in Planning

The University's planning process considers the perspectives of external groups when the opinions and recommendations of those groups are essential to decision making. Several academic departments at Clarke, including the Education Department, the Nursing Department, the Accounting and Business Department, and the Social Work Department, maintain advisory boards consisting of community representatives who bring a valuable "outsider perspective" to the work of those departments. In this same regard, a number of administrative units have employed external consultants during their planning processes.

For example, the University's Marketing and Communications Department has contracted with Stamats for branding research, and the Division of Enrollment Management uses the service of an external consultant for support in developing its recruiting plans. Earlier in this self-study, the institution's academic program review system was described; this review process frequently involves the input of external consultants. Faculty members from departments with specialized accreditation regularly attend professional conferences sponsored by the accrediting agencies, where they have the opportunity to consult with peers and agency staff members. In these ways, the institution's planning is informed as needed by the expertise and experience of individuals or groups outside the University.

Other Factors Affecting Planning at Clarke University

Clarke University's strategic "blueprints" provide impetus and direction for its broad planning priorities and expenditures. However, several other factors have a direct bearing on allocation of funds.

Economic variables

Planning at Clarke University also is based on consistent evaluation of capacity and possible fluctuations in enrollment, tuition revenue, return on investment, and contributed income. Conclusions drawn from this analysis are not foolproof, as was demonstrated by the economic downturn of 2008. However, the University was able to weather the financial crisis successfully, largely because its budget development process systematically projects different levels of revenue and expenses based on a range of economic and institutional scenarios.

Trends in higher education

As a tuition-driven institution that relies heavily on student enrollment, Clarke aligns its planning priorities with current trends in higher education and the enrollment implications that emerge from these trends. In this regard, the institution's market research has resulted in the implementation of a doctor of nursing practice program, expansion of the special education and graphic design programs, and introduction of a sports management program. Currently, in alignment with goals of the 2012–2017 strategic plan, the University is completing the groundwork for a new program in

food science. The Strategic Planning Committee's work with external scans has also identified increased need for educational programming in the health sciences and for initiatives in globalization and community involvement; both became focus areas in the 2012–2017 strategic plan.

Academic program reviews and end-of-year reports

Academic program reviews and end-of-year reports, described fully in Criterion Four, give appropriate attention to budgetary priorities and future planning, frequently resulting in the addition or elimination of faculty positions or critical programmatic decisions. For example, low enrollment and market trend information resulted in the elimination of the bachelor of science degree in chemistry and the bachelor of arts degrees in sociology and computer science, necessitating the reallocation of resources. Conversely, positive growth and the strength of other science programs provided the impetus for the design and construction of the Center for Science Inquiry.

Assessment of student learning

Clarke's planning for allocation of resources and program improvement also connects to assessment of student learning. For example, in 2009 the University made the decision to utilize the *Collegiate Learning Assessment* (CLA) to measure student growth in the general education thinking and writing outcomes. Data derived from the CLA provided a springboard for faculty discussion about how outcomes for their courses might accommodate the teaching of the skills of argumentation, particularly in writing.

CORE COMPONENT 5. D. *The institution works systematically to improve its performance.*

Clarke University is committed to continuous improvement. This is evidenced in the nature and quality of its growth since the last HLC comprehensive visit in 2004. The institution's ability to enact this commitment relies on a number of factors, including planning and evaluation processes that enable it to identify areas of strength and areas with potential, as well as areas that give rise to concern. The depth and breadth of these evaluative procedures give focus to the institution's strategic and operational planning. Descriptions of the many and diverse forms of evaluation—of human and material resources, of instructional design and implementation, and of learning outcomes assessment—are found throughout this document.

That the University is firmly committed to ongoing improvement based on its self-evaluation processes is evident in the relationship between what it has learned from evaluation and what it has done with what it has learned. In that regard, every key administrative and academic unit at Clarke University can point to evidence of substantial improvements in their areas as a result of the institution's systematic planning and its efforts in making data-based decisions. Several examples follow.

Clarke
UNIVERSITY

Ongoing Improvement: Academic Program Change

As noted earlier, data derived from academic program review has resulted in the elimination of three programs: the bachelor of science degree in chemistry, the bachelor of arts degree in sociology, and the bachelor of arts degree in computer science. Discontinuing these programs has enabled the institution to divert resources to other academic programs, particularly those experiencing growth. Program reviews have been pivotal in the creation of the graphic design program and the criminal justice minor. In fall 2014, Clarke will introduce a new undergraduate major in food science. Other key initiatives focusing on undergraduates include creation of CU100 Transitions: First-Year Seminar and improvements in academic advising, both described earlier in this self-study.

At the graduate level, the University recently inaugurated a new master's degree program in organizational leadership (MOL) and will offer courses leading to a master's degree in social work (MSW) in fall 2014, pending HLC approval. In addition, it has recently added programming leading to the doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degree.

All new programs offered by the institution are responses to market data derived from reliable sources. For example, plans for the MSW began in fall 2012, when National Bureau of Labor Statistics predictions indicated that the need for trained social workers was expected to grow by as much as 25% in the next decade, given the nation's aging population and other demographic factors. The University's dedication to keeping "progressive with the times" in terms of its academic programs is evidenced not only in its attention to relevant data but also in its collective will to act.

Ongoing Improvement: Academic Facilities

The University continues to improve its academic facilities as well. Since the last HLC comprehensive visit in 2004, two major additions to campus facilities have been built: the Lingen Technology Commons (LTC), housed in the lower level of the Nicholas J. Schrup Library, and the Center for Science Inquiry (CSI), which opened in fall 2013. Described in greater detail earlier in this self-study, the LTC and the CSI are prominent examples of the institution's commitment to providing students with learning environments that are contemporary, technology rich, and conducive to not only independent but also collaborative study.

Ongoing Improvement: Athletic Facilities

In a major initiative, the Division of Business and Finance, which oversees the institution's facilities, has led the purchase of the former Tri-State Golf Center in Dubuque, situated on 2.4 acres, with more than 14,000 square feet of available space. The purchase of this property aligns with the identification, in the current strategic plan, of Clarke's athletic program as an existing strength that can be employed to increase enrollment. When renovation is complete, the venue will provide additional space for athletic practices, offices, and storage; additionally, it will eliminate "overbooking" the Robert and

Ruth Kehl Center, which currently houses all of Clarke's indoor training and athletic performance activities.

   The Division of Business and Finance has also led Clarke's successful efforts in developing an environmentally friendly, sustainable campus, as described in Criterion One and evidenced by the many acknowledgements of those efforts from external organizations.

Ongoing Improvement: Student Life

The Division of Student Life, through its planning processes, continues to improve its services and operations.

