

Assurance Argument
Grace College and Seminary - IN

Review date: 2/27/2023

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

1.A.1

Revised Mission

Since the HLC Comprehensive Visit in 2019, the mission of Grace College & Seminary was revised under the leadership of Grace's former president in the context of strategic planning ([December 2020](#)), a collaborative process that included board members, administrators, faculty, and staff.

The mission statement approved in 1992 stated:

Grace College is an evangelical Christian community of higher education which applies biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service.

During the spring of 2021, a committee including the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the deans of each academic school, and a group of faculty and staff was appointed to evaluate Grace's mission and core values to determine whether these continued to be intentional and thoughtful reflections of the institution's identity.

There was active discussion on the wording of "evangelical Christian community," which had been chosen to convey the evangelical spirit as a reflection of its [religious heritage](#). Though the institution's religious heritage remains unchanged, the committee proposed changing the language from "evangelical" to "Christ-centered."

A [suggested revision](#) of the mission statement was presented to the cabinet, an appointed task force,

and the dean of the seminary, all of whom provided feedback to the board. In April 2021, the board [affirmed](#) an updated [mission statement](#) as part of the [2021 Strategic Plan](#), which also included institutional values and goals (1.A.5, 2.A.1).

The newly revised institutional mission statement clearly identifies Grace as an educational organization, committed to the intellectual development of its students within a Christ-centered community.

We are a Christ-centered community of higher education applying biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service.

1.A.2

The primary institutional documents that extend and enhance Grace's mission include the *Articles of Incorporation*, *Covenant of Faith* doctrinal statement, *Grace Values*, and *Philosophy of Education*. These related documents expound and complement the mission statement by providing the foundation for the institution's academic commitment to student learning. Additionally, they guide the academic and co-curricular activities of the institution.

Mission-Related Documents

The Articles of Incorporation

The [Articles of Incorporation](#) is the legal document that created the corporation called Grace Schools. It established a liberal arts college, a seminary, and educational services that were "necessary in providing general and special education for ... students who seek to prepare themselves for lives and positions of effective Christian leadership" (Article III, Section 1). Further, the Articles of Incorporation established that (1) these educational activities were to be carried out "in harmony with the articles" of the *Covenant of Faith* (Article III, Section 3, portal document), which outline the doctrinal truths that are foundational to all the institution's activities, and (2) have as their chief spiritual goal "to know Christ and make Him known" (Article III, Section 4).

The Covenant of Faith

The [Covenant of Faith](#) is a detailed and explicit statement of the Christian doctrine of Grace. Adherence to the *Covenant* provides assurance of individual and collective commitment to the principles that are central to the purposes of Grace and the values of the [Charis Fellowship](#), the institution's affiliated fellowship of churches, ministries, and campuses. The *Covenant of Faith* articulates the values and heritage that foster the institution's identity as a "Christ-centered community of higher education." Members of the administration, faculty, and board of trustees are expected to subscribe to the basic doctrines it affirms.

Board of Trustees' Purpose

The institution's mission is an integral part of the [Board of Trustees Handbook](#). It includes both the mission statement of the college and the seminary. The board handbook further sets forth the purpose of Grace's Board of Trustees and the major avenues by which the board enables the institution to meet its mission and purpose.

The Board of Trustees of Grace Schools exists to define the mission, and to influence, support, and nurture the development and accomplishment of the institution's vision by the

administration, faculty, and staff.

The Grace Values

The [Grace Values](#) are part of the *Strategic Plan* [approved](#) by the board in April 2021. The Values Team, an appointed task force led by the VP of Academic Affairs and composed of deans of academic schools, faculty, and staff, reviewed proposed values and revised them as an expression and application of the character, competence, and service identified in the institution's mission:

- *Thriving: We **thrive** in our relationship with God in humble pursuit of Christ's calling, being transformed by His redemptive power.*
- *Selfless: We **selflessly** love and value others as unique, connected, and diverse image-bearers of God.*
- *Engaged: We **engage** the world with intercultural competence, civic participation, scientific exploration, and ethical action so that humanity can flourish as God is glorified.*
- *Authentic: We integrate **authentic** faith in Christ and His Word in all areas of our lives.*

Philosophy of Education

The [Philosophy of Education](#), approved by the faculty on [April 5, 2010](#), describes the integration of faith, learning, and reasoning to guide the curricular experiences of students. The *Philosophy of Education* includes the basic beliefs, concepts, and values that describe the institution's approach to carrying out its mission, and statements of belief about ethics, aesthetics, knowledge, and faith. Grace aims to operationalize the philosophy of education through the Grace Core and all academic programs.

Statement on Human Sexuality

In 2019, the board [approved](#) a revision of the [Statement on Human Sexuality](#), a mission-related document, which reflects and is consonant with Grace's lifestyle statement and faith commitments. The Provost led this group, which included faculty, staff, and a board member.

1.A.3

Intended Constituents

Intended constituents include those whose lives or work is networked with the lives or work of Grace, those whom the institution has the ability to learn from, and those who affect the institution's ability to provide meaningful educational services. Broadly defined, these include students, alumni, church relationships, and the community. Internally, the institution's constituents are students and faculty, staff, administrators, and the board. Externally, they are prospective students and families, alumni, churches, Christian organizations such as those entities associated with the [Charis fellowship](#), and local, regional, state, international, and professional communities.

Nature and Scope

The institution's [mission statement](#) indicates its intention to serve students in a learning environment by noting that the mission is carried out in the context of "higher education." The mission identifies

the community as a constituency, acknowledging the relationship between all the institution's internal constituents while affirming its outward orientation through service.

The [Articles of Incorporation](#) articulate the historical and enduring relationship between the institution and the Charis Fellowship constituency, formerly named Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches (Article VI), by noting that corporate membership is extended to member churches of the fellowship. Additionally, no less than one-half of the board is to be composed of members of the Charis Fellowship (Article IV, Section 1).

The [Covenant of Faith](#) doctrinal statement notes that one of the essential purposes of the institution is to carry out its educational activities in harmony with the articles of the *Covenant of Faith*, to which each member of the administration, faculty, and board of trustees is required to subscribe annually in writing. Further, it notes that articles represent doctrine taught in the Scriptures, indicative of the context and constituency of Grace. This constituency includes those who live at, work at, and are affected by the work of the institution.

Through the expression of the [Grace Values](#) in academic and co-curricular settings, students develop character, sharpen their competence, and are prepared to serve in a global society as both liberally and professionally educated. The institutional values clearly identify students as the constituents they serve.

1.A.4

The institution's mission documents guide the academic and co-curricular activities of the institution and provide the foundation for the institution's educational commitments and student learning outcomes.

As a Christ-centered community of higher education engaged in thoughtful scholarship and career preparation, the institution seeks to carry out its mission by developing compassionate, confident, and skilled graduates to lead lives of purpose through the First-Year Experience, the Grace Core, degree programs, and co-curricular experiences. These each have purpose statements with program learning outcomes that support the institution's missional statements.

Academic Offerings

Grace engages student learning through [undergraduate or graduate degrees](#) in a variety of formats, including a residential campus, a distance education program, a graduate program, and a seminary.

The First-Year Experience and Linked Courses

The [First-Year Experience](#), uniquely shared by Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, is part of a larger group of divisions that work together toward students' adjustment, education, and wellness. The purpose of the First-Year Experience is *to welcome, transition, and connect students in the Grace community as the foundation of a formative and transformative learning experience*. The First-Year Experience at Grace is a comprehensive program designed to foster all students' educational, personal, spiritual, and interpersonal outcomes in an inclusive learning community ([FYE Mentor Manual](#)). Throughout orientation and the [four first-year linked courses](#), students become part of learning communities and breakout groups led respectively by faculty and student mentors.

The Grace Core

Grace's mission is achieved in part through the [Grace Core](#), a liberal arts experience shared by all Grace students and highly relational in nature. The purpose statement of the Grace Core is a *Christian liberal arts common experience that develops character, competence, and service in worshipping Christ, connecting with others, engaging His world, and following His calling*. The four learning outcomes of the Grace Core were recently updated by the Core Committee and approved by faculty (see [Proposed Grace Core](#) and 3.B.1).

The distinctive of Grace's mission as a *Christ-centered community of higher education focused on applying biblical values* is expressed by the integration of biblical and Christian values throughout the [Core Curriculum](#) and the inclusion of Bible courses in the Core: *BIB1050 Exploring the Bible; BIB 2010 Scripture and Interpretation; and BIB 3300 Essential Doctrinal Themes*.

Academic Programs

The mission and values are achieved through [undergraduate and graduate degree programs](#) in a wide variety of fields within its six academic schools and inform the purpose statements of individual academic departments within each school:

1. [School of Arts and Sciences](#)
 - [Department of Engineering; Department of Humanities; Department of Science and Mathematics; Department of Visual, Performing, and Media Arts; Nursing Program](#)
2. [School of Behavioral Science](#)
 - [Behavioral Science Department](#) and [Graduate Counseling Department](#)
3. [School of Business](#)
 - [Business Department](#) and [Sport Management Department](#)
4. [School of Education](#)
 - [Department of Teacher Education and Special Education](#)
5. [School of Ministry Studies](#)
 - [Biblical Studies Department](#) and [Grace Theological Seminary](#).
 - Grace Theological Seminary, housed within the School of Ministry Studies, is dedicated to preparing Christian leaders for service and effective ministry by offering a number of degrees in ministry-related studies. Additionally, the seminary includes a master-level [competency-based](#) theological education (CBTE) program, [Deploy](#), a model delivering seminary online and onsite within a ministry context of students' local church or para-church ministry.
6. [School of Professional & Online Education \(SPOE\)](#)
 1. In addition to the residential academic departments, SPOE fulfills the mission and values of the institution by providing a wide range of academic programs that are affordable and accessible to a diverse population of learners (i.e., [degree completion of bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, master's degrees, College Launch Associate of Science Liberal Arts](#), dual enrollment, [ministry programs located at Grace's educational sites in Akron, OH](#)). SPOE collaborates with other academic schools for the administration of online courses and programs.

To further sharpen competence through academic offerings, Grace has developed academic partnerships with [Bethel Nursing](#), [John Patrick University](#), [Purdue University](#), and [Lower Cost Models Consortium](#) (LCMC) that include undergraduate courses, concentrations, majors, and master's degrees.

Grace's commitment to competence and preparation for service requires that every student complete a

meaningful [internship](#) as part of their degree requirements (see [Internship, Apprenticeship, and Practicum Policy](#)). [Meaningful internships](#) are informed by national and professional standards outlined in the [Credit Hour Policy](#) and [Applied Learning Policy](#).

To achieve innovation and affordability, Grace instituted a [blended degrees](#) model that enables undergraduate students to work simultaneously toward their master's degree and in most cases complete both degrees in four years allowing them to continue with federal, state, and institutional financial aid for the entire four years of enrollment.

Student Affairs and Academic Services

The institution's mission and values guide holistic learning and student engagement based on principles and values congruent with the mission documents and are implemented in all areas on campus, including co-curricular experiences and student support services.

Office of Student Affairs

Grace believes co-curricular education is a vital aspect of the college experience and growth of college students. The Student Affairs' vision of *a God-honoring community of students becoming and belonging* advances the mission's Christ-centered community through programs, events, and organizations. The purpose of the Office of Student Affairs is *to provide quality programs and resources that promote student learning and engagement in personal transformation, healthy community, whole-life worship, and intentional service*. The Office of Student Affairs is committed to helping students mature spiritually, emotionally, socially, and academically (see [Student Handbook](#)).

The integration of faith and learning is strongly emphasized at Grace and means engaging various topics and disciplines with thoughtful and biblical reflection, pursuing the highest standards of academic excellence, and challenging students to do the same. The [chapel](#) experience enables the Grace community to worship and learn together as one community.

The office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) seeks to embrace, appreciate, and promote understanding of diverse cultures and peoples among all students. [Council for Diversity and Inclusion](#) (CDI) aspires to value diversity as God does, seeing and celebrating every student and employee as made in God's image and deserving of dignity and respect. The CDI programs include the Black Student Association, Asian Student Heritage, Native American Student Organization, Esperanza Latina, First Gen, International Student Family, and SHE, a women's empowerment group.

[Student Involvement](#) fosters a sense of community through exceptional programs that encourage experiential learning, unify the college family, honor Jesus Christ, and serve the entire community. Grace offers student-led clubs, activities, and involvement opportunities for all students. Examples of clubs include Student Activities Board, Red Zone, *ROOTS Magazine*, Disc Golf, Grace Intramural Program, SERVE, Student Senate, Club Sports, and *Sounding Board* newspaper.

[Residential Life](#) fosters an environment in and around the residential halls that is conducive to learning, growing, and serving in order to build an authentic Christian community. Grace's residence life aspires to see a Christ-centered community where every student can fully live, learn, and serve in healthy spaces characterized by authentic relationships, deepening spirituality, and both reflection and intentional action. Each residential floor has a [Growth Group](#) that consists of Bible studies and

mutual spiritual support to the residents.

[Health & Counseling Services](#) serves students in the Grace community. These services are tailored to mirror the institutional mission. All services offered are founded upon biblical principles and incorporate appropriate medical and psychological knowledge, as well as research. Health & Counseling Services is dedicated to promoting, maintaining, and restoring students' physical and emotional health.

[Gordon Health and Wellness Center](#) (GHAWC) is dedicated to promoting, maintaining, and restoring students' physical and emotional health and offers the Grace community a full range of services to promote wellness, physical fitness, and physical activity through a state-of-the-art fitness room, aerobics room, and a spacious field house.