Residence hall improvements

One continuing goal of Clarke University's student life program is to increase residence hall occupancy through the recruitment of new residents and the retention of current residents. To this end, new marketing pieces have been created and residence hall facilities have been updated. In addition, the residence hall staff has introduced a community development model to help create a positive learning–living environment. While these efforts are in their early stages, the initial results are very positive: Residence hall retention increased 3% between fall 2011 and fall 2012.

Athletics program improvements

Clarke University athletics staff continually review recruiting goals and determine ways to improve operations and program offerings. For example, declining numbers in men's and women's tennis led to the decision to eliminate the program in AY2005–2006 and reallocate resources to other programs. In 2010, due to increasing interest at the high school level, men's and women's bowling were added to the institution's athletic offerings.

Career services improvements

In fall 2012, the Division of Student Life launched an Exploring My Options program through the Counseling and Career Services Center to assist students (both current and prospective) who are undecided about their major or academic focus. Creation of the program was prompted by a cabinet review of admissions data indicating that many students who were accepted to Clarke chose not to enroll. The institution anticipates that Exploring My Options will be an effective recruitment instrument and one that will assist in retaining current students who are undecided about a major or program of study.

Ongoing Improvement: Enrollment Management

The Division of Enrollment Management reviews its processes on a regular basis and continues to improve its use of data in planning. For example, the division analyzes data from the National Student Clearinghouse annually to determine at which institution students who were admitted to Clarke actually matriculated. Data are shared with academic department chairs and sorted by many variables (major, academic level, geography, deposit cancels, gender) in crafting the University's marketing strategies. The division also compiles an

annual first-year student profile and semiannual transfer student profiles to review the changing demographics of Clarke University students. These are just two of the many data-collection efforts that help determine where admissions counselors travel and strategies for first-year student marketing efforts.

Ongoing Improvement: Institutional Advancement

In summer 2012, the Office of Institutional Advancement employed for the first time a modeling and wealth-screening solution to help identify new annual giving and major gift prospects. By partnering with its software vendor, Blackbaud, the department obtained statistical models on nearly 25,000 individuals in its database; this new information ultimately translated into roughly 2,000 new prospects, each with the capacity to give $500 or more to Clarke on an annual basis. This and other initiatives in Institutional Advancement have fundamentally altered the "giving environment" for the institution, as evidenced in following table.

Gift Level	TGR Characterization	Previous Number of Donors	New Number of Prospects	x as Many Prospects
$25,001+	10-12	13	40	3x
$ 5,001-$25,000	8-9	51	197	4x
$ 1,001-$ 5,000	6-7	162	836	5x
$ 501-$ 1,000	5	203	1,259	6x
$ 251-$ 500	4	335	2,256	7x
$ 0-$ 250	1-3	4,028	19,971	5x

Moreover, comparisons of total annual giving to the University provide evidence that the institution continues its emphasis on contributed income. Between FY2010 and FY2013, total annual giving increased from $1,322,216.52 to $3,445,448.98.

CONCLUSION

Evidence presented in Criterion Five of this self-study demonstrates that Clarke University is an institution committed to continuous improvement and that this improvement is undergirded by comprehensive, systemic, and meaningful planning. Strategic planning efforts are inclusive and data driven, and all planning is closely linked to the budgetary process. Most important, the institution holds itself accountable for meeting goals identified during planning processes.

Evidence further supports the assertion that the University's resource base is solid and expanding, and that teaching and learning occur in an environment characterized by excellence in terms of

human, structural, and technological resources. The institution's governance system, too, is a key resource, and is overseen by a knowledgeable, responsible board of trustees and an experienced administration.

During the self-study process, the institution identified several challenges related to the criterion and the core components.

- Some board of trustee committees are smaller than desirable as a result of limited trustee expertise or interest in areas such as finance, enrollment, and advancement. Increasing the number of trustees with needed expertise and commitment to the University is an ongoing challenge.

- The dedication of Clarke's board of trustees is one of its strongest assets, but members have many commitments that demand their time, and attendance at committee meetings can be uneven. This is a challenge because the primary work of the board is initiated and conducted through the committee structure. Providing trustees access to committee meetings via conference call has helped mitigate this situation, but further steps need to be taken to promote remote participation.

- The board is aware that the number of BVM sisters is declining, and sisters with the interest, attitudes, and skills to serve as trustees constitute a limited pool. The sisters' continued presence is highly desirable because of their deep understanding of the founding vision and the values of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. But it is critical that sister trustees bring more than their membership in the BVM congregation as a sole qualifying characteristic. Currently, Clarke's board is blessed to have sisters who bring business, finance, and facilities expertise or who have experience as university professors. This is not likely to remain the case. The University president and BVM congregational leaders have had general conversations about the situation and how to address it in the future.

- The size of the full-time faculty contingent in rapidly growing departments must continue to be evaluated on a regular basis. In this regard, academic program reviews and end-of-year reports have proven valuable; nonetheless, this remains a challenge for the institution.

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Appendices

Clarke University
Commonly Used Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AAC	Academic Advising Committee
AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admission Officers
AIPTF	Academic Integrity Policy Task Force
BAS	Bachelor of Applied Studies
BVM	Blessed Virgin Mary
CAB	Clarke Activities Board
CAS	Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education
CLA	Collegiate Learning Assessment
CSA	Clarke Student Association
CSI	Center for Science Inquiry
EPC	Educational Policy Committee
FDC	Faculty Development Committee
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FPB	Faculty Personnel Board
FPC	Faculty Personnel Committee
GEAC	General Education Advisory Committee
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning
MARC	Margaret Mann Academic Resource Center
MIC	Multicultural Issues Committee
SASP	Student Athlete Success Program
SAVE	Students Against Violence Everywhere

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Federal Compliance Filing by Institutions

Effective for visits beginning January 1, 2013

This document outlines the information institutions should provide in a separate federal compliance section of its comprehensive PEAQ self-study report or AQIP Quality Check Up. Institutions must address the **federal requirements** in the information they submit to the Commission **before** the visit and additional supporting information on federal compliance in the Resource Room during the visit. (Institutions participating in the Standard or Open Pathway will provide all of their information through the Assurance System.) The information requested in this document should be provided in the separate federal compliance document **before** the visit unless otherwise noted. The institution should refer to the Federal Compliance Guide for Institutions and Evaluation Teams in completing this template. The Guide identifies applicable Commission policies and an explanation of each requirement.

Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

1. Complete the *Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours* attached to this document, and submit the worksheet and the attachments listed in it.

2. Provide information about the length of the institution's degree programs and identify and justify any difference in tuition for specific programs.

Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

Credit Hours

Clarke University has always operated with the understanding that for every hour of instruction, a minimum of two additional hours of preparation and homework would be required for each credit hour earned. During the 2011-2012 Academic Year the institution formally articulated an "academic credit hour" policy that was reviewed by faculty, submitted and approved by both undergraduate educational policy committee and the graduate council. This policy is included in course syllabi, in the pre-populated syllabus template available on the university website and in the university catalog. The policies for undergraduate and graduate courses are stated as follows:

Academic Credit Hour Policy
Academic credit is awarded based on student achievement resulting from instruction and out-of-class student work. For every credit received in a semester (fifteen weeks or the equivalent), the undergraduate student should expect to participate in at least one hour of direct instruction (face-

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 1
Version 01 – 2012-12

to-face or online) and to complete a minimum of two additional hours of student work per week. The Federal government requires this minimum standard for instruction and corresponding student work be used in awarding Federal financial aid (34 CFR 600.2).

Example: A three-credit hour course would require a minimum of 9 hours of student work (instruction and homework) weekly.

Approved Graduate Academic Credit Hour Policy
Academic credit is awarded based on student achievement resulting from instruction and out-of-class student work. For every credit received in a semester (fifteen weeks or the equivalent), the graduate student should expect to participate in at least one hour of direct instruction (face-to-face or online) and to complete a minimum of three additional hours of out-of-class student work. (Approved by Graduate Council, March, 2011)

Example: A three-credit hour course would require a minimum of 12 hours of student work (instruction and homework) weekly.

The university's adult TimeSaver program and graduate programs are delivered in hybrid format. In addition to including the policy in the course syllabi that are posted in Moodle, the calendar in the Moodle template is designed to reinforce the differentiation between instruction (face-to-face and online) and homework. Such practice is intended to provide students with an understanding of and realistic expectations for the course in which they are enrolled.

The Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours has been completed by the registrar and members of the HLC steering committee. The worksheet and attachments are provided at the end of this document.

List of Evidence Documenting Compliance:

Clarke University 2013-2014 Academic Catalog
Clarke University Website
Departmental Syllabus Template

Program Lengths:

Clarke University requires 124 credit hours for graduation. The general education program is 48 credit hours reflecting the liberal arts character of its mission. Undergraduate degree program lengths vary between 32 and 79 credit hours. Students in majors with more than 75 credits are advised that additional summer course work or an additional semester may be warranted depending on the specific degree or endorsements, e.g., music education notes in the university catalog that the degree "may require summer school if the program is to be completed in four years." Students who are academically successful and are timely in selecting or changing majors do complete their program of studies in four years. Transfer students average completion of their undergraduate studies in 5.5 years, including their prior post-secondary study. For students transferring after their second year, six semesters of institutional aid is provided to assist them in timely degree completion.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 2
Version 01 – 2012-12

Masters degree programs range from 36 to 48 credit hours. The two clinical doctoral degrees range from 87 credit hours for the BSN-DNP and 127 credit hours for DPT. These program lengths are consistent with other like professional programs across the country.

Tuition

Tuition rates are reviewed annually by the university's budget committee. Current comparisons with peer and aspirant institutions are included in this annual review process and play a key role in final determination of competitive tuition rates for the next academic year.

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

1. Explain the process for handling student complaints.
2. Summarize the number and type of complaints and track their resolutions since the last comprehensive evaluation by the Commission.
3. Explain how the institution integrates what it has learned from the complaint process into improvements in services or in teaching and learning.

Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

Clarke University has a wide variety of ways in which students can informally and formally secure responses to their complaints. Below is the complete policy that is found among other policies on the Financial Aid website (Student Consumer Information Report), in the Academic Catalog, and in the Student Handbook.

Clarke University Complaint Process

The U.S. Department of Education regulations to improve the integrity of programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended (the "Program Integrity Rule"), took effect on July 1, 2011. Based on those regulations, schools need to clarify and disclose information on their accreditation and state approval status.

Clarke University, as an institution authorized to provide postsecondary education in the state of Iowa, is committed to full compliance with the Program Integrity Rule.

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredits Clarke University.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

Clarke University seeks to resolve all student concerns in a timely and effective manner. To that end, this complaint process serves as an ongoing means for students to discuss concerns or register formal complaints that pertain to alleged violations of state consumer protection laws that include but are not

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 3
Version 01 – 2012-12

limited to fraud and false advertising; alleged violations of state laws or rules relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions; and complaints relating to the quality of education or other state or accreditation requirements.

Informal Resolution Process

Any student who believes he or she has been subject to unjust actions or denied his or her rights is expected to make a reasonable effort to resolve the matter on an informal basis before seeking formal resolution. To that effect, Clarke University recommends the student request a meeting with the parties directly involved. During the meeting, students should describe the nature of the complaint and a desirable resolution. Both parties are encouraged to try to find a fair and satisfactory resolution.

The Offices of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Dean of Adult & Graduate Studies, Student Life, Admissions, Student Accounts, Registrar, Financial Aid, and Human Resources all provide specific administrative means to address and resolve most, if not all, of the questions and concerns you may have. The contact information for each of these Offices is provided below.

> Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies (academic programs, faculty, advising): (563)588-6383; graciela.caneiro-livingston@clarke.edu
>
> Office of the Dean of Adult & Graduate Studies (TimeSaver and graduate programs, faculty, accreditation): (563)588-6432; steve.kapelke@clarke.edu
>
> Office of Student Life (student and campus life): (563)588-6517; kate.zanger@clarke.edu
>
> Office of Admissions (admissions eligibility): (563)588-6468; beth.triplett@clarke.edu
>
> Office of the Registrar (academic records, registration): (563)588-6392; kristi.bagstad@clarke.edu
>
> Office of Student Accounts (bills and payment plans): (563)588-6342; kathy.vaughn@clarke.edu
>
> Office of Financial Aid (loans, scholarships, grants): (563)588-6338; amy.norton@clarke.edu
>
> Office of Human Resources (personnel): (563)588-8194; megan.lucas@clarke.edu

Formal Resolution Process

If the parties involved in complaint are unable to find a satisfactory resolution through the informal process described above and formal action is deemed appropriate, students must follow the procedures outlined in the following documents.

> **Grade Challenges:** Clarke University Catalog
>
> **Academic Integrity Policy:** Clarke University Catalog

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 4
Version 01 – 2012-12

Standards of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures: Student Handbook

Discrimination and Harassment: Student Handbook

It is expected that students will fully utilize Clarke University's administrative procedures to address concerns or complaints in as timely a manner as possible and with the appropriate individual or office. If a student has a complaint and is unsure with whom to address the concern, the student may complete the **Student Complaint Assistance Form**. Typically Formal student complaints at Clarke University are directed either to the Vice President for Student Life or the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, each of whom logs the complaints and takes appropriate measures to resolve them. The logs for Academic Affairs and Student Life are available in the resource file.