The [Grace Athletic Department](#) exists for the purpose of glorifying God by helping make disciples of Jesus Christ, developing competitive athletic teams, and sharing the Gospel message within the sport culture. The athletics program is an integral part of the educational mission at Grace. Competition in athletics makes a significant contribution to the development of the total person and can be used effectively as part of the training program that prepares a person for service and leadership.

[Campus Safety](#) is committed to providing a safe college experience through observation, reports, documentation, and when necessary, taking such action as is deemed appropriate to promote the safety of the Grace community.

Academic Services

The mission and values of Grace inform student support services that aim to support all students' academic engagement and vocational success.

The [Morgan Library Learning Center](#) offers learning assistance and support for the academic progress and persistence of all students, which includes academic tutoring, writing and math lab, disabilities services, and academic accountability.

The [Center for Career Connections](#) (CCC) educates and prepares students for an effective career launch through intentional and collaborative programming and services, enabling students to explore callings and career pathways, engage in career training and preparation, and articulate their unique areas of strength and career competencies. The seminary invites students and alumni to access [ministry position openings](#) provided by churches and ministries and posted on their website for students and alumni to access.

The [Office of the Registrar](#) serves the academic needs of current students, future students, and alumni of Grace. They maintain all academic records, oversee course registration, process transfer credits, assist veteran students, and provide multiple other services.

The [Office of Information Technology](#) offers students technical support for all matters related to computers, software, and printers on campus. Additionally, [SPOE](#) provides additional support for questions pertaining to the learning management system and online courses.

Enrollment Profile

In alignment with Grace's Christ-centered learning community, students who enroll at Grace agree to live in harmony with its [Covenant of Faith](#) and [Community Lifestyle Statement](#), which are

included in the application process. Additionally, the [standard of conduct](#) by which students agree to abide in the seminary reflects the seminary's focus on training leaders for church and global ministry.

To advance the institutional mission to be a "Christ-centered community of higher education" reflective of a global and diverse Christian community, Grace continues to work on improving its diversity, equity, and inclusion priorities. Grace's 2022 incoming class was the most socioeconomically and ethnically diverse since the institution opened in 1937. Though residential students came primarily from [Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio in 2022](#), students also came from 20 other countries to become part of the Grace community, which altogether includes 78 international students from 36 different countries and the highest enrollment of Hispanic students in its history, resulting in enrollment [demographics](#) just slightly below that of its county.

Age diversity is increased by the type of available degree options. The online degree completion programs, with a required prerequisite of 60 college credits, appeal to adult learners. Moreover, Grace has a [Silver Scholar program](#) that invites local senior citizens to [audit courses](#) for a small fee. In contrast, Grace also welcomes academically prepared high school students to begin taking college courses through [Jump Start](#) and College Launch programs. Students in [College Launch](#) complete an associate degree while enrolled in secondary education.

Given the wide variety of athletic opportunities at Grace, student-athletes represent 30% of the student body (378 students) and participate in varsity, junior varsity or club sports.

Enrollment Growth

Since the 2019 HLC comprehensive visit, Grace's [traditional undergraduate enrollment](#) has seen a pattern of growth and has been the highest in institutional history for two of the past three years. Grace welcomed an all-time high of [471 new students in fall 2021](#) and [465 in fall 2022](#), meeting goal 1 of the marketing and enrollment dimension of the *2021 Strategic Plan* for traditional undergraduate students (i.e., [TUG new student F22 goal: 460](#)). With the addition of 42 new students in its online undergraduate program, College Launch, and Akron program, Grace has welcomed the most undergraduate students in its history (see [Traditional and Online New Student Enrollment](#)).

Additionally, Grace Theological Seminary has seen continued growth with 152 new students enrolled in the seminary's expanding programs, which represents a 34% increase since 2021 (e.g., online Master of Arts in Ministry represents 92% increase in enrollment and the seminary's competency-based program Deploy, 45.8%).

[Presidential Scholarship Days](#), [Direct Admissions](#), and Financial Aid are continued opportunities for growth. The [Grace Guarantee](#) promises Kosciusko County's residents at least \$12,000 per year from Grace and assures that Indiana households that make \$65,000 per year or less have tuition covered through state, federal, and institutional aid.

The admissions and marketing teams have partnered with Carnegie's Slate Optimization Team in seeking creative solutions to enrollment (see [Carnegie Higher Education case studies](#)).

1.A.5

Public Information

All the foundational documents and statements are accessible in the following locations:

Foundational Documents	Locations
<i>Mission Statement</i>	<p>Website *</p> <p>Catalog *</p> <p>Board Handbook *</p> <p>Faculty Handbook **</p> <p>2021-2022 Employee Handbook **</p> <p>Residential Student Handbook *</p> <p>Akron Student Handbook **</p> <p>Online Student Handbook **</p> <p>Grace Story (formerly Two Eight & Nine) Magazine *</p> <p>* includes current mission statement</p> <p>** includes former mission statement</p>
<i>Vision Statement/Brand Promise</i>	<p>Website</p> <p>Faculty Handbook</p>
<i>Philosophy of Education</i>	<p>Catalog</p> <p>Faculty Handbook</p> <p>Residential Student Handbook</p> <p>Online Student Handbook</p>
<i>Covenant of Faith</i>	<p>Website</p> <p>Catalog</p> <p>Board Handbook (Articles of Incorporation Appendix)</p> <p>Faculty Handbook</p>

<p><i>Grace Values</i></p>	<p>Website*</p> <p>2021-2022 Employee Handbook **</p> <p>Faculty Handbook **</p> <p>*includes current institutional values</p> <p>**includes 2017 Strategic Plan and Values</p>
<p><i>Community Lifestyle Expectations</i></p>	<p>Catalog</p> <p>Board Handbook</p> <p>Residential Student Life Handbooks</p> <p>Akron Student Handbook</p> <p>Online Student Handbook</p> <p>Faculty Handbook</p> <p>Employee Handbook</p>

Institutional Priorities

The institution's strategic plan spans three years, from 2021-2024. It has both vision statements and eight strategic goals that represent the institution's priorities and link actions to mission (see [plan introduction](#)). The [key goals in the 2021-2022 Strategic Plan](#) were operationalized; accountability occurred through chairs of the dimension teams through regular written "[check-in worksheets](#)." Chairs reported publicly the implementation and progress of goals in bi-monthly [chair meetings](#) and in the President's Advisory Council.

Following a year of implementation, it became apparent to campus leadership that a common direction and purpose was needed for each of the eight dimensions; a [key institutional goal for 2022-2023](#), therefore, was [approved](#) by the board to unify each of the eight dimensions' headlines. The mission statement and strategic priorities are reviewed publicly at monthly [Grace Employee Meetings](#).

Sources

- 1910 Grace- Bethel University Agreement
- 2020 Grace and Purdue Master Contract and Addendum
- 2021 Student Mentor Manual - revised
- 2022 (Spring) Silver Scholars Course Schedule
- 2022-2023 Strategic Plan - Grace College and Seminary
- 21-22 Articles of Incorporation - Board of Trustees Handbook (Pages 28-32)
- 21-22 Associate of Science in Liberal Arts - Catalog (Pages 424-430)

- 21-22 Blended Degrees - Catalog (Page 44)
- 21-22 C.D.I - Academic Catalog (Page 17)
- 21-22 Campus Life Co-Curricular - Catalog (Pages 15-19)
- 21-22 Campus Safety - Student Handbook (Pages 66-67)
- 21-22 Chapel - Student Handbook (Pages 23-26)
- 21-22 College Launch Associate of Science in Liberal Arts - Catalog (Pages 495-502)
- 21-22 Community Covenant - Student Handbook (Pages 4-5)
- 21-22 Community Life Expectations - Residential Student Handbook (Pages 4-5)
- 21-22 Community Lifestyle Pledge - Catalog (Page 446)
- 21-22 Counseling Services - Student Handbook (Pages 55-56)
- 21-22 Covenant of Faith - Board of Trustees Handbook (Pages 28-30)
- 21-22 Covenant of Faith - Catalog (Pages 33-35)
- 21-22 Covenant of Faith - Faculty Handbook (Pages 13-16)
- 21-22 Deploy - Catalog (Page 349)
- 21-22 Dept. of Behavioral Sciences - Catalog (Pages 175-191)
- 21-22 Dept. of Biblical Studies - Catalog (Pages 300-326)
- 21-22 Dept. of Education - Catalog (Pages 282-298)
- 21-22 Dept. of Engineering - Catalog (Pages 51-58)
- 21-22 Dept. of Graduate Counseling Catalog and Student Handbook - Catalog (Pages 193-250)
- 21-22 Dept. of Humanities - Catalog (Pages 60-101)
- 21-22 Dept. of Science and Mathematics - Catalog (Pages 103-142)
- 21-22 Dept. of Sports Management - Catalog (Pages 277-280)
- 21-22 Dept. of Visual_Performing_and Media Arts - Catalog (Pages 144-171)
- 21-22 Description of Grace College Core - Faculty Handbook (Pages 12-13)
- 21-22 GOAL - Catalog (Pages 445-459)
- 21-22 Grace Core and First-Year Experience - Catalog (Pages 39-44)
- 21-22 Grace Theological Seminary - Catalog (Pages 328-416)
- 21-22 Grace Values - Strategic Plan
- 21-22 Growth Groups - Student Handbook (Page 32)
- 21-22 Institutional Mission - Residential Student Handbook (Page 6)
- 21-22 Internship and Practicum - Catalog (44)
- 21-22 Intro to School of Arts and Sciences - Catalog (Page 49)
- 21-22 Intro to SPOE - Catalog (Pages 418-422)
- 21-22 Key Goals - Strategic Plan
- 21-22 Library and Learning Center - Student Handbook (Pages 48-50)
- 21-22 Master of Science in Higher Education - Catalog (Pages 479-485)
- 21-22 Mission - Catalog (Page 7)
- 21-22 Mission - Faculty Handbook (Pages 9-10)
- 21-22 Mission Statements and Community Life Expectations - Board of Trustees Handbook (Page 4)
- 21-22 Nursing - Catalog (Page 173)
- 21-22 Office of Informational Technology - Student Handbook (Pages 57-60)
- 21-22 Philosophy of Education - Catalog (Pages 7-10)
- 21-22 Philosophy of Education - Faculty Handbook (Pages 10-13)
- 21-22 Philosophy of Education - Link from Page 6 of Residential Student Handbook
- 21-22 Residence Life - Student Handbook (Pages 27-40)
- 21-22 School of Business - Catalog (Pages 252-275)
- 21-22 Standards of Conduct - Catalog (Pages 331-332)
- 21-22 Statement on Community Lifestyle - Faculty Handbook (Pages 103-104)

- 21-22 Student Involvement - Academic Catalog (Pages 17-19)
- 21-22 Vision and Values - Faculty Handbook (Page 10)
- 22-23 Community Lifestyle Expectations - Akron Student Handbook (Page 6)
- 22-23 Mission - Akron Student Handbook (Page 5)
- 2-Deploy_Compencies_List_and_Course_Map
- 5 Lessons My Internship in New York City Taught Me About Living Out Your Faith - Grace Website
- 6.7.21 - Strategic Dimension Chairs Implementation Process and Schedule
- About Us - Grace College Athletics
- Akron Student Handbook 2022-2023
- Applied Learning Policy
- Becoming Grace by Jared Burkholder and Mark Noris
- Board of Trustees Handbook 2021-2022
- Brand Promise - Grace Website
- Carnegie Grace College Case Study
- Center for Career Connections - Grace Website
- Charis Fellowship - About
- College Launch - Grace Website
- Community Life Expectations - Online Student Handbook (Pages 9-14)
- Community Life Standards - Employee Handbook (Page 44)
- Core Program Learning Outcomes
- Covenant of Faith - Grace Website
- Credit Hour Policy
- Ethnic Diversity of Student Body 2223-10
- Faculty In-Service - April 5_ 2010
- First-Year Core Courses
- First-Year Experience - Grace Website
- GEM PP 10.24.2022
- Geographic Distribution of Students 2223-10
- GHAWC - Grace Website
- Grace College Mission Statement - Website
- Grace College Offering Free Tuition for Families with Adjusted Gross Income Less than or Equal to 65000 Dollars
- Grace College Registrar - Grace Website
- Grace College Welcomes Largest Ever Incoming Class - Grace Website
- Internship_ Apprenticeship_ and Practicum Policy
- JPU Grace MOU 6.22.20 fully executed
- Jump Start - Grace Website
- LCMC Consortial Agreement Sample
- Merged Check-In Worksheet Examples
- Ministry Position Opportunities - Grace Website
- Minutes-Board - Statement on Human Sexuality approval
- Minutes-Board - Strategic Plan actions
- Minutes-Board-Mission approval
- Mission - Grace Story
- Mission and Values - Employee Handbook (Page 7)
- Mission Statement - Online Student Handbook (Page 6)
- Mktg and Enrollment Check-In Worksheets - FYE 4.30.22
- NCES - Grace Undergraduate Enrollment Information

- ONLINE Student handbook 2022-2023
- Philosophy of Education - Online Student Handbook (Page 8)
- Pre-Admit Email
- Presidential Scholarship Days - Grace Website
- Silver Scholars - Grace Website
- SPOE - Grace Website
- Statement on Human Sexuality approved 2-10-20
- Strat Dim Chair Meeting
- Strat Plan March 31_2021
- Strategic Plan - current plan Board Presentation on Strategic Planning
- Strategic_Plan_2021
- Summary of Degree Programs 2122-10
- Traditional and Online New Student Enrollment
- TUG Enrollment Chart Fall 2023 - F23 Goals
- Values - Grace Website

1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.B.1

Grace College & Seminary is among 185+ institutions that are members of the [Council for Christian Colleges and Universities \(CCCU\)](#), a global higher education association dedicated to “[advancing faith and intellect for the common good.](#)”

Grace's mission also reflects a commitment to the common good by “[preparing students for service,](#)” which provides diverse opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to engage in academic research and practical experiences in service to the local and global community.