Since the last accreditation visit, the University has received a total of 33 formal complaints. The majority of these have been logged in Academic Affairs. The Academic Affairs Office has received 25 complaints from both students and parents. The basis for the complaints fall under several categories: grades in general (6), grades related to violation of academic integrity policy (3), perceived disrespectful or insensitive treatment from instructors (5), instructor's teaching methodology (3), misunderstandings regarding responsibility in the advising process (2), misunderstanding program evaluation/requirements (3), advisor's lack of knowledge of requirements (1), advisor's unavailability (1), instructor risking health of patients during clinical practice (1).

Complaints Addressed to External Agencies

If on occasion students believe that these administrative procedures outlined above have not adequately addressed the concerns identified under the Program Integrity Rule, the following independent procedures are provided. It should be noted that external agencies rarely review or act on complaints that have not been processed through all appropriate channels at the University.

1. The Higher Learning Commission ("HLC") of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools is an independent body responsible for the accreditation of programs offered by Clarke University. HLC relies on constant contact with the University to ensure quality higher learning. Accredited institutions are required to submit progress reports, monitoring reports, contingency reports, and annual reports, as well as to participate in focus visits. Each year, HLC receives a number of complaints from students or other parties. When a complaint raises issues regarding an institution's ability to meet accreditation criteria, HLC will forward a copy of the complaint to the institution and request a formal response. Complaints may be filed with Higher Learning Commission at the following link: http://www.ncahlc.org/information-for-the-public/complaints.html

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 5
Version 01 – 2012-12

2. A variety of other state agencies or state boards, which are involved in the evaluation and approval of institutional programs, or in the granting of professional certification or licensure, may also be contacted. These agencies include, but may not be limited to, the following:

o The Iowa Board of Nursing approves the university's nursing programs. The description, process, and forms for filing a complaint with the Iowa Board of Nursing may be found on the IBON website.

o The Iowa Department of Education, Division of Learning and Results, processes accreditation of undergraduate teacher preparation programs. Complaints may be sent to: State of Iowa, Department of Education, Division of Learning and Results, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E 14th St, Des Moines IA 50319-0146; Telephone: (515) 281-5294: www.educateiowa.gov

o The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education provides guidelines and directions and guidelines for submitting formal complaints. The information is found in the *CAATE Policy and Procedure Manual*, section XXIV. Complaints Regarding CAATE Accredited Program, p. 37. This document may be accessed on the CAATE website.

o The National Association of Schools of Music governs the accreditation of the music unit at Clarke University. Directions and guidelines for expressing a concern about a member institution may be found on the association's website.

o The Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education is the division of the American Physical Therapy Association responsible for review of formal complaints in physical therapy programs. Section 11 of the Rules of Practice and Procedures provides guidelines for addressing complaints.

o The Council on Social Work Education is responsible for accreditation of the University's social work program. Guidelines for formal complaints to the Commission on Accreditation may be found on the CSWE website.

o The State of Iowa protects its citizens against consumer fraud. You may file a written complaint online or download the file, print it, complete it and mail it to the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division.

o Iowa Civil Rights Commission 400 East 14th Street Des Moines, IA 50319-1004 (515)-281-4121 800-457-4416

How To File:
http://www.iowa.gov/government/crc/file_complaint/index.html

Complaint Form:
http://www.iowa.gov/government/crc/docs/revised_COMPLAINT_FORM_2007.htm

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 6
Version 01 – 2012-12

- o Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:
  http://www.eeoc.gov/

3. If you are currently enrolled, or anticipate enrollment, in an educational program that requires state agency or board authorization and/or licensure and do not see it listed here, please contact the Office of the Provost at: (563)588-6406.

The University learns continuously from student complaints. For example, the behavior of a particular faculty member that rose to the level of a formal complaint has resulted in discussions with, and mentoring for, that faculty member. Further, the institution has recently changed the system slightly by which students file complaints—i.e. a standardized form has been created and enables the institution to more easily route student complaints to the right area.

Publication of Transfer Policies

1. Demonstrate that transfer policies are disclosed in the institution's catalog, on the web site, or in other appropriate publications.
2. Demonstrate that the disclosed transfer policies align with the criteria and procedures actually used by the institution in making transfer decisions.

Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

Clarke University prides itself as a transfer-friendly institution. Students expressing an interest in transferring to Clarke have a variety of "transfer resources" highlighted and made available to them on the first page of the transfer admission website. From this page, students can avail themselves of the following information:
- Myinfo search for classes.
- Equivalencies for both major and general education courses from community colleges in the area.
- Advice and factual information to support students throughout the application, admission, and transition phases of transferring to Clarke.
- TES (Transfer Evaluation System) is an online tool that provides students with the means to check how their credits will transfer. While unofficial, it is an extremely helpful tool for students coming from institutions other than area community colleges.

The university catalog is also available on this page. Therein the prospective transfer student will find procedures and policies governing the transfer process and specific information about how foreign language, religious studies, composition/speech, math, and other general education credits will transfer.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 7
Version 01 – 2012-12

Prospective transfer students routinely visit with an academic advisor who is a faculty member in the intended major. At this time student's credits are reviewed and a determination about which will be accepted or not accepted toward the degree is made.

The final, official determination of credit acceptance is made by the Assistant Registrar, Registrar, General Education Director, and Department Chairpersons. Students wishing to transfer to Clarke, receive an official credit evaluation upon acceptance to the university.

Practices for Verification of Student Identity

1. Identify whether students are enrolled in distance or correspondence courses.

2. Demonstrate that the institution verifies the identity of students enrolled in these courses, that any additional costs to the student because of this method are disclosed to students prior to enrollment, and that the method of verification makes reasonable efforts to protect student privacy.

   Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

   Clarke University verifies student identity though the use of a secure login and pass code for the courses employing online and hybrid delivery formats. In hybrid format, Clarke employs a 50/50 model (50% face-to-face and 50% online) of instruction. Consequently, faculty members proctor exams and receive printed documents during face-to-face sessions. Perhaps most importantly, because Clarke faculty value interaction with their students and know their individual abilities and patterns of communication, misrepresentation is more difficult. The university also subscribes to TURNITIN to support its academic integrity policy. The university does not attach extra fees for identity verification.

Title IV Program Responsibilities

This requirement has several components the institution must address. The institution staff compiling this information should work with the financial aid office and the chief financial officer or comptroller.

1. **General Program Responsibilities**

   a. Provide information regarding the status of the institution's Title IV program; in particular, submit information about recent findings from Title IV program reviews, inspections, or audits.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012 Page 8
Version 01 – 2012-12

b. Disclose any limitation, suspension, or termination actions that the U.S. Department of Education has undertaken and the reasons for those actions.

c. Disclose any fines, letters of credit, or heightened monitoring arising from the Department of Education. Explain the consequences of these challenges for the institution's short- and long-term financial health.

d. Discuss the institution's response and corrective actions to these challenges.

e. Provide information about findings from the A-133 portion of the institution's audited financial statements that identify any material weaknesses in the processing of financial aid.

2. **Financial Responsibility Requirements.** Provide information about the Department of Education's review of the institution's composite ratios and financial audits.

The Commission also annually analyzes each institution's financial ratios to determine whether there might be financial concerns. The team will check with the institution and with Commission staff regarding whether the Commission or the Department has previously raised concerns about an institution's finances based on these ratios. If so, the institution should have addressed in its documents the actions it has taken and plans to take in response to these concerns. *Related Commission Requirements: Core Component 5.A, 2.B; Assumed Practice D.1.*

3. **Default Rates**

   Note for 2012 and thereafter institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012.

   The institution should take steps to avoid excessive loan default rates.

   a. Disclose student loan default rates as provided by the Department for the three years leading up to the visit.

   b. If the default rates are higher for the institution than its peer institutions, if rates are rising, or if rates have exceeded Departmental thresholds or triggered a Department review, then the institution should address the actions it has taken in response and submit to the team any corrective plan filed with the Department.

   c. Submit information about the institution's participation in private loan programs and any loan services that it provides to students directly or that a related corporation provides to its students.

4. **Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.** Title IV responsibilities include the legal obligation to disclose information to students and to the public about campus crime, athletic participation and other information. Identify any findings from the Department regarding these disclosures.

   Supporting information: Provide samples of those disclosures in the Resource Room.

5. **Student Right to Know.** Title IV responsibilities require that institutions provide graduation/completion for the student body by gender, ethnicity, receipt of Pell grants, and other data as well as information about the process for withdrawing as a student, cost of attendance,

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 9
Version 01 – 2012-12

refund and return of Title IV policies, current academic programs and faculty, names of applicable accrediting agencies, description of facilities for disabled students, and the institution's policy on enrollment in study abroad. In addition, certain institutions need to disclose their transfer-out rate.

Supporting information: Identify any findings from the Department regarding these disclosures. Provide samples of these disclosures in the Resource Room.

Related Commission Requirements: Assumed Practice A.6.

6. **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies.** The institution is required to have a Satisfactory Academic Progress policy and an attendance policy as part of the Title IV program. Document that these policies are readily available to students, satisfy state or federal requirements, and are being appropriately applied by the institution in individual student situations. (Note that the Commission does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.)

7. **Contractual Relationships.** Disclose contracts with third-party entities not accredited by a federally recognized accrediting agency. (The institution should have previously disclosed to the Commission all existing contracts in the 2010 and 2011 Annual Institutional Data Updates and received approval for those contracts. The Commission's substantive change policy requires that the institution notify the Commission of any new contracts for up to 25 percent of an academic program, that the institution obtain prior Commission approval before initiating any contract for 25 to 50 percent of a program, and that the Commission approve contracts for more than 50 percent of a program only in exceptional circumstances under strict scrutiny. The institution should review the document, "*Information on Contractual and Consortial Arrangements,*" for more information. *Related Commission Requirements: Assumed Practice A.10.)*

8. **Consortial Relationships.** Disclose consortial relationships with other entities accredited by a federally recognized accrediting agency. (The institution should have previously disclosed all consortial relationships to the Commission in the 2010 and 2011 Annual Institutional Data Updates. The Commission's substantive change policy requires that the institution notify the Commission of any new consortium for 25 to 50 percent of an academic program and that the institution obtains prior Commission approval for any consortium that offers 50 percent or more of an academic program. The institution should review the document, "*Information on Contractual and Consortial Arrangements,*" for more information. *Related Commission Requirements: Assumed Practice A.10.)*

Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

General Program Responsibilities
Clarke University maintains copies of documents relevant to Title IV compliance in the Financial Aid Office (Certification Renewal and Program Participation Agreement) and the Business Office (annual audit reports). Clarke University is authorized to participate in the following Federal Financial Aid programs:

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 10
Version 01 – 2012-12

- William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program
- Federal Work-Study Program
- Federal Perkins Loan Cancellation
- Federal Perkins Loan Program
- Federal Pell Grant Program
- Teacher Education Assistance for University and Higher Education Grants (TEACH)
- Federal Nursing Loan
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)

To date, Clarke University has never been audited by the Department of Education.

Financial Responsibility Requirements

Clarke's composite ratios

A-133 portion of the audit – Compliance Report

Default Rates

Clarke University maintains default rates that are below the national averages. The following table documents default rates as provided to the Department of Education for the prior three years:

OPE ID	School	Type	Control	PRGMS		FY2010	FY2009	FY2008
001852	Clarke University 1550 Clarke Drive Dubuque IA 52 001-3198	Master's Degree or Doctor's Degree	Private	Both (FFEL/FDL)	**Default Rate**	4.2	3.8	5.6
					No. in Default	13	14	14
					No. in Repay	307	365	248
					Enrollment figures	1304	1342	1398
					Percentage Calculation	23.5	27.2	17.7

The Clarke University Financial Aid Office has worked to ensure that students are fully informed of their obligations both upon entering and before leaving the institution.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 11
Version 01 – 2012-12

Clarke University has had no significant findings, fines, or corrective actions from internal financial audits or the U.S. Department of Education audits.

Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) requires that postsecondary institutions participating in federal student aid programs make certain disclosures to students. Clarke University discloses campus crime information, athletic participation, financial aid, and related disclosures to all students in the Student Consumer Information Report in compliance with federal law. The Student Consumer Information Report is available on the Clarke University website, or a paper copy is provided on request.

Campus crime statistics are published annually as required by the U.S. Department of Education. The campus is notified of the availability of the report through email and the report is available on the University's website.

Student Right to Know

All institutions receiving Federal Title IV funds are required to provide students and staff access to featured performance results, policies, and resources. To comply with the Department of Education's Student Right to Know Act, Clarke University offers the Student Consumer Information Report on the University's website or a paper copy is available on request.

Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies

Clarke University has an Academic Progress Policy and Attendance Policy as required by Federal Title IV funding. These policies are disclosed in the Student Handbook and Academic catalog which is available on the University's website. Attendance policies are also disclosed in course syllabi.

Contractual Relationships

Clarke University has a contractual relationship with the Archdiocese of Dubuque Office of Education. The Archdiocese of Dubuque Office of Education partners with Clarke University to deliver the Masters of Arts in Education Degree. The Masters of Arts in Education program primarily serves parochial school teachers. Blended on-line formats provide coursework that ensures both convenience and collaboration within a community of learners. Coursework is offered during the summer as well in the academic year.