The following are examples of partnerships, initiatives, and programs that demonstrate Grace's educational role to serve the public.

Advocacy for Exceptional Children

The student chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in the School of Education serves students with exceptionalities through advocacy, professional development, and training. [Recognized for its outstanding work](#), the CEC hosted the seventh-biennial [What's Next Day](#) on February 11, 2022, at Grace. This event was an opportunity for local high school students with disabilities to explore post-secondary options that are available in the community and for Grace students to participate in a student-led fundraiser for a Warsaw native.

Marketing Services

Grace's [American Marketing Association \(AMA\)](#) chapter is an opportunity within the School of Business to help provide marketing services for nonprofit organizations in the community, such as Fellowship Missions, Habitat for Humanity, and Combined Community Service while fostering student development in professional competence through experiential learning. Grace is the fourth school in Indiana to begin a chapter. Additionally, Grace's online advertising and email marketing class has partnered with local businesses to create comprehensive digital marketing plans. The class presented final [marketing recommendations to business leaders of local organizations](#) on February 27, 2020, in the Manahan Orthopedic Capital Center (MOCC).

DEPLOY and Global Church

After a year-long exploration of the need for training pastors and ministry leaders, Grace Theological Seminary began a competency-based non-residential Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Ministry degrees ([DEPLOY](#)), inviting church leaders to remain in their current ministry setting while completing their master's degree. By making the program [competency-based](#), students are able to move through the curriculum at their own pace and serve the public in the context of their local church.

Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams

Kosciusko County, home to the institution, boasts 100+ freshwater lakes and 600+ miles of streams. The institution houses the [Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams](#), which conducts research, provides resources, and engages and educates residents and elementary students. The Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams collaborates with local organizations to make the 14 Kosciusko County lakes and streams of its county clean, healthy, and safe to provide residents with weekly toxin reports. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requested that the Lilly Center participate in a study attempting to link bald eagle deaths with blue-green algae toxins and weeds present in lakes across the region. The Lilly Center participated by [sampling local lakes](#) and is awaiting results and potential next steps. Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams invited the county to [celebrate its 15th anniversary](#) during the summer of 2022, engaging the community in water literacy.

Winona History Center

Winona Lake is a distinctive town that represents the [growth and history of midwest America](#), from its Chautauqua and Bible conference heritage to the home of evangelist Billy Sunday to its renaissance in recent decades. Grace houses and oversees the [Winona History Center](#), with the mission of fostering educational and scholarly interest in Winona's heritage through the preservation and exhibition of historical collections and by inspiring the community to discover the treasures of American history.

Community Summit on Anti-Racism and Community Safety

Grace and Kosciusko County leaders joined the presidents of nine Indiana colleges and universities for a community [summit on anti-racism](#) and community safety on Friday, July 10, 2020. The summit included dozens of Indiana state, city, and civic leaders who met virtually to listen, discuss mutual needs, and better understand how to advance the work of racial justice and transformation.

Center for Thriving Leaders

The [Center for Thriving Leaders](#), located at the seminary, assists local churches within the Charis Fellowship (1.A.3) to flourish by serving church leaders and helping local churches renew and revitalize. The center offers programs to equip and encourage church and ministry leaders through mentor-based cohorts, annual events and retreats, ongoing training sessions, a repository of presentation topics, and academic, spiritual, mental, and essential ministry programs. The center is an initiative resulting from the Charis Collective for Thriving Leaders, an organic network of leaders from Charis Fellowship partner organizations that collaborates for the flourishing of church leaders and small churches.

Grace College as Charter School Authorizer

Grace is committed to fulfilling its role as a high-quality [charter school authorizer](#). [Grace Schools Charter Authority LLC](#) provides educational choice by authorizing public charter schools in communities that express a desire for educational alternatives based on need or innovation and by promoting school accountability, which impacts academic programs and student achievement. Grace Schools Charter Authority, LLC equips districts with professional standards and best practices to authorize and support quality public charter schools for all Indiana students. Grace currently authorizes [four charter schools](#).

Partnering with Elementary Children

Since 2018, the [School of Education](#) has been [partnering](#) with the [Baker Youth Club](#) (BYC) to help elementary students learn, exercise, and build relationships. *BYC works with the youth of Kosciusko County to shape an educated, healthy, and social identity based on Christian values.* Grace education majors put their knowledge into practice during eLearning days at BYC by facilitating learning activities while interfacing with educational technology platforms, building relationships with students, and serving diverse children. The chair of the elementary education program has served on the board of BYC for 6 years, contributing to a partnership that is making a difference in the lives of children in the community.

1.B.2

Grace is a [non-profit educational institution](#) and does not have any investors, parent organizations, or external interests promoting other purposes. Although Grace is affiliated with the [Charis Fellowship](#), which [approves the Board of Trustees](#), the fellowship does not function as Grace's parent organization (2.B.1, 2.C).

The institution's mission documents guide the academic and co-curricular activities of the institution and provide the foundation for the institution's educational commitment and goals for students learning.

Grace is primarily a teaching organization. According to its [Articles of Incorporation](#), one of the purposes of the institution is to "establish a Liberal Arts College and Theological Seminary and other educational institutions, schools, extension services and facilities as may be deemed useful or necessary in providing general and special education for worthy and properly qualified students (Article III, Section 1)."

According to the [Grace Catalog](#), the Grace experience focuses on character development, competence in learning and doing, and service to God and others. Additionally, the Grace experience extends further into life-changing and spiritually transforming preparation for service through ministry, counseling, and professional careers for graduate students.

Grace is committed to fostering an institutional culture where scholarship and academic excellence are brought together with thoughtful reflection on the Christian faith. These values are advanced through the [Office of Faith, Learning & Scholarship](#), founded in 2010 to support Grace's commitment to the integration of scholarship and Christian faith. The institution seeks to honor Grace's rich intellectual and spiritual heritage while engaging with diverse disciplines and viewpoints and sponsors regular activities that contribute to its mission. These include the [Lyceum Series on Faith & the Academy](#), [Communitas](#), [Alpha Chi Honor Society](#), faculty scholarship forums,

and summer book discussions (3.B.4).

1.B.3

The institution regularly and effectively demonstrates its commitment to its internal and external constituents. Grace identifies with its external constituencies in the community of Warsaw and North Central Indiana and has partnered with businesses, organizations, and associations to fulfill needed talent gaps that reflect the unique needs of the region.

The Manahan Orthopedic Capital Center

Built in 2007, the [Manahan Orthopedic Capital Center](#) (MOCC) continues to enrich the community known as the [orthopedic capital of the world](#). Grace partnered with several community orthopedic companies to fund and plan a needed facility to hold meetings and events. This athletic arena/event center provides space for athletic events, concerts, trade show events, and banquet events. The MOCC is also home to the college's [business](#) and [athletic](#) departments and chapel. Examples of community use include the [Kosciusko County Chamber of Commerce](#) dinner and awards, [Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Community Event](#), [Global Leadership Summit](#), [Kosciusko County Right to Life banquet](#), Kosciusko County Community Foundation [Barn and Business breakfast](#), and [basketball tournaments](#) that benefit the local hospitality industry and provide service to local nonprofits.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

Since 2010, the [William P. Gordon Institute for Enterprise Development](#) at the Grace [School of Business](#) and [United Way of Kosciusko County](#) have sponsored the IRS-endorsed [VITA program](#) in Kosciusko County. The program has brought [\\$2.6 million in refunds to Kosciusko County residents](#) since its inception.

Sports Camps

In alignment with Grace's mission to build character, Grace hosts a [variety of men's and women's camps](#) in many different sports (i.e., volleyball, basketball, soccer, baseball, softball, tennis, and track and field). For example, for 50 consecutive years, the [NAIA Hall of Fame former men's basketball coach](#) and student-athletes have been operating [basketball summer camps](#). Children and youth learn basketball fundamentals while having fun. The leaders use basketball to teach youth about life, how to deepen their faith, and how to be good teammates.

NCCAA National Basketball Championships

The NCCAA contract with Grace to host both the men's and women's basketball championships runs through the year 2024. Grace will host 16 college teams on campus in [March of 2023](#) for two national championships.

Pen Pal Friendships with Nursing Home Residents

During the pandemic, [Grace's SERVE team](#) launched a [pen pal program](#) that paired Grace students with residents of [Warsaw Meadows](#), a local nursing home. The outreach allowed students to form meaningful relationships with nursing home residents in the community without any physical contact.

Funding Local Food Banks

On November 3, 2021, Grace partnered with a local church to facilitate its [Eleventh Annual Supermarket Sweep](#), an event designed to help local families in a tangible way. The Grace community and community at large participate by shopping for items from a list created by local food banks and distributing the items once purchased. The event has annually [provided over \\$20,000](#) of groceries to supply local food pantries before the holiday season.

Music for Winona Lake for Winona Residents

Grace and [The Village at Winona Festival of Music for Winona Lake](#) are in their sixth year of enriching the community by providing a variety of classical, sacred, and contemporary music featuring local choruses, returning ensembles, and new musicians. The festival runs from March through December and is sponsored by Grace and other local sponsors, including [The Village at Winona](#), [Wagon Wheel Center for the Arts](#), and [Sweetwater Sound](#), the largest online retailer of musical instruments in the United States.

Involvement in Community Boards

Grace [staff](#), [adjunct faculty](#), and [full-time faculty](#) serve on regional community boards. The President serves on the [Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation](#) and the [Orthoworx](#) boards and is a member of the [Rotary Club](#).

Center for Movement and Wellbeing

A key initiative to address well-being is currently being evaluated, with the intention of reallocating Lilly funding from the Center for Agribusiness to a Center for Wellbeing on campus. On September 7th, 2022 Grace met with Lilly Endowment regarding the *Charting the Future* grant to discuss the possibility of reallocating funding, to which they were amenable. The purpose of the center will be to develop community partnerships with various health agencies committed to physical and mental well-being to advance health initiatives in Kosciusko County.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Argument

1.C.1

Grace aims to prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success in a diverse, multicultural society, and globally connected world. As a Christ-centered community of higher education engaged in thoughtful scholarship and career preparation, Grace seeks to develop compassionate, confident, and skilled graduates to lead lives of purpose. Grace's mission to "prepare students for service" and value to "engage the world with intercultural competence, civic participation, and ethical action" are reflected in the curriculum and co-curricular activities.

Curricular Examples

Core Curriculum

- [Grace Core Learning Outcomes](#)
 - The Core learning outcomes adopted by the faculty by [vote on 9/13/2021](#) elaborate on [ways](#) students prepare academically and vocationally for **informed citizenship** and **workplace success**. For example, students will:
 1. integrate faith and learning across disciplines by *(b) synthesizing ideas, disciplines, perspectives, and contexts*.
 2. demonstrate foundational knowledge and ways of knowing in multiple disciplines including *(b) history, arts, cultural expressions, (c) human behavior, and social structure*.
 3. cultivate characteristics of maturity in relationships with God, others, self, and the world by *(b) practicing awareness of, collaboration with, and service to others, especially engaging with those from diverse cultural backgrounds*.
 4. apply knowledge to all aspects of life through intellectual and practical skills, including *(d) global and intercultural literacy*.
- A distinctive of the undergraduate Grace experience is the fulfillment of a [cross-cultural field experience](#). Students participate in [Go Encounter trips](#), where they engage a culture other than their own, develop new perspectives, and learn about global issues by participating in a [domestic](#) or [international](#) 10-day trip led by cross-culturally experienced faculty and staff (see

[2022-2023 Destinations](#)).

Department Courses

Numerous required and elective courses include learning outcomes that emphasize multicultural awareness, intercultural competence, and/or civic engagement (see [Undergraduate Catalog](#) for descriptions). For example,

- First-Year Linked Course: HIS 1050 Current Issues in Historical Context (i.e., special topics in Civil Rights)
- Biblical Studies: BBL 3140 Biblical Backgrounds
- Communication: COM 1100 Public Communication
- Business: BUS 3570 Fundamentals of International Business
- Education: SED 2410 Policy & Practices in Special Education
- English: LIT 3000 Classics of World Literature
- French: FRE 3880 French & Francophone Culture & Civilization
- Graduate Counseling: CPY 5750-I Gender & Sexuality, CPY 6500-I Social & Cultural Issues
- History and Political Science: HIS 3800 History and Geography of Africa
- Humanities: HUM 2000 Global Perspectives
- Intercultural Studies: ICS 3110 Intercultural Communication, ICS 3300 Eastern World Religions
- Psychology: PSY 2600 Multicultural Psychology
- Sociology: SOC 4150 Gender, Race, and Violence
- Spanish: SPA 3225 Topics in Hispanic Culture & Civilization

Departmental Degree Programs

Certain degree programs include developing cultural knowledge and skill through [study abroad](#), [cross-cultural field experiences](#), applied learning, [apprenticeships](#), and [internships](#). For example,

- Minors in [International Communication](#) and [Modern Languages](#)
- Majors in [International Business](#), [Modern Language](#), and [Intercultural Studies](#)
- Master's in [Intercultural Studies](#), [Clinical Mental Health Counseling](#) (see [common core areas](#))
- Doctors of [Intercultural Studies](#) and [Korean Intercultural Studies](#)

To prepare students for workplace success, the Center for Career Connections collaborates with academic schools to provide students with training on resume and cover letter preparation, job search strategies, interviewing, and networking in senior seminar capstone courses. Degree programs include [experiential learning](#) (i.e., [internships](#), [student teaching](#), co-ops, and [practicums](#)). Students gain real-world experience via a hands-on learning environment.

Co-Curricular Strategies and Student Services

Additionally, co-curricular opportunities and student services seek to grow students' intercultural competence, provide opportunities for civic and cultural engagement, and grow students' career-readiness competencies while fostering a welcoming and diverse environment committed to student belonging.

- The [Mediation Team](#) meets weekly to practice honing their skills in peaceful conflict resolution by studying actual cases and taking part in mock mediation from the perspective of a client,

advocate, and mediator.

- Council for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) creates support and community among underrepresented groups on campus and generates conversation to promote cultural competency and engagement through celebration, connection, and education. Students are invited to participate in student organizations, clubs, community connections, and affinity groups such as the Black Student Association, Esperanza Latina, International Student Family, Asian Student Heritage, and Native American Student Organization (see [2021-2022 CDI Campus Events](#)). Additionally, [initiatives](#) in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) invite the community into a conversation for equitable practices and raise awareness for inclusivity.
- Grace admissions and student affairs collaborate on [Latino Visit Day](#) specifically for Latinx families conducted in Spanish to explore the campus, meet professors, hear from students, and learn about available opportunities and resources.
- The [Institute of Global Studies](#) fosters a global living-learning community for international students and students interested in intercultural study and cross-cultural communication. The Institute also houses the Modern Languages Program, cross-cultural, and Study Abroad programs, enabling students to experience a welcoming community, learn together, and understand other cultures so they are better prepared to work and serve in a diverse and multicultural society.
- Grace collaborates with [Language Matters](#), founded by Grace alumni brothers from Chile. Conversation, translation, and interpretation services equip learners and leaders to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps.
- Grace offers a variety of student-led organizations and campus clubs through the [Student Involvement Office](#) designed to enhance campus culture and provide opportunities for service to diverse populations. SERVE teams include Reach (tutoring refugees), Lunch Buddies (mentoring elementary students at lunch), and Grace Village Bingo (interacting with the elderly).
- The Office of Student Success & [FYE](#) provides holistic and culturally responsive support to students, oversees the First-Year Experience, facilitates guided pathways to students' postsecondary credentials and careers, and collaborates across campus for policy and procedural improvements toward equitable student outcomes.
- The [Morgan Library](#) Learning Center offers individualized learning assistance and support for the academic progress and persistence of all students, which includes tutoring, writing help, disabilities services, and academic accountability. The Office of Student Disabilities Services provides individualized support and accommodations for students' equal access to education at Grace. Additional services and programs include the Content Tutor Program and writing and math labs, which offer free individual and group tutoring sessions; Peer Academic Facilitators and academic counselors are available to meet regularly with students for support, accountability, and guidance.
- [Chapel](#) and missions conference speakers raise students' awareness of other cultures, with focused attention on global and international issues, direct interaction with speakers, and unique perspectives on integrating ministry and service. Grace celebrated its [60th Annual Conference on Mission](#) in 2021. The Dean of Chapel is actively working to increase the [diversity of chapel speakers](#). From 2018-2019 to 2021-2022, there was a 0.7% increase in female speakers (34.9% to 35.6%) and a 7.5% increase in speakers of color (34.9% to 42.4%).
- The Center for Career Connections (CCC) seeks to provide [a variety of learning opportunities](#) for students to grow in their career-readiness competencies. Students participate in professional development training aimed at increasing their confidence and skill level in interview preparation. Career Week, which includes a [keynote speaker](#) ends with the [annual career and internship fair](#) where Grace hosts [60-70 recruiters on campus](#). Students are able to connect to a

global network of internship and employment opportunities through the Handshake platform, where students can connect with 8,500+ employers.

- A grant through Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education ([NetVUE](#)) enables Grace to enrich the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation among Grace undergraduate students by focusing on the development of four vocational programs at Grace:
 - Extending the training of student mentors bi-annually to equip them to understand vocation and to train them to lead conversations about vocation with first-year students.
 - Developing a cross-cultural trip that explores vocation and launching an essay contest about vocation for students who go on cross-cultural trips.
 - Hosting chapel speakers who will focus their sessions around the topic of vocation.
 - Hosting monthly career journey panel luncheons for students and faculty/staff.

2021 NSSE Results

Despite curricular emphases and co-curricular initiatives outlined above, the [2021 Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement](#) indicate that Grace has continued room for growth in understanding people of other backgrounds and developing informed citizens. The following percentage of seniors reported that their experience at Grace contributed “very much” or “quite a bit” to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in:

- Understanding people of other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religion, nationality, etc.) - 63%
- Being an informed and active citizen - 52%

In contrast, 76% of seniors report that their experience at Grace has contributed to their development in acquiring job- and work-related knowledge and skills.

1.C.2-3

Grace is committed to a safe environment for those who live, learn, work, and worship together in its community. Grace values practices that uphold integrity, respect, compassion, and fairness in all aspects of its work with students, employees, and constituents of Grace.

Inclusive and Equitable Processes

Nondiscrimination and Equity Policies

Grace publishes on its website and in its handbooks its general college and employment [Notices of Nondiscrimination](#). The [Nondiscrimination and Equity Policies and Procedures](#) manual explicate the [Nondiscrimination Policy](#) and additional [employee, faculty, and student policies](#) related to nondiscrimination, harassment, and equity.

SafeColleges Training

Grace employees and board members participate in ongoing training related to integrity issues and ethical behaviors. The [SafeColleges Training plan](#) is designed to ensure all employees review compliance topics, have access to additional topics of interest, and develop a common knowledge base for a safe community of learning.

See criterion 1.C.4 for student demographics and enrollment strategies that demonstrate a focus on diversity and inclusion.

See criterion 2.A.2 for Grace's procedures for grievances and complaints.

See criterion 3.C.1 for hiring processes that demonstrate equitable practices.

Climate of Respect

As a faith-based liberal arts institution, Grace believes that each person is uniquely created and gifted by God, as attested through Grace's missional documents and strategic initiatives. The institution seeks to be clear in the expectations of its constituencies, fair in its enforcement of those expectations, and respectful of the dignity of all individuals.

To better understand the challenges of creating an engaging campus climate and environment respectful for all, Grace conducted employee engagement surveys in 2019 and 2021. Hence, areas needing improvement and additional support emerged. Accordingly, the administration is actively seeking to [take action](#) in response to employees' identified areas of concern (5.A.2) and to align the community's experience with Grace's stated beliefs and values.

Philosophy of Education

The *Philosophy of Education* is a missional document that outlines character traits (i.e., humility, integrity, love) that contribute to a climate of respect by prodding members of the community to facilitate collegiality and community.

As we strive for greater integration of faith and learning, our Christian faith prompts us to facilitate a rich sense of collegiality and community among faculty and students. This is largely made possible through the fruit of the spirit. Humility prods us to consider our own biases and presuppositions. It calls us to listen to competing voices and perform our work in dialogue with colleagues and others within the broader discipline. Integrity requires that we accurately represent the views of others, resisting generalizations and caricatures. It also requires that we strive for Christian excellence in all that we do, maintaining the highest standards of professionalism. Love prompts us to encourage and challenge each other as faculty members while caring for and serving our students. In an atmosphere permeated by the fruit of the spirit, our community will be a grace-filled place for us and our students to think critically, ask questions, and wrestle with the challenges of our world.

2018 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan

The 2017 [Aspire Strategic Plan](#) included the development of an additional diversity strategic plan. In 2018, therefore, the Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, composed of the President (ex-officio), faculty members, student affairs members, human resources, admissions, and academic support staff, conducted a diversity and inclusion audit to better understand the climate and culture at Grace. This [audit](#) led to the development of the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan](#) to promote an equitable and inclusive campus climate and academic programs. This plan went through two open forums on campus before the Board of Trustees [affirmed](#) it in October 2018.

The *2018 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan* had four priorities: foundational, compositional, campus culture, and educational (see [2018 DEI Plan final assessment](#)).

Examples of implementation of the *2018 DEI Strategic Plan* included Grace's first faculty [to teach at Karoli Gaspar in Hungary for a semester](#), faculty and staff participation in a [Civil Rights Tour](#), and a revised [Statement on Human Sexuality](#). See [9.15.20 DEI Final Report](#) for more information.

Additionally, the academic schools conducted a curriculum diversity audit to document ways in which they were diversifying their curriculum ([Arts and Sciences](#), [Behavioral Sciences](#), [Education](#), [Business](#), and [Professional and Online Education](#)).

The DEI final report was presented to [the board on September 15, 2020](#). Since 2018, academic schools have reviewed their plan for ongoing practice of proposed strategies or revisions for improved inclusive strategies and practices.

Current Strategic Plan

One of the eight dimensions of the current strategic plan is diversity, equity, and inclusion (see p. 6 of the [2022-23 Strategic Planning Dimension](#)).

The chairs of the DEI dimension team document progress of implementation in the [DEI Dimension Check-In Worksheet](#) and report implementations of goals in bi-monthly [chair meetings](#).

Recent Hires

Several recent hires have contributed to growing a climate of respect among students, faculty, staff and administrators. Grace [hired](#) its first full-time Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion in 2020, whose role is [to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion programming](#) and advise the administration on issues related to diversity and underrepresented student populations. In 2021, Grace hired a Latino Liaison who was promoted to Director of Latino Engagement in 2022 to better serve the increased [Latino and Latina populations](#), build better relationships with the Hispanic community, and collaborate with admissions for recruiting.

In 2022, Grace also hired its first Director of Student Success and FYE, who is responsible to provide holistic and culturally responsive support to students, oversee the First-Year Experience, facilitate guided pathways to students' postsecondary credentials and careers, and collaborate across campus for policy and procedural improvements toward equitable student outcomes.

In 2022, Grace's Athletic Department appointed its first [Senior Women's Administrator](#) to help promote meaningful representation of women in leadership and management at Grace; it also provides an identifiable female presence with whom staff and student-athletes can communicate.

Living-Learning Community

Since the last HLC visit, Grace has more intentionally [recruited international students](#) and has added a new living-learning space to its campus community. The [Institute of Global Studies](#) is an integrated space that brings together a 6-unit apartment-style residence, offices, and learning spaces for international students, [exchange students](#), and domestic students who are passionate about [intercultural study](#) and cross-cultural communication. Students from different backgrounds pursuing different vocations come together across different disciplines for social and informal events, lectures, cultural workshops, cooking lessons, and the enjoyment of music from different countries. On occasion, the institute hosts visiting guests from different cultures or from Grace's exchange programs.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

Grace clearly and publicly articulates its mission and related statements, which govern Christian faith and service, student learning, community living, and scholarship. Grace continues to work on its strategic plan, which addresses institutional priorities that include finances, diversity, and employee wellness.

Grace is primarily a teaching institution, developing students' competence and preparing them for lives of service. Grace demonstrates its commitment to the common good in a variety of service projects involving research, professional skills, and community involvement.

Its Core and academic offerings are aligned with its mission. Its student affairs, academic services, and institutional activities support holistic learning, student engagement, and informed citizenship.

Although the demographics of Grace closely align with those of its immediate community, the institution aspires to become a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus while maintaining its faith commitments. Grace continues to work on improving its diversity and inclusion priorities related to its enrollment profile and has room for growth in its students' understanding of others of different backgrounds.

Our institutional actions are indicative of our commitment to our educational role to serve the public and engage with our constituencies to respond to their needs.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

Grace College & Seminary has established policies and processes to promote fair, ethical behavior by faculty, staff, administrators, students, and board members. Grace creates and adheres to accountability for these processes.

Although established as the only institution of higher ed affiliated with the Grace Brethren Church, Grace's students and employees represent various Christian faith traditions. Grace's [Articles](#) and its [Bylaws](#), however, establish that [no less than one-half](#) of its board shall be members of a Charis Fellowship church. The board is composed of [23 trustees](#), 12 of whom are [members](#) of the Charis Fellowship. The board seeks diverse representation of its constituencies on the board; however, currently, only two board members are people of color, and one board member lives internationally. *Bylaws* detail board membership criteria, duties, and qualifications among other guidelines for the board and the institution.

In September 2021, Grace's then-president [announced](#) his intent to retire in summer 2022; however, in mid-December 2021, he [announced](#) his early retirement effective December 16, 2021. The Board of Trustees established a search committee composed of board members and several faculty and staff according to its [handbook](#). This committee engaged an external executive search firm to assist in the process of recruiting and hiring a new president. The search firm and search committee chair conducted listening sessions with [faculty](#), [staff](#), [board members](#), [community leaders](#), and [students](#) to solicit input and develop a profile for a new president. On April 14, 2022, the board [announced](#) its appointment of Grace's seventh president.

2.A.1

The most recent revision of the mission statement began in December 2020 by board members and administrators. A revision was presented to the cabinet, and later to another board member and the dean of the seminary, all of whom provided feedback to the board. The board [affirmed](#) the institution's updated [mission statement, core values, and key institutional goals](#) in April 2021 (1.A.1).