Consortial Relationships

Clarke University is a charter member of the Online Consortium of Independent Colleges and Universities (OCICU) (Regis) and has access to all courses offered via the consortium partners for delivery to its students, the following guidelines shall be followed with respect to course selection, student registration, and grade transcription:

The purpose of Clarke's membership in the OCICU is to provide online alternatives for courses that do not meet minimum enrollment, and for students who are in need of specific courses to maintain acceptable academic progress. The Director of Adult Studies shall act as the point of contact for consortium activities and as the Clarke University liaison to the OCICU.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 12
Version 01 – 2012-12

Clarke University pays a per-student enrollment fee established by the OCICU. Only courses selected by Clarke shall be offered to Clarke students. Courses shall not compete with Clarke-offered sections.

Required Information for Students and the Public

1. Submit course catalogs and student handbooks to the team.

2. Identify sections of the web site that include required disclosure information.

   2013-2014 Clarke University Academic Catalog

   Clarke University Student Handbook

Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information

1. Demonstrate that advertisements and recruiting materials provides accurate, timely, and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and that information about the institution's accreditation status with the Commission and other accrediting agencies is clear and accurate.

2. Demonstrate that the institution provides such information to current and prospective students about its programs, locations, and policies.

3. Provide the team with a link to the Mark of Affiliation on the institution's web site.

   Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

   Clarke University has measures to ensure that information about its programs and policies are accurate and available. The University catalog is overseen by the Provost and Academic Deans. Information in the catalog is reviewed prior to publication by academic department chairs, program directors, academic deans, and appropriate university staff. The current year's catalog is maintained electronically on the University website. In addition to the catalog, the website has links to faculty, staff, and student handbooks. Print copies are available upon request.

   Accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission is stated in the catalog along with the Commission's Mark of Affiliation, address, phone number, and URL of the Commission. This information is also available on the Clarke University web site.

Review of Student Outcome Data

1. Demonstrate that the institution collects information about student outcomes.

2. Provide evidence that information collected about student outcomes informs planning, program review, assessment, etc.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 13
Version 01 – 2012-12

Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

Data on student learning outcomes are collected through academic department end of year reports. Data is submitted through the Campus Labs Compliance Assist program, a centralized online integrated assessment program for data collection. The system allows users to manage and track planning and assessment entries relating goals, projects, and outcomes to each other in a hierarchical system.

Reports are generated from Campus Labs to compare achievement of learning outcomes between and/or among academic departments from year to year and/or over a five-year period to inform five-year program reviews. Data on achievement of learning outcomes is analyzed and utilized for decision-making and action planning to improve student performance across academic departments. Please refer to Criterion IV for detailed information.

All academic departments, including general education, submit end-of-year reports to the director of assessment and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. Data are summarized in a comprehensive analysis report. Individual department reports are sent to department chairs with recommendations for improving departmental planning during the next academic year. In addition to annual assessment reports, each department conducts a program review every five years. The program review committee consisting of divisional chairpersons evaluates each report along with the Vice President of Academic Dean and the President of the University.

Assessment Days are conducted once a semester to address ways to improve assessment practices. For example throughout the years from 2004 – 2014 faculty members developed a wide range of skills for assessing student learning: 1) writing course outcomes aligned department outcomes, 2) creating rubrics for measuring student performance and 3) planning assessment practices using curriculum mapping processes.

Each semester assessment committee members examine institutional, academic and student life reports for the purpose of identifying trends in student learning and engagement across the institution. These reports are studied, analyzed, and communicated to appropriate areas. Recommendations are incorporated into assessment day activities held each semester. (Please see Criterion IV for additional information).

Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies

1. Disclose information about any relationship with a specialized, professional, or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution has a presence.

   Supporting information: Provide the team in the Resource Room with the most recent comprehensive evaluation report and action letter from each institutional or specialized accrediting agency as well as any interim monitoring prepared for that agency.

Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 14
Version 01 – 2012-12

Clarke is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. It is also accredited by or affiliated with the following organizations:

• Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
• Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education Programs
• Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
• Council on Social Work Education
• National Association of Schools of Music
• Iowa Department of Education

This list is included in the print and online versions of the university catalog. A copy of the most recent report from each accreditation visit is available in the Evidence Resource File. Currently the university is in good status with all accrediting bodies.

Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

1. Determine what constituencies should receive the notice of opportunity to comment. These groups should include students, parents, alumni, taxpayers, donors, community groups, local businesses.

2. Determine what media the institution will use to solicit comments. Local newspapers, institutional web sites, and alumni magazines are appropriate choices. The notice should reach all constituencies but should not unduly burden the institution.

3. Publish the notice of the visit following the prescribed format; a sample notification is available on the Commission's web site under Preparation for the Comprehensive Visit.

   Commentary and Evidence of Compliance:

   Clarke University has announced its self-study and November 2013 visit using various media. Notice appeared in The Courier (Clarke University Publication), Alumni e-newsletter, Clarke Magazine, Telegraph Herald, Galena Gazette, Dyersville Commercial, and the Maquoketa Sentinel Press.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 15
Version 01 – 2012-12

Worksheet for Use by Institutions
on Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours

Instructions

This worksheet should be completed by the person(s) at the institution who know the most about the institution's calendar and credit hour assignments; at many institutions the registrar may be the appropriate person to complete this assignment. The person(s) completing the assignment should work closely with the institution's financial aid officer to ensure consistency between what is reported to the Commission on this form and what is reported to the U.S. Department of Education.

Purpose of this form. This form provides the evaluation team with a single source of information about the institution's calendar, credit hour policies, and total credit hour generation related to the courses for which it provides instruction, and an overview of the institution's pattern of distribution of credit hour assignments. **It is not an inventory of every course the institution offers.** The institution should:

- report on academic terms and credit for courses that support the institution's certificate and degree programs;

- include notes or other brief explanation in this form where appropriate to explain the allocation of credit hours;

- estimate or round off where appropriate;

- **not** include prior learning, transfer, etc., wherein the institution awards credit but does not provide instruction associated with that credit.

Appendix A. Credits and Program Length. All institutions must complete Appendix A. Institutions that use multiple calendars may need to complete more than one section of Part One.

Appendix A includes these sections:

Part One. Institutional Calendar, Term Length, and Type of Credit

Part Two. Format of Courses and Number of Credits Awarded

Part Three. Policy on Credit Hours

Part Four. Total Credit Hour Generation

Part Five. Clock Hours

Supporting Materials

Appendix B. Clock Hour Worksheet. Institutions should complete Appendix B only if they offer clock-hour courses/programs or are required by the U.S. Department of Education to report certain courses/programs to the Department in clock-hours for Title IV purposes.