Faculty, staff, administration, board, and students affirm commitment to its [Community Lifestyle Statement](#) standards expected of the Grace community and based on scripture. Nontraditional students [pledge](#) to abide by the institution's community guidelines while on campus or engaged in Grace activities.

To ensure accountability to its mission documents, the board signs annual [attestations](#) about [community lifestyle](#), [conflict of interest](#), and the [Covenant of Faith](#) as well as their [participation as a board member and donor](#). The board chair also reminds the board of the mission statement and its roles and [responsibilities](#) at board meetings. Similarly, employees sign the lifestyle statement, and most are asked to sign the conflict of interest form annually.

The [final accountability](#) report of the 2016-2020 *Aspire Strategic Plan* was presented to the [board](#) and to [employees](#). The planning process for the institution's current strategic plan began in [October 2020](#). In addition to board member participation on the [Strategy Task Force](#), the full board was apprised of the institution's strategic planning process multiple times to ensure their understanding, involvement, and approval. Strategic priorities were initially presented to the board; later an [overview](#), strategic dimensions, and the core values team were discussed. The 2021-2022 Strategic Plan was [approved](#) by the board following a review of the framework and plan and a discussion regarding the process to develop the institution's core values. The board was updated again regarding the plan's dimensions and headlines and then the 2022-2023 Strategic Plan was [approved](#), with a key institutional headline focusing on student success and employee wellbeing.

2.A.2

Governing Board

The [Board Handbook](#), revised and typically [approved annually](#), specifies the [roles](#), functions, and parameters of the board related to the financial, advancement, and academic functions of the institution; its relationship to the president, administration, faculty, and staff; and policies that guide its work and commitment to integrity in its decision making. For example, board policies regarding its relationship to [personnel](#) are evidenced by its ratification of VP and faculty appointments. Grace's [organizational chart](#) is updated regularly and provided to the board to ensure clarity in reporting relationships at all levels of the institution (2.C).

The board establishes [ad hoc committees](#) to address its own internal practices (governance committee), and its relationship to the president (presidential search committee, succession planning) and the institution ([Reimagine 2.0](#)).

The board maintains financial oversight of significant financial transactions at [each board meeting](#) by approving signature authorities, and of budget controls such as budget approval, sale of property, debt approval, and refinancing. It actively participates in the budgeting process, as a whole, and through the [Financial Affairs](#) Commission. Board minutes document [approvals](#) related to preliminary and final budgets, plans to balance the budget, financial aid/scholarships/average discount rates, pricing increases, reports on designated giving, health care options, as well as personnel-related budget decisions such as restoration of wage reductions, make-up of lost wages during COVID, bonuses, and raises.

The CFO provided an extensive report on a model of [margin analysis](#) for academic departments to the [executive committee](#) of the board, cabinet, deans' council, and individual deans to ensure their understanding. The model has been used for preliminary budgeting discussions and 2-year planning

purposes.

Additional [financial decisions](#) and discussions by the board are in accordance with its policies and practices including those related to awarding contracts to vendors, campaigns, funder reports, and approval of [Investment](#) Committee and Retirement Plan Investment Committee members (5.C.4).

In 2019, the board approved reinstating the pastoral housing allowance. After legal and auditors' reviews the board [approved](#) at its Fall 2022 meeting Grace's comprehensive policy for eligible employees that includes a clear disclosure of liability to qualifying employees.

The board engages in periodic self-evaluation, most recently in 2020. An ad hoc group of board members and administrators analyzed the results, then provided a [report](#) and recommendations to the full board. The theme of board development emerged and has been addressed by the board through agenda items and a [motion](#) (2.C.1).

To improve its understanding of Deploy, an innovative, competency-based seminary program, the board requested details on its [financial model](#) and more regular reporting about projections and profitability. In his [presentation](#) to the board, the dean described Deploy when outlining the seminary's vision and growth strategies.

The board complies with [Indiana law](#) when conducting a vote by [email](#); action is only considered duly approved if the trustees have unanimously approved the proposed action.

Financial

To verify its financial veracity, Grace engages FORVIS, LLP, a nationally certified public accounting firm, to conduct an annual [audit](#) of its financial statements and has [not had any material weaknesses](#) for nearly 10 years. Grace distributes its audited financials to the board annually for review and [the auditor](#) meets on-site with the full board and individually with the president for a report. Three years of audited financials are continuously available to the board via its portal access. Institutional budgeting requires [input](#) from all budget managers then discussion and finalization by [senior administrators](#); final budget approval rests with the board.

Financial updates are routinely shared with the cabinet and in all-employee meetings to maintain transparency and integrity within the organization. Grace provides an annual report to its constituents in the [Grace Story](#) magazine and financial [updates](#) to the [Charis Fellowship membership](#) at its annual conference.

The business office records and tracks grants Grace receives; the controller and CFO, in collaboration with the department recipient, oversee larger grants requiring annual [progress reports](#) to the funder. Smaller grants are typically managed by the department, but monitored by the business office.

The Advancement Office adheres to its [gift acceptance and recognition policies](#) that address acceptance and allocation of gifts and recognition and naming of buildings. The former VP of Advancement was a certified fundraising executive and as such [pledged to abide](#) by the CFRE *Accountability Standards*, *International Statement of Ethical Principles in Fundraising*, and the *Donor Bill of Rights*.

As required by the U.S. Department of Education, Grace publicly disclosed its [HEERF funding](#) on a quarterly basis. Also in compliance with the USDOE, Grace used BKD's (now FORVIS) cyber

security consultant to conduct an [audit](#) associated with the Gramm Leach Bliley Act regarding Grace's privacy and information security provisions to protect consumer financial data.

In addition to its disclosure of financial aid information to consumers on the website, such as that related to lenders, loans, and satisfactory academic progress (2.B.1), Grace practices ethical and responsible [awarding of financial aid](#) and publishes its [code of conduct](#) in accordance with the USDOE. Grace is a member of [NASFAA](#) and [ISFAA](#) and adheres to their codes of conduct.

The Aspire Task Force yielded multiple recommendations, the financial [impact](#) of which was tracked by the business office.

Academic

In compliance with the *Higher Education Opportunity Act* (HEOA), information regarding academic policies, facilities, faculty, disabilities services, textbooks, graduation rates, retention, student outcomes, and student affairs is disclosed on Grace's [Student Right to Know](#) webpage.

Stakeholders have access to the [Academic Catalog](#) and [Academic Policy Manual](#) on the Grace website. Policies include those related to student rights and responsibilities such as academic integrity, appeals, and withdrawal. Disclosures that impact students' decision-making about enrollment include transfer credit and degrees from non-accredited institutions. Grace assures a comparable academic experience between online, off-campus, and main campus courses as evidenced by [core courses](#) having the same learning outcomes regardless of modality (3.A.3).

Catalogs for some programs, such as [Clinical Mental Health Counseling](#) and [Teacher Education](#), disclose additional program-specific information regarding admission, retention, licensure, or other academic policies or responsibilities unique to the program.

The registrar oversees compliance with *Academic Policies*, which are approved, along with changes to academic programs, by the [Academic Affairs Committee](#). Accountability is ensured by offices that oversee specific policies, such as declaration of major and curriculum changes overseen by the registrar and faculty respectively.

The *Student Handbook* ([residential](#) and [online](#)) includes the expectation of academic honesty, grievance, academic appeals, and other policies related to student conduct, rights, and responsibilities associated with academics.

Grace's [Intellectual Property](#) policy acknowledges the creative works of authors/creators and their rights related to the retention of copyright ownership.

Library staff provides services and resources on the legal and ethical [ways to use information](#), including guidelines and legal parameters such as US copyright laws, ALA/ACRL code of ethics, and licenses and purchase agreements. In partnership with OIT, database access is limited to current students, faculty, staff, and those physically in the building, per most license agreements. [Notices](#) are placed on equipment capable of making copies of copyrighted material and all library and learning center employees are trained, sign agreements, and monitored for privacy issues they encounter. Librarians provide training in the legal use of copyrighted materials, and guidance on OER and the use of copyrighted material for the [creative commons](#) license and through [PALNI](#). Librarians provide [instruction](#) related to academic integrity on the library web pages, some specific to a discipline and some specific to courses.

The [Acceptable Use Policy](#) guides expected use of computing, networking, and information resources provided by the institution to faculty, staff, students, partner organizations, and authorized guests. The institution addresses violations of this policy directly with students or employees.

Human Resources

Grace makes its [notices of nondiscrimination](#) publicly available on its website, employment documents, admission applications, *Student Handbook*, and in its [Nondiscrimination and Equity Policies](#) manual. The human resources department engages in [interactive dialogues](#) with employees requesting accommodations, including those requested during the COVID pandemic.

Grace complies with employment law in its recruiting, hiring, compensation, rates of pay, and exemption status, and follows established guidelines for [interviewing](#) and hiring. In accordance with federal and state law, employment-related information is [posted conspicuously](#) outside the HR office, and HR makes posters available on the portal for employees living outside Indiana. New and prospective employees are advised of the institution's [Drug Free Workplace Policy](#) and its [Annual Security and Fire Safety Report](#) as required by law, and other required disclosures are documented by HR.

HR also oversees the accountability of staff through performance [reviews](#) or performance improvement plans if corrective action is needed.

HR also oversees [student employment](#) and assures compliance with federal and state law as it does with non-student employees.

Annually, employees are to review the faculty and/or employee handbooks, which include information about its code of conduct, conditions of employment, and employment-related policies. Administrators and directors orient new employees to [campus operations](#), typically each quarter as coordinated by HR.

Grace's commitment to integrity is evidenced in personnel training related to ethical issues. All personnel participate in [annual training](#) to ensure employees understand topics such as FERPA, sexual violence, active assailant, and community lifestyle expectations. For accountability, employees receive reminder emails to complete their assigned training and supervisors receive completion reports. Additional topics, such as bloodborne pathogens and campus security authorities, are assigned to those in specific roles. Supervisors undergo periodic [training](#) on topics intended to ensure [legal](#), responsible, and ethical interactions with employees, including [student employees](#).

Since 2019, [new policies](#) related to integrity and ethical behavior have been written.

[Grace's grievance](#) procedures are communicated in its employee and faculty handbooks, including actions leading to [faculty non-reappointment](#) and dismissal as well as appeals processes. Discrete [Title IX Complaint Reporting](#), [Bias Incident Reporting](#), and [Complaint Notification](#) forms have been created or revised to provide mechanisms for reporting unethical or prohibited conduct. Grievance and complaint procedures are publicly available on the website. Grace partners with [FORVIS](#) to provide a reporting option for employees to make ethics or fraud complaints; Grace has had only two complaints through this site (2017, 2022).

Grace acts responsibly by appointing faculty, hiring part-time instructors, and approving [dual credit](#) secondary education teachers who are [qualified](#) in their disciplines in accordance with HLC

guidelines and Grace's policies (3.C.3).

Policies relevant to all employees such as benefits, leave, corrective action, compensation, job postings and changes, performance reviews, and workplace safety and communication are detailed in the [Employee Handbook](#). Topics relevant to all employees were discussed in the President's Advisory Council with campus leaders; PAC evolved into the President's Strategy Council in 2022.

Auxiliary

Grace contracts with external partners to provide auxiliary services that support the operations of the campus in ethical and responsible ways. Although Grace does not hire individual vendor employees, it typically provides input into the hiring of supervisors to assure they will work in harmony with Grace's mission and values.

[Aramark](#), contracted to provide physical plant services, details its priorities, business conduct policy, [ethics and compliance](#), [training](#), reporting mechanisms, and other aspects of its governance and oversight in its "[2021 Impact Report. Be Well. Do Well.](#)".

[Sodexo](#) provides Grace's campus dining services. Its "[Better Tomorrow 2025](#)" commitments outline its global, corporate responsibility strategy to make positive contributions to society and the environment and to help its clients do the same. Sodexo has unannounced annual audits during which its regular employee [training](#) related to safety and integrity is documented. The general manager [completes](#) extensive OSHA training. It has been a cooperative partner with students and staff to improve the [quality and value](#) of dining services and has invested in campus renovation projects (5.C.3).

[Slingshot](#) (formerly Tree of Life), an EdTech company rooted in character and dedicated to personal relationships, serves as the campus store and textbook manager.

Lutheran Kosciusko Hospital provides Grace's licensed campus nurse and athletic trainers. It is dedicated to providing [quality and safe](#) care for its patients as well as to creating a safe work environment for its employees. Grace's nurse works within the scope of her practice and does not diagnose, rather makes referrals for evaluation and treatment outside what she is licensed to provide. She obtains continuing education on topics specific to college campuses (e.g., eating disorder training), completes annual training through LKH (e.g., CPR, TB certification), and maintains membership in [ACHA](#), in which she is expected to adhere to its [principles and standard of ethical conduct](#). Although not required to follow HIPAA requirements at Grace, the nurse and trainers share health information on a need-to-know, secure basis to safeguard student records. When providing education and medical evaluation recommendations, they offer students an [Informed Refusal](#) should students decline external referrals, and trainers follow Grace's policy related to [sensitive exams](#) of athletes. The [contract](#) for the athletic [trainers](#) includes conduct expectations, scope of practice, and an agreement between parties to adhere to federal and state laws.

[Instructure](#), Grace's Canvas learning management system partner, is committed to [privacy](#), [security](#), and [accessibility](#). Grace's OIT department uses an SOC 2 or HECVAT [report](#) to measure vendor risk, such as with Instructure, to assure security controls are in place to protect confidential institutional information. SOC trust criteria include privacy, confidentiality, security, processing integrity, and availability of data.

[Winona IT](#) became a partner with Grace in May 2022 to provide help desk technicians and network/

infrastructure support. Based locally and owned by a Grace alumnus, it has a [similar mission](#) to Grace's and provides a solution for support coverage that can be scaled.

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- 9-20-21 GEM v2 Listening Sessions
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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

Grace College & Seminary strives toward transparent and open communication with its constituents through printed materials, its website, regular staff meetings, and social and other media as necessary. The board affirmed Grace's [brand identity](#), *The Ways of Grace*, and regularly communicates its mission and values (1.B).

In compliance with the HEOA, Grace publishes consumer disclosures on its [Student Right to Know](#) webpage for current and prospective students and employees. The Vice President of Administration and Compliance oversees annual updates to the *Student Right to Know* page of the website to ensure accurate, complete information is presented to the public. Grace emails an [Annual Notice](#) to students regarding these consumer rights including their [FERPA rights](#), which are also located in the [Catalog](#), [Student Handbook](#), and [Academic Policy Manual](#). It also discloses its [Privacy Policy](#) on its website regarding the collection of user information.

Students and parents are updated about important campus information through means such as [chapel](#), [student and parent emails](#), [Parent Orientation](#), and [Parent Council meetings](#).

External academic reviews and financial analysis provide evidence verifying claims of Grace about its financial stability and academic programs.

The [margin analysis](#), conducted by the CFO and reviewed with the deans, cabinet, and the board, details the financial stability of academic programs (5.B.3, 5.C.2).

2.B.1

Academic Offerings and Requirements

Grace's [website](#), [catalog](#), and check sheets are the primary means of communicating its academic offerings and requirements and are available to prospective and current students. They are [reviewed and updated](#) annually, along with promotional material such as the [Viewbook](#), to ensure accuracy and completeness. The catalog and check sheets outline required courses and prerequisites (3.D.2, 4.A.4), and the catalog also notes discipline-specific [policies](#).

Students meet with their academic advisor regularly to ensure they complete the academic requirements for graduation. Advising appointments include reference to [check sheets](#) for majors and minors, which concisely outline the courses required in each degree.

The [academic page of the portal](#) provides the academic calendar, Grace core curriculum, current and archived check sheets, and [sample core syllabi](#). [Department](#) websites provide additional information. Class schedules for all degree levels are available on the [website](#) where students can search for individual courses. Information about registration is available on the student page of the portal. The [Academic Policy Manual](#) is available on the website and includes policies related to academic requirements.

As a [charter school](#) authorizer, Grace publishes [annual reports](#) for its authorized schools on the Indiana Department of Education website and, in compliance with Indiana's Open Door law, gives [notice](#) of public meetings regarding authorization status.

In accordance with the US final ruling on consumer disclosures and state authorizations, the nursing, teacher education, and graduate counseling departments disclose [licensing](#) requirements.

The [deans](#) and the marketing office have worked collaboratively during the fall 2022 semester to ensure the accurate representation of degree programs on the [website](#) and other [print materials](#).

Faculty and Administrators

Faculty and administration of the institution, along with their title and credentials, are listed in the [academic catalog](#), which is updated regularly as well as on their departmental [webpages](#).

Costs to Students

Grace publishes its [tuition, fees, and billing and payment information](#) on its website and both financial aid and admissions offices include cost sheets in their mailings to students. Grace's [financial aid webpage](#) provides additional information about loans, scholarships, grants, repayment, forms, a checklist, and an [affordability calculator](#) to help determine the student's cost to attend Grace. Students may check their accounts through the [portal or through their Slate Status Page](#) where they can also submit a credit agreement. The *Academic Policies Manual* includes a [Payment Policy](#). Students receive an itemized [invoice](#) of all costs after they register for courses; charges are updated weekly to reflect changes to their schedules.

Governance Structure

Grace is a cooperating member of the Charis Fellowship (1.B.2, 2.C). This [affiliation](#) is noted on both the Charis and Grace websites, and in Grace's catalog, *Bylaws*, and *Articles of Incorporation* (referencing "Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches"). Membership in the corporation is issued to any Charis church that contributes annually to Grace Schools, with each qualifying member church entitled to one vote on any matter concerning which the corporate membership is entitled to vote (e.g., board of trustees). Although the Charis Fellowship does not govern Grace College & Seminary, Grace makes decisions in harmony with the Charis Fellowship's *Commitment to Common Identity* and the resolutions proposed by its social concerns committee.

Accreditation

Specialized accreditation validates institutional academic integrity through external recognition of compliance with professional standards. Accreditations are listed on the [website](#) and published on the appropriate department's webpage and in their printed materials. In public releases of new programs, Grace provides relevant accreditation information (4.A.5).

Affiliations and Authorizations

Academic organizations in which Grace is a member, academic partners with whom Grace has articulation agreements, and the athletic affiliations of Grace Lancers are available to the public through its [website](#).

The Executive Dean of the School of Professional and Online Education maintains Grace's active, voluntary participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) for authorization of postsecondary distance education in other member states, and the [authorization status](#) of each state is disclosed on the website.

2.B.2

External academic reviews and financial analysis provide evidence verifying claims of Grace about its financial stability and academic programs.

Research

The [Office of Faith, Learning, and Scholarship](#) promotes scholarship and faith integration to honor Grace's intellectual and spiritual heritage while engaging with diverse disciplines. This office organizes the [Lyceum Series](#), which merges cultural engagement, academics, and faith by bringing [speakers](#) to campus; and [Communitas](#), a celebration of student scholarship, artistic expression, and Christian community. This office also leads scholarship [forums](#) that focus on faculty research.

Community Engagement

First-year students in the First-Year Foundations ([FYE1000](#)) select and attend at least three community events to develop a sense of belonging by interacting with peers and faculty and by contributing their strengths, perspectives, and experiences. To introduce students to corporate research and academic inquiry, and to develop social awareness and civic responsibility, first-year students also investigate topics of interest.

Athletic teams participate in local [service and mission](#) projects as part of fulfilling their own [departmental mission](#). After COVID-19 interrupted team travel, student-athlete missions trips resumed in summer 2022. As a member of NCCAA, Grace teams that participate in tournament play also participate in community service.

[Student involvement, campus clubs](#), and [ministry opportunities](#), described on Grace's webpage and in the [catalog](#), build campus culture through student-led organizations that are not only opportunities for service and leadership, but also traditions that unify Grace's campus family and engage in service. Academic, professional, political, cultural, musical, athletic, and civic [groups](#) enhance students' experience, and participation in [study abroad](#), [honors societies](#), research experiences, and career services impact students in tangible ways. Students have indicated the [benefit](#) of their involvement in student activities and contributions of community engagement to their educational experience.

Performance and [music](#) opportunities provide outlets for creative expression through [coursework](#) and [musical theater and dramatic](#) productions, Remnant (traveling religious drama), and Back in Five (improvisation). Student-led one-acts, cabarets, and campus-wide open mic events involve students across campus. Creative opportunities are also offered through art [coursework](#), [gallery exhibits](#), and creative [writing](#).

The [Council for Diversity and Inclusion](#), open to all students on campus, has expanded in the last several years, an indication of interest and value to students. This year, CDI added the International Student Family organization and the Native American Student Association to its existing Black Student Association, Asian Student Heritage, and Esperanza Latina groups. All [sponsor](#) events to promote affinity, unity, togetherness, and conversation.

Religious or Spiritual Purpose

Grace has articulated through its [Community Lifestyle Expectations](#) the guidelines for choosing God-honoring personal, social, and recreational practices that are consistent with the normative environment found in its Christian context. These expectations apply to students, faculty, staff, and board members. At Grace, curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs and resources promote personal transformation, healthy community, whole-life worship, and intentional service.

Within its campus milieu, holistic development occurs through Grace's focus on creating a spiritual, social, academic, and residential environment that supports healthy, respectful student behaviors and norms. Creating this environment requires consistent communication of expectations, while supporting and encouraging choices in conduct and personal, living, leisure, worship, and work habits that promote transformation, community, worship, and service. This environment is depicted in the [Spiritual Life](#) graphic shared with students and parents.

Notably, students are expected to attend [chapel](#) or occasional, alternative options such as Conference on Missions, midnight chapel, scripture reading groups, and student-led or other seminars. In chapel, students, faculty, and staff worship together and hear God's word from authors, musicians, and leading voices – often on global and social concerns like poverty, hunger, clean water, human trafficking, pornography, and modern-day slavery – all from a Christian worldview.

Student chapel committee members serve as coordinators, media/tech, graphic designers, and worship leaders. The worship band is directed by and consists of Grace students.

First-year residential students attend weekly [Growth Groups](#), and commuter students are connected to a growth group through the commuter liaison. All students are encouraged to attend beyond their first year.

Academically, faith integration is expected in all courses in all disciplines through their content, learning outcomes, and assignments. Additionally, the core curriculum includes three Bible courses, and faculty routinely pray for students or provide short devotions at the beginning of class (1.A.4).

[Student conduct](#) promotes individual and community growth and an environment conducive to learning and development in Jesus Christ. Conduct procedures outline an instructive, encouraging, and fair process of accountability and restorations with the campus community, in which biblical values are applied in the development of character, competence, and service.

Experiential Learning

Students in all traditional [undergraduate](#) disciplines complete at least 3 hours of an internship; similar experiences are also included in [graduate](#) and [seminary](#) programs. Academic departments approve and administer this requirement for their programs. Other opportunities for experiential learning include the cross-cultural field experience (1.A.4) and co-curricular activities such as the [mediation team](#) and the forensics team.

Revision of academic policies regarding internships and what was formerly the applied learning requirement is currently underway.

Sources

- 2021 Margin Analysis Report - FINAL (Deans Mtg) Amended
- 21-22 FYE1000 Syllabus - Involvement Assignment and Inquiry Project (Pages 4-5)
- 22-23 Student Conduct Procedures - Student Handbook (Pages 18-22)
- Academic Policy Manual Webpage
- Academics - Grace Website
- Academics 2B - Core Curriculum sample syllabi
- Academics-Catalog 2B - Examples of program requirements
- Academics-Checksheets 2B - Examples
- Academics-Portal 2B - Academic Information Screenshot
- Affiliations 2B - Academic Partners
- Affordability Calculator - Grace Website
- Agenda-Parents Council - Updates 10-19-19
- Annual Notice 2B - Email to students
- Annual Report-Charter Schools 2B - IDOE site
- Art Department -Visual Performing and Media Arts - Grace Website
- Assessment-Students 2B - Benefits of student involvement
- Athletics-Students 2B - Mission
- Authorizations-by-State-document-for-website
- Calendar-CDI 2B - Sponsored Events
- Calendar-Charter Schools 2B - Board Meeting Notice
- Campus Activities and Clubs - Grace Website
- Campus Clubs and Student Involvement - Grace College webpage
- CDI and Affinity Groups Mission_Vision Statments
- Class Schedules - Grace Website
- Community Engagement 2B - Creative Writing
- Community Engagement 2B - Gallery Exhibits
- Cost to Students-Invoice 2B - Itemized Costs
- Cost to Students-Website 2B - Next Steps and Slate screenshots
- Cost to Students-Website 2B - Tuition and Fees
- COVID-19 - Announcements - Campus Commitment Updates and Sanctions 8-28-20
- Department Brochures 2022-web
- Example Department Faculty - Grace Website
- Faith_Scholarship_and Learning - Grace College webpage
- FERPA -Grace Website
- Financial Aid and Scholarship - Grace Website
- Governance-Affiliation 2B - Charis Fellowship
- Grace Chapel - Grace Website
- Grace College Art Students Present Paintings to Local Retirement Community - Grace Website
- Grace College Student Right to Know web page
- Growth Groups - Grace Website
- Internship Credits - Undergrad Checksheets
- List-Athletics 2B - Community service activities
- List-Catalog 2B - Faculty and Administration

- List-Performances 2B - Theater and Performance Productions 2017-2022
- List-Students 2A - Honors societies benefits
- List-Students 2B - Study abroad and cross cultural benefits
- Lyceum Series on Faith and Scholarship - Grace College webpage
- MA Local Church Ministry Degree - Grace College Website
- MACMHC-spring-start-7-semesters
- Majors and Minors - Grace Website
- Ministry Opportunities - Grace Website
- Minutes-Board 2B - Brand Identity
- Minutes-Deans 2B - Accurate representation of academics
- Music Opportunities - Grace Website
- ONLINE Student handbook 2022-2023
- Parent Orientation Agenda 2022 2B
- Policy-Students 2B - Community Lifestyle Statement 9-7-20
- Policy-Students 2B - Payment
- Privacy Policy - Grace Website
- Research-Faculty 2B - Scholarship Forums NEEDS WALLYS TITLE
- Research-Speakers 2B - Lyceum Speakers
- School of Ed_ Nursing_ and Grad Counseling Licensing Requirements
- Seminary Homepage - Grace Website
- Spiritual Life
- Student Involvement_ Clubs_ and Opportunities - 22-23 Catalog (Pages 11-14)
- Survey-Communitas 2B - Student Satisfaction
- Testimonials-students 2B - Mediation Team
- Viewbook-Marketing 2B - 2021
- Web Review Example

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

Grace College & Seminary is an autonomous, [501\(c\)\(3\)](#) authorized by the [State of Indiana](#) to operate its Winona Lake campus and by the [State of Ohio](#) to operate its Akron educational site. It operates under its [Articles of Incorporation](#) for which it was formed, in part, to establish a liberal arts college and a seminary (1.A.2).