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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012
Version 01 – 2012-12

Page 16

Appendix A: Assignment of Credit Hours

Part One: Institutional Calendar, Term Length, and Type of Credit

*Institutions that use multiple calendars across the institution may need to complete more than one section below. For more information about the terminology and calendaring units referenced in this form, see **2011-2012 Federal Student Aid Handbook**, Volume 3, Chapter 1, Academic Calendar, Payment Periods and Disbursements. Definitions in this section are taken from that **Handbook**.*

Terms		Column 1 Term Length: Number of weeks	Column 2 Number of Starts
Semester / Trimester Calendar	Standard Format: 14-17 week term	15 weeks + 1 week finals	1
	Compressed Formats: 4, 8 or other week terms within the semester calendar [1]	8 weeks	2
	Summer Term	3, 4, 8 weeks	2, 2, 1
Quarter Calendar	Standard Format: 10-12 week term		
	Compressed Formats: 2, 5, or other week terms within the quarter calendar [1]		
	Summer Term		

Non-Standard Terms (terms that are not semester, trimesters, or quarters. A non-standard term may have the following characteristics: courses do not begin and end within a set period of time; courses overlap terms, including self-paced and independent study courses or sequential courses that do not begin and end within a term; terms may be of equal or unequal length.)

Term		Column 1 Term Length: Number of weeks	Column 2 Number of Starts	Column 3 Type of Credit
Non-Standard Term Calendar	Term One			
	Term Two			
	Term Three			
	Summer Term			

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Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 17
Version 01 – 2012-12

Part Two. Format of Courses and Number of Credits Awarded

Guide to Completing this Section

Period Reported

An institution may use any recent term that provides a reasonable picture of their credit hour allocations as the basis for reporting in the Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses. The institution should identify on the form what term is being reported. **The institution should complete a separate form for each type of term identified in Part One.**

Key to Rows

- **# of Courses**–Count each course offered by the institution in the row corresponding to the number of credits awarded and the column or columns representing the format of delivery through which the course or a section of that course is offered. Do not count sections of the same course if the sections are offered in the same delivery format.

- **# of Meetings**–Enter the total number of class meetings (or equivalent) provided in each course with that credit award during that term; if the number of class meetings varies, enter a range. For distance, correspondence or other formats report on instructional time. Do not include study or other time where students work independently or with other students even though such time may be provided to replace time with a faculty member. Instructional time need not be limited to time spent with all students in the class in a single format.

  Include lab or discussion in the number of meetings if they are a required element of the course, do not have a separate course number or credit hour allocation, and if the presence of a lab or discussion is considered significant when the institution assigns credit hours to the course. If lab or discussion does meet these considerations, it need not be reflected in this chart.

- **Meeting Length**–Enter the range (shortest to longest) of meeting times in each category. *(Note that one hour may be 50 minutes of actual instructional time.)*

Key to Columns

- **Column 1–FTF**: For courses where instructors interact with students in the same physical space for approximately 75% or more of the instructional time.

- **Column 2–Mixed FTF**: For courses where instructors interact with students in the same physical space for less than 75% of the instructional time with the remainder of the instructional time provided through distance or correspondence education.

  Note that the above explanations arise from the Commission's distance education protocol. Institutions may use other thresholds for FTF and Mixed FTF provided that they define them clearly and include the definition on this worksheet.

- **Column 3–Distance:** For courses where instructors interact with students through one or more forms of distance delivery.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 18
Version 01 – 2012-12

- **Column 4–Correspondence**: For courses where instructors interact with students through mail or electronic interface according to a typically self-paced schedule.

  Federal Definitions of Distance/Correspondence Education:

  Distance education/course means education that uses one or more of the {following} technologies (i) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor: and (ii) to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies used may include: (i) the internet; (ii) one way and two way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; (iii) audioconferencing; or (iv) videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-Roms, if the videocassettes, DVDs or CD-Roms are used in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in clauses (i) through (iii).

  Correspondence education/course means: (1) Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. (2) Interaction between the instructor and the student is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. (3) Correspondence courses are typically self-paced. (4) Correspondence education is not distance education.

- **Column 5–Independent/Directed Study:** For courses where instructors interact with students through a flexible format.

- **Column 6–Weekend College:** Some institutions may have an evening or weekend college that, while on the same calendar, may structure its courses and credit assignments differently than the same courses offered during the regular day; institutions that offer courses in the evening or on the weekend as another scheduling option for students, but the courses provide similar class meetings or instructional time as those courses offered by the institution during the regular day need not report evening or weekend courses in this category.

- **Column 7–Internships/Practica:** Some institutions may provide internship or practica experiences for which credits are awarded by the institution. Institutions that have professional schools in medicine, law, nursing, physical therapy, etc. that often require internships or practica with high credit allocations should provide brief summative information about the internships but not need include them in the report form.

Some Examples

- *If the institution offers Calculus 210, a three credit-hour course, in FTF and distance formats as well as through the Weekend College, the course should be reported in the row for 3 credits and once in each of those columns.*

- *If the institution offers that course in a full 14-17 week standard format as well as in a compressed format, the course should be reported on one form for the standard form and in a separate form for the compressed format.*

- *If in the FTF format instructors meet with students two times per week for 1.5 hours per meeting for the 14 weeks of the term, report the # of meetings as 28 meetings, and the length of each meeting as 1.5 hours.*

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012
Version 01 – 2012-12

Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses

Complete a separate form for each term length specified in Part One, Columns 1 and 2 above.

Term and Length: Fall 2012 & Summer 2013

Credit Hour Allocations – Fall 2012

Credit Hour Allocations – Summer 2013

# Credits Awarded	Instructional Time	Course Formats						
		1. FTF Courses	2. Mixed FTF Courses	3. Distance Courses	4. Corresp Courses	5. Independent/ Directed Study Courses	6. Weekend College	7. Internship/ Practica Courses
Sample Row: 3 Credits	# of courses	119	24	57	14	2	20	4
	# of meetings	15-45	15-30	15	4-8	3-14	6	6-10
	Meeting length	1-3 hrs.	1-2 hrs.	1 hr.	1-2 hrs.	.5-3 hrs.	4 hrs.	1-4 hrs.
1 Credit	# of courses							
	# of meetings							
	Meeting length							
2 Credits	# of courses							
	# of meetings							
	Meeting length							
3 Credits	# of courses							
	# of meetings							
	Meeting length							
4 Credits	# of courses							
	# of meetings							
	Meeting length							
5 Credits	# of courses							
	# of meetings							
	Meeting length							
__ Credits[1]	# of courses							
	# of meetings							
	Meeting length							
__ Credits[1]	# of courses							
	# of meetings							
	Meeting length							

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Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012
Version 01 – 2012-12

[1] Institutions offering courses with **six or more credits awarded** should list those courses in these spaces. Identify the number of credits awarded in the first column. Add additional rows, if needed. **In a separate attachment, identify the course(s) and explain the reasoning behind the credit allocated to those courses.**

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 21
Version 01 – 2012-12

Other Courses Not Reported Above

List below any other courses that were not included in the Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses. Identify the course names and the number of credits allocated to them along with a brief description of how instruction takes places in these courses and how many hours of instruction are provided. (Such courses might include travel or other courses that do not fit in the columns above because they have a different delivery format.)

Part Three: Policy on Credit Hours

The institution has a policy specific to the assignment of credit:

[X] Yes*   [ ] No

The institution has policies specific to the assignment of credit at the following levels (check all that apply):

[X] Institution-wide   [ ] Delivery format specific

[ ] Department-specific   [ ] Program specific

Include the institution's credit hour policy in the attachments to this worksheet.

Part Four: Total Credit Hour Generation

Identify the typical number of credits of a full-time or part-time undergraduate and graduate student takes during a regular term.

The average number of credits for a full-time undergraduate student is 15 credits.
The average number of credits for a part-time undergraduate student is 6.5 credits.
The average number of credits for a graduate student is 10 credits.

Provide the headcount of students earning more than this load in the most recent fall and spring semesters/trimesters or the equivalent for quarters or non-standard term institutions.

[537] Most Recent Fall Term [2012] (identify the year)

[468] Most Recent Spring Term [2013] (identify the year)

Part Five: Clock Hours

Answer YES to the statement below **only if your institution offers any programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these**

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 22
Version 01 – 2012-12

programs. For example, any program that prepares students for a licensed or professional discipline may need to be reported in clock hours to the Department.
Check with the institution's financial aid officer to determine if the institution has programs of this nature. Such programs typically include those required to be identified in clock hours for state licensure of the program or where completing clock hours is a requirement for graduates to apply for licensure or authorization to practice the occupation. Such programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.

The institution reports clock hours to the U.S. Department of Education with regard to some programs for Title IV purposes:

☐ Yes   ☒ No

If the answer is Yes, complete Appendix B, Clock Hour Worksheet, and attach it to this report.

Supporting Materials

The institution should include with this document the following supporting materials:

- Copies of all applicable policies related to the assignment of credit in .pdf format.

- A copy of the catalog or other document in .pdf format that contains course descriptions and applicable credit hour assignments.

- The catalog or other document in which the institution has marked or highlighted any course that is provided by the institution in non-standard terms or compressed format for the term reported. This information can also be provided on a separate list that identifies those courses and how to find them in the course catalog.

- The course schedule for the most recent completed fall and most recent completed spring terms with times and meeting dates for all classes at all locations and by delivery format. If the course schedule is not available as a separate document, include a URL to access this information online. If a password is required to access this information, include that password.

Note that the team may ask for additional data to examine credit hour production by educational program and by course. These data may include separate breakdowns for general education as well as by delivery format and by course academic unit (semester, quarter, etc.), by level, by location or by delivery format.

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Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 23
Version 01 – 2012-12

Appendix B: Clock Hour Worksheet

> ## Important. Please review the following instructions.
> ## Only certain institutions must complete this worksheet.
>
> Complete this worksheet **ONLY IF** you answered YES in Part 5 of Appendix A indicating that the institution offers any programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs. For example, any program that prepares students for a licensed or professional discipline may need to be reported in clock hours to the Department.
>
> Check with the institution's financial aid officer to determine if the institution has programs of this nature. Such programs typically include those required to be identified in clock hours for state licensure of the program or where completing clock hours is a requirement for graduates to apply for licensure or authorization to practice the occupation. Such programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.

> Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8)
> 1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
> 1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Identify the academic programs that are reportable in clock hours based on the information above. (The institution may attach a separate list.)

Explain the institution's credit to clock hour conversion policy.

If the credit to clock hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class.

Audience: Institutions
Form
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Process: Federal Compliance Filing
Contact: 800.621.7440
Published: December 2012   Page 24
Version 01 – 2012-12

A. Academic Policies and Procedures
1. Academic Integrity Violation Report
2. Archdiocese Agreement
3. Articulation Agreements
4. Clarke Academic Catalog 2013–2014
5. Consortium Agreement
6. Diversity Experience Guidelines
7. Internships
8. Student Complaints
9. Study Abroad Programs
10. Syllabi Templates
11. Transfer Policy and Practice

B. Accreditation Reports
1. Athletic Training
2. Education
3. Music
4. Nursing
5. Physical Therapy
6. Social Work

C. Achievement
1. Faculty and Staff
2. Student

D. Assessment
1. Academic Advising Assessment
2. Assessment Committee
3. Curriculum Maps
4. Department Rubrics
5. End-of-Year Reports
6. General Education Assessment
7. Information Literacy
8. Institutional Research
9. Library and the MARC
10. Program Review
11. Student Learning
12. Student Life Assessment
13. TimeSaver Program
14. Transitions Program

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E. Cabinet Minutes 2012 – 2013

F. Committee/Advisory Board Reports and Minutes

G. Departmental Planning
1. Academic Affairs
2. Advancement
3. Business and Finance
4. Enrollment Management
5. Student Life

H. Faculty and Staff
1. Faculty CV
2. Staff Assembly
3. Staff CV

I. Financial Documents
1. Audit
2. Budget
3. Endowment Performance
4. Federal Compliance
5. Grants
6. Monthly Operating Report

J. Handbooks/Manuals
1. Accredited Department Handbooks
2. Advisor Manual Documents
3. Employment Manual
4. Faculty Evaluation Manual
5. Faculty Recruitment
6. Prior Learning Assessment Handbook
7. Staff Evaluation Manual
8. Student Athlete Handbook
9. Student Consumer Information Report
10. Student Handbook
11. Student Organization Manual

K. HLC Reports
1. 2004 Self-Study Report
2. 2008 Focused Visit

L. Institutional Support
1. Facilities
2. Safety and Security
3. Technology

M. Organizational Charts

N. Publications
1. Marketing
   a. Campus Community
   b. Recruitment
2. Student

O. Recruitment and Retention
1. Enrollment
2. Enrollment Projections
3. IPEDS Data
4. Orientation
5. Retention Activities
6. Retention Committee
7. Retention Data
8. Spark
9. Student Life
10. Student Opinion Survey

P. Service and Outreach
1. Campus Ministry
2. Community Events
3. Internships
4. Support Services
5. Sustainability

Q. Strategic Planning
1. Articles
2. Campus Master Plan
3. Capital Campaign
4. Data and Inputs
5. Drafts of Board Documents
6. Facilities Capital Action Plan
7. Final Reports 2011
   a. Experiential Learning
   b. Football
   c. Occupational Therapy Program
   d. Performance Ensembles
8. KPI Info
9. Strategic Plan 2007–2012
10. Strategic Plan 2012–2017
11. Strategic Planning Committee 2012–2013
12. Strategic Planning Meetings
13. Technology Master Plan
14. To Board May 2012

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