Grace is governed by policy set by a board of trustees, the structure, selection, and duties of which are delineated in its bylaws. The board exists to define the mission and to influence, support, and nurture the development and accomplishment of the institution's vision by the administration, faculty, and staff. The [organizational chart](#) specifies the structure of Grace; the board serves as the governing body.

As part of its voluntary membership of and cooperating agency status with the [Charis Fellowship](#), an organized fellowship of churches and ministries, Grace has an annual meeting to elect trustees, provide a financial report, and affirm corporation officers. Grace [aligns](#) with the Charis Fellowship and its relationship to the Fellowship has been a component of the board's deliberations, referenced in the *Board Handbook* as part of its [philosophy of governance](#), and evidenced by its presentations at the [corporation meeting](#) at the annual Charis Fellowship Conference. The board makes no declarations or resolutions that are in conflict with the policies and practices of the Charis Fellowship unless doing so would result in a compromise of Grace's own positions or commitments.

2.C.1

Board members are [professionals](#) in fields related to board functions, and trustee recruitment plans consider professional representation needed for the board to make decisions in the best interest of the institution. Professional expertise is an area of consideration when assigning board members to a [commission](#); for example, the [Risk Commission chair](#) is the former Chief of Police for the University of Detroit Mercy.

The board's knowledge of the institution's operations and needs comes from board development as

well as direct reports from the president, administrators, and consultants.

The board makes informed decisions and establishes policies to ensure, preserve, and enhance the missional integrity of the institution and its deliberations reflect these priorities. The board convenes twice per year for in-person [meetings](#). Typically, it also meets virtually once per year; it also convenes for special executive sessions and in [emergencies](#). Commissions [meet](#) prior to board meetings, during board meetings, and as needed to remain current and informed.

Board development reflects the nature of higher education and broader landscapes as contexts for Grace's operations, and to meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities that require it to stay objective, responsible, honest, trustworthy, efficient, and act for the good of the organization as stewards of public trust. It hears reports from consultants and [administrators](#) in board meetings and through commissions to more fully inform them as they deliberate what is in the best interest of the institution.

Recent board development opportunities included full board presentations by Shirley Hoogstra, [CCCU President](#), on religious liberty; [EAB](#) on the state of higher ed, risks, and opportunities; and the VP/in-house counsel and the president of [ICI](#) regarding navigating enrollment pressures in Indiana and the Midwest. The VP of ICI also presented to the Risk Commission on risk in higher education. Such development opportunities prepare the board to make objective, informed decisions with respect to Grace's responsible financial and academic practices. A [recent board meeting](#) affirmed a commitment by the board to regular development as part of its annual full board meetings.

At times, the board has conducted its own [development](#), such as through a book discussion on religious liberty, discussion on Christian higher ed, and a discussion and internal survey on unity and [perspectives on politics and gender](#) during a national cultural divide.

The *President's Report to the Board* and the VP of Administration and Compliance's *Report to the Risk Commission* note [legal updates](#) to apprise the board of situations in which there may be a legal and related financial impact on the institution.

The [Aspire to Action Committee](#) of faculty and staff was appointed in 2018 by the president to examine how to achieve a \$5 million budget reduction. The committee chair reported to the full board, and the CFO and COO provided updates and summaries to the financial affairs commission and [full board](#).

Models of collaboration and [additional revenue](#) and a [comprehensive enrollment plan](#) were presented to the board for consideration of innovation, challenges, and strategic decision-making facing the institution.

The board hears regular financial reports, approves the budget, considers the financial viability and future of the institution, and receives reports on the strategic plan, which articulates institutional priorities at its commission and full board meetings (2.A.2).

2.C.2-3

The board considers the interests of Grace's internal constituencies at its board meetings. Cabinet members [attend](#) open sessions of full board meetings to provide input and context about institutional issues.

The president provides a formal written report to the full board with input from senior administrators

and campus leaders. Commissions conduct the more detailed work of the board and include a senior administrator who works closely with the commission chair to develop agendas that also [involve](#) members of the campus community. In addition, staff representatives provide detailed reports to their [commissions to assure](#) constituent concerns are communicated before commissions make recommendations.

This organizational structure allows each commission to spend sufficient time reviewing and considering the interests of its constituencies. As evidence, the Advancement Commission of the board provides oversight to the Office of Advancement and, in instances of capital campaigns, receives both feasibility and [progress reports](#) from the campaign, then reviews them before making a recommendation to the board for approval.

The board considers the interests of [internal constituencies](#) by inviting them to present at board meetings or for personal interaction and informal presentations at lunch. The following are examples of those who have participated in board meetings:

1. New faculty
2. New chief human resources officer
3. Deans
4. Student body president
5. Agribusiness students and faculty
6. Student chapel committee
7. Worship arts students and faculty
8. Athletes, coaches, the SID, and the AD
9. Presidential Scholarship Competition winner
10. Student leadership award winners

Special guests may also be invited to commission or board meetings to provide vision, updates, and priority topics for the full board, all of which influence the board's decision-making.

The board has acknowledged the challenges facing [employees](#), such as through reports on the *Employee Engagement Survey* results as well as health care options about which they considered the financial impact on the institution and individual employees. They also make financial decisions that directly impact the lives of employees, such as those related to bonuses, salary increases, and restoration of reduced wages.

The board acknowledges its relationship with [external](#) constituencies such as the Charis Fellowship, constituents who have an interest in Grace's status as a college versus a university, and the recruitment plans for international students.

2.C.4

The board [preserves its independence](#) from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution. Each board member completes the annual questionnaire associated with the [Conflicts of Interest Policy](#), which states that members must disclose all relationships and business affiliations that may provide a potential conflict between the interest of the institution and themselves personally. This was evidenced by a board member who recused himself from a financial decision in which he had ownership interest. Further, the [Board Handbook](#) gives guidance regarding speaking on behalf of the institution, including making statements that appear to support a political party or platform.

2.C.5

Grace's [organizational chart](#) reflects the delegation of its daily operations to its administration and oversight of the curriculum to the faculty. [For example](#), the board approved the maximum 23/24 pricing increase, leaving discretion to administration to determine the precise increase for tuition, room, and board; and the maximum target for the average discount rate, leaving the management of the awards to administration. Other board approvals for which staff determine the details and implement included the preliminary budget, employee bonuses, and the strategic plan. Faculty oversee the curriculum by, in part, reviewing the core curriculum, discussing the textbook request process, and [approving academic programs](#). Although the board hears reports on various topics, such as the vision for the seminary, a new customer relationship management system, and additional revenue streams, the daily operations and decision making is left to the department.

The [primary responsibilities](#) of the board are to appoint the President of the institution and ratify other chief officers and full-time faculty. This structure allows the day-to-day management of the institution to lie with the president and administrators.

Sources

- 21-22 Articles of Incorporation
- 21-22 Philosophy of Governance - Board of Trustees Handbook (Pages 4-5)
- Agenda-Board 2C - Board development - Four Approaches to Race_Politics_Gender and Theology
- Aspire to Action Recommendation Report September 22-2018
- Authorization-Indiana 2C - Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- Authorization-Ohio 2C - Department of Education approval
- Bios-Board 2C - July 2022
- Bylaws 2C - Charis Fellowship alignment
- Charis Fellowship - Website
- Commissions-2C - Board of Trustees Handbook (Pages 7-8)
- Handbook-Board - Public Affairs
- Handbook-Board 2C - Meetings (Pages 5-6)
- Handbook-Board 2C - Relationship to Administrators (Page 11)
- IRS Grace Schools 501c3 Determination letter
- Minutes-Board 2C - Board development - EAB presentation
- Minutes-Board 2C - Board development - ICI presentation 4-21-22
- Minutes-Board 2C - Board development - internal
- Minutes-Board 2C - Board development - Shirley Hoogstra CCCU presentation
- Minutes-Board 2C - Campaign Progress Report
- Minutes-Board 2C - Consultants Enrollment Report - Healy and Thorpe 4-25-19
- Minutes-Board 2C - Consultants Revenue Stream Report - Sally Blount 10-3-19
- Minutes-Board 2C - Delegation of operations
- Minutes-Board 2C - Emergency Meetings
- Minutes-Board 2C - Interests of Constituents
- Minutes-Board 2C - Reports - Aspire to Action
- Minutes-Board Commission 2C - Academic Affairs 10-1-21
- Minutes-Corporation 2C - 2021
- Minutes-Faculty 2C - Curriculum Oversight

- Organizational Chart 9-28-22
- Policy - Conflicts of Interest 9-14-21
- Policy-Board 2C - undue influence
- Reports-Board 2C - Legal Updates

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

2.D

Grace College & Seminary is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. The Bible and the institution's *Covenant of Faith* provide a framework for academic freedom.

Academic freedom, its scope, intellectual pursuits, and the cooperative effort needed for the institution to function well are detailed in the [Faculty Handbook](#), which provides guidelines for faculty as they carry out this freedom.

Faculty sabbaticals are reviewed and approved; however individual research topics and scholarship are determined by the faculty member. Faculty forum [topics](#) are submitted for scheduling purposes, but faculty may research topics of their own interest.

Along with academic freedom comes the responsibility of all employees to accurately represent the institution and protect sensitive information. This is emphasized in institutional documents such as the *Computer Usage Policy* and the *Employee Handbook*, which provides [guidance](#) regarding representing Grace, protection of confidential information, and social media. The *Social Media* and *Confidential Information* policies do not prohibit disclosures protected by the National Labor Relations Act, legally protected speech and conduct, or employees from reporting non-compliance concerns with governmental agencies or otherwise participating in such governmental investigations or inquiries.

In addition to the cooperative effort needed between faculty and the institution, the *Faculty Handbook* cautions faculty that they are free to speak as a private citizen but must fully recognize their responsibilities as a member of the professional community and as a representative of the institution. Faculty members who also serve in supervisory roles represent the institution even in private settings.

As a liberal arts institution, inquiry and freedom of expression are represented in each discipline. Some [syllabi](#), therefore, include goals and learning outcomes that develop this expression. It is also represented through an [inquiry project](#) in *Freshman Foundations*.

Students can also express academic freedom by [writing](#) for the *Sounding Board*, submitting publications to *Inkspot*, and by participating in co- and extra-curricular clubs and organizations. They also have the academic freedom to select research projects submitted to the IRB for approval (2.E).

The [Board Handbook](#) also includes guidelines for representing and speaking on behalf of the institution.

Students who want to organize or lead on-campus public protests or engage in activism related to a cause or issue are guided by Grace's [*Peaceful Protest Policy*](#). In part, the purposes of the policy are to recognize that the right to dissent is an academic and scholarly pursuit; should be done so in a safe, civil, and respectful way; and that Grace will make reasonable efforts to foster this. Grace has not had requests for approval of activism-related events since the policy was enacted in 2019.

Sources

- Community Engagement - Creative Writing
- ENG 1100 G - Effective Writing - Lukens
- Freedom of Expression 2D - Freshman Foundations
- Handbook-Board 2D Public Affairs
- Handbook-Employee 2D - Freedom of Expression
- Handbook-Faculty 2D - Academic Freedom
- Policy-Students 2D - Peaceful Assembly and Protest 8-18-19
- Research-Faculty - Scholarship Forum and Sabbatical topics

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1-2

The [Institutional Review Board](#) provides oversight of and assures ethical research practices related to (1) research conducted by faculty, students, and other campus personnel regarding human subjects, or (2) using campus personnel or students as research subjects.

This [committee](#) is composed of faculty representing various disciplines, including the seminary and a graduate program, the VP of student affairs, and a community representative. As students submit research proposals for approval and informed consent forms, the IRB committee uses its reviews to help educate students regarding the protection of subjects and integrity in research.

Although the committee has not disapproved proposals, some required extensive editing and support from the committee to ensure compliance with informed consent and other ethical [research standards](#).

2.E.3

The institution's academic and student support programs contribute to the development of student skills and attitudes fundamental to the responsible use of knowledge. Academic and support services provide education for students to develop not only the skills but also the internal value of ethical inquiry and responsible application of knowledge in both their personal lives and their work as students.

Undergraduate and graduate [courses](#) provide direct instruction regarding ethical research and use of information. For example, all incoming students enroll in the liberal arts course [Effective Writing](#), typically by their second semester. This course has goals related to the ethical use of knowledge (e.g., plagiarism, citation of sources, and use of credible sources) as well as opportunities to practice these skills in written work.

The Morgan Library website includes [research guides](#) and links to online [citation-style resources](#) to assist students in both their research and crediting others' work properly. The library also provides resources specifically for [online students](#) including tutorials and mobile device searches. Additional

academic support services, such as assistance with writing styles, are provided by the [Writing Lab](#) housed in the library.

2.E.4

The *Academic Policies Manual* and the [Student Handbook](#) outline the policy on academic honesty and integrity. The [Academic Integrity Policy](#) itself details the expected conduct of students, the offices to which violations will be reported, the range of sanctions, the appeal process, and the use of the [Academic Integrity Violation](#) form to enforce violations and which becomes part of the student's disciplinary record. [Records](#) of student academic dishonesty and sanctions are retained in the student affairs and academic affairs offices; additional offices, such as the registrar, school of education, dean of student's major, and athletics, are notified if applicable.

Faculty members include policies in their [syllabi](#) about cheating, plagiarism, or academic integrity and honesty. Articulating expectations and consequences provides consistency in communication with students and integrity in the academic process.

Sources

- 21-22 Academic Integrity Policy - Student Handbook (Page 46)
- Enforcement-Academic Integrity 2E - Student Violations
- Grace HSRC - Stand Oper Proced 09-2020
- IRB 2E - Ethical Research and Accountability
- List-Faculty - Committees 2022-2023
- Morgan Library Writing Lab
- Policy 2E - Academic Integrity 21-22
- Policy- 2E - Academic Integrity Violation Form
- Policy-Faculty 2E - Academic Integrity syllabus template
- Research-Library 2E - Citation Resources
- Research-Library 2E - Off Campus Student Resources - Research Guides
- Research-Library 2E - Research Guides excerpt and examples
- Research-Students 2E - Direct instruction research ethics
- Research-Students 2E - ENG 1100 G - Effective Writing - Krammes Spring 2022

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

Grace clearly, publicly, and accurately articulates its mission, and its board, employees, and students are expected to work, live, and worship within its mission and faith heritage.

There is shared responsibility in the work of the institution, starting with the governing board, which helped collectively develop its revised mission and values. Additionally, the board engages in the responsible solicitation, use, and expression of information for its decision-making. Responsible use of information also occurs within academics, scholarship, and research activities of Grace faculty and students.

Grace has created systems of accountability, seeks external validation, and upholds external regulations to ensure commitment to its mission, ethical behavior, and integrity in its governance, scholarship, and operations.

Grace acts responsibly with its external partnerships.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

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

Argument

3.A.1

Grace College & Seminary, with a Carnegie classification of *Master's Colleges & Universities: Medium Programs*, offers degree programs at the [associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels](#). All Grace degree programs and program certificates are current, rigorous, relevant, and appropriate to higher education through specialized programmatic accreditation, curriculum development, and [assessment of student learning](#), which includes annual assessment and program reviews (4.A).

Specialized Accreditation

To ensure that programs are current and meet quality standards as outlined by their accrediting bodies, several programs at Grace have specialized accreditation (4.A.5).

Since the 2019 visit, current work regarding accreditation is notable in three programs:

- The bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering received its initial accreditation by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology ([ABET](#)).
- A competency-based model of theological education (Deploy) transitioned from an experimental program to "ongoing exception status" by the Association of Theological Schools ([ATS](#)).
- The School of Education, previously [NCATE](#) accredited, was accredited for the first time by CAEP (see [site review visit report](#), [accreditation letter](#), and [accreditation action report](#)).

See complete list of accredited programs on the [Grace website](#).

Curriculum Development

Grace has a systematic and sequential process to warrant quality in the development and revision of

curricula. New and revised curricula, whether initiated by the department, school, or administration, are evaluated and endorsed through a faculty-reviewed process prior to implementation. Proposals follow the [Procedure for the Curriculum Changes Policy](#), which was revised and approved on 5-3-2021 to align with portions of the Higher Learning Commission's "New Academic Program Substantive Change Application." The elimination of programs may also be a necessary aspect of enhancing the quality of curricula. Steps to propose the teach-out of majors, minors, and certificates are described in the policy (page 4).

Grace's institutional data as reported in its *HLC Institutional Update* triggered the Non-Financial Indicator 4 (minimal full-time faculty) in both 2021 and 2022. The need to identify [solutions](#) to meet the HLC Non-Financial Indicator 4 has necessitated creativity, innovation, and growth in Grace's curricular offerings. These include the elimination of degree programs, the restructuring of certain degree programs with concentrations, and the addition of [faculty](#). Additionally, Grace is developing the tools needed to evaluate its curricular offerings to assure they are current and viable and align with the [CIRP report](#) of intended majors (page 31).

Credit Hour Policy

Credit hour policies set expectations for student performance. All courses, including new or redesigned courses, conform to Grace's [Credit Hour Policy](#), which complies with the federal definition of "credit hour."

The School of Professional and Online Education (SPOE) monitors the minimum thresholds of student learning as per the *Credit Hour Policy* and in relation to the credentialing level. To be consistent with credit hour federal guidelines, SPOE uses established criteria for determining [credit hour equivalency](#) when designing courses (e.g., direct and indirect instruction, learning activities, time on task). In 2018, 100 online courses underwent an audit to verify that courses met the guidelines and policies for determining credit hour equivalency. As a result of the evaluation, significant changes were made in GOL 4520 (see [GOL 4520 pre-OE review](#) and [GOL 4520 after OE review](#)). Slight improvements in hours were made in MHE 5080 ([MHE 5080 pre-OE review](#) and [MHE 5080 after OE review](#)) and some courses, such as [CPY 5150](#), were well over the required hours.

Course Syllabi

Student performance expectations appropriate to the degree program are communicated at the course level through course syllabi and provided to all students in each academic course. Course [syllabi](#) are expected for all courses, independent studies, private tutorials, readings, field experiences, practicums, apprenticeships, and applied learning experiences, and are [evaluated](#) by program directors and academic deans. The [elements](#) of the syllabus that are audited include course information, purpose, learning outcomes, requirements, and schedule; disposition of course; and determination of grade. Faculty members submit all course syllabi to the office of Academic Affairs at the beginning of each semester.

Beginning summer of 2022, [institutional elements of the syllabus](#) pertaining to the disposition of all courses (e.g., disability policy and academic integrity) were communicated on Grace's learning management system, Canvas, for consistency.

Assessment of Student Learning

As further detailed in 4.A, courses and programs are assessed through [annual program learning outcomes \(PLO\) assessments](#), [program reviews](#), [faculty scholarship](#), [faculty development plans](#), [faculty promotion portfolios](#), and [course evaluations](#). [Curriculum mapping](#) is used to determine the scope and sequencing of desired learning outcomes in the reporting of annual PLO assessments. Formative and summative assessments are [identified, collected, evaluated](#), and used for program review and continuous program improvement. The program review process requires a [comparison of degree programs](#) to similar institutions to benchmark program outcomes, required departmental core courses, internship/practicums, and capstone courses against the program being evaluated.

Grace's curriculum aligns with established standards for various disciplines. Following are departmental examples of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded:

- Benchmarking Grace students' results against students from peer institutions on Major Field Tests in capstone courses (e.g., [Biology](#), [Mathematics](#))
- Continued state recognitions on State Review Reports for "on-site initial licensure" (e.g., [Business Education](#), [Elementary Education](#), [Life Science Education](#))
- Excellent pass rates for program completers taking their licensure exams in the Department of Humanities secondary education programs (e.g., English Ed. majors had a [100% pass rate](#) for the last 5 years).
- Specialized Professional Associations (SPA) National Recognition Reports (e.g., [English Ed](#), [Mathematics Ed](#), [Social Studies Ed](#), [Foreign Language Ed](#)) - all Department of Humanities secondary education majors achieved the status of "National Recognition" through the SPA Program Review process in 2020-2021.
- Results appropriate to undergraduate major for [Oral Proficiency Interviews](#) in foreign language programs.
- 100% licensure exam pass rate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling of those [reported](#) in 2021-2022.

3.A.2

Academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels at Grace differentiate their learning goals for students according to (a) program conceptualization, focus, and design, (b) curriculum content, (c) program learning outcomes, and (d) depth, breadth, specificity, and application of knowledge and skills. Programs also differentiate their goals as expressed through their purpose, discipline, and profession all within the broader institutional context and mission.

All these elements differentiate the institution's programs not only from others within the same educational level (e.g., undergraduate psychology from undergraduate counseling) but also between levels (e.g., undergraduate counseling from graduate-level counseling and doctoral level pastoral ministry). It is assumed that students entering graduate programs will already possess the core knowledge attained in their undergraduate work (except when completion of blended degrees overlaps), but attain a depth of knowledge and skill that exceeds that of the undergraduate student. Students in doctoral programs are differentiated by their ability to demonstrate advanced skills related to research.

Examples of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

[Examples of differentiated PLOs](#) across levels include:

Bachelor's (B.A. and B.S.)	Master's	Doctoral
<i>Counseling</i> - Students will utilize basic biopsychosocial documentation, assessment, counseling skills, case reporting, and clinical documentation including treatment plans and progress notes.	<i>M.A. in CMHC</i> - Students will apply ethical, legal, and professional knowledge to counseling and consulting issues and practice.	N/A
<i>Entrepreneurial Management</i> - Senior students will create and defend a viable business plan.	<i>M.S. in Nonprofit Management</i> - Students will integrate and apply discipline-specific concepts in a variety of nonprofit settings.	N/A
<i>Sport Management</i> - Graduates will integrate Biblical ethics into their decision-making processes.	<i>M.S. in Athletic Administration</i> - Students will use proper & ethical business practices and marketing procedures.	N/A
<i>Youth Ministry</i> - Students will know how to minister to youth and their families in various contexts.	<i>MDiv</i> - Students will develop a biblically consistent personal theology in preparation for ministry leadership.	N/A
<i>Intercultural Studies</i> - Students will be able to understand and express the orthodox view of God and theology in a context that is culturally and audience-specific.	<i>Intercultural Studies (MDiv)</i> - Students will display relevant skills in cultural analysis and engagement.	<i>Intercultural Studies</i> - Students will demonstrate an appreciation for and comprehension of the difficulties of cross-cultural understanding and relationships in both professional and ministry situations in research papers dealing with intercultural communication, contextualization, and applied cultural anthropology.

<p><i>Bible</i> - Students will be able to understand and express the orthodox view of God and theology in a context that is culturally and audience-specific.</p>	<p><i>M.A. in Ministry Studies</i> - Students will develop a biblically consistent personal theological commitment in light of Christian history, theology, and orthodoxy.</p>	<p><i>DMIN</i> - Students will evaluate and address in an irenic manner theological trends and how they impact significant issues with the Evangelical church.</p>
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Associate	Bachelor's
<p><i>A.A. in Liberal Arts</i> - Graduates will interpret and integrate relevant content to be successful in the pursuit of professional endeavors.</p>	<p><i>Core PLO (4)</i> - Students will apply knowledge to all aspects of life through intellectual and practical skills.</p>

Additional undergraduate examples of PLOs differentiated between disciplines include:

- **Biology** - Successful biology students are able to synthesize solutions to real-world biological problems using contemporary knowledge, tools, and instrumentation rooted in fundamental biology.
- **Communication** - Students become critical thinkers who appreciate complexity and deliberation, and who respond to ideas with an acknowledgment of personal bias and personal ethics.
- **Engineering** - Students will apply engineering design to procure solutions that meet specified needs with consideration of public health, safety, and welfare, as well as global, cultural, social, environmental, and economic factors.
- **English** - Students become accomplished critical readers who appreciate complexity and variety, and who respond to itinerary texts with an awareness of aesthetic values, historical context, ideological orientation, critical approach, and competing interpretations.
- **Exercise Science** - Students describe, understand, and apply basic scientific knowledge, concepts and theories of anatomy, physiology, nutrition, biomechanics, metabolism and other supplementary topics as they relate to human movement and exercise.
- **French** - Students identify linguistic, syntactical, and generic features of a written text, and integrate those features in their own writing.
- **History/Political Science** - Students are able to conduct research and skillfully utilize sources in their discipline.
- **Mathematics** - Students will be able to use mathematical and logical language.
- **Elementary Education** - The "Teacher as a Moral Practitioner" designs instruction that is aligned to state standards, incorporates formative and summative assessments, and includes a teaching sequence that leads to successful independent practice.

Grace differentiates learning goals for its academic programs within disciplines. For example, the Seminary has a competency-based [Master of Arts in Local Church Ministry](#) and [Master of Divinity](#) in the [Deploy](#) program. Deploy uses a competency-based theological education (CBTE) model to deliver

seminary education online and onsite within a ministry context at local church or para-church ministries. Learning goals and competencies for these degrees in the Deploy program were developed by the faculty in consultation with pastors and ministry leaders and align with the overall goals of the residential program with a focus on practical ministry experience (see Deploy [PLO assessment summary](#) and [minutes](#) on curriculum mapping discussion and adoption of new wording for Deploy PLOs).

These areas of differentiation are expressed in each academic program's annual assessment and program reviews, which articulate the program's purpose and learning outcomes and collectively support and enhance all aspects of the institution's mission: character, competence, and service.

Grace stores master shell courses in Canvas, Grace's Learning Management System, to ensure that learning goals are consistent across modalities. Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are published and stored in the Learning & Assessment Google Site under [Curricular Program Learning Outcomes Plans](#) and are reported and updated annually at the end of May.

The [assessment committee](#) conducted a program learning outcomes audit in 2019-2020 (4.A) and reviews learning outcomes yearly as part of annual assessment reporting (see [rubric](#)).

An aspect of the [program review process](#) includes a determination of whether learning outcomes are appropriate for the level of the degree program (page 6).

3.A.3

Internally, there is no differentiation in procedure when proposing new majors or use of a different modality, which assures consistency in academic quality and student learning goals. Procedures for academic proposals are addressed in more detail in 4.B.1 and evaluating course instructors is addressed in 3.C.4.

Consistency of Learning Goals

Grace aims for program quality and learning goals to be consistent across all modes of delivery and in all locations for academic credibility and understands the value of consistency in its programming. Since the mid-1980s, Grace has had experience offering academic degree programs both online and in other locations, including three prison locations. Presently, Grace offers degree programs on its main campus, online, and in Akron, OH.

To ensure program quality and consistency of curricula across modalities and locations, Grace uses a learning management system, relies on content experts, provides faculty training, and engages in a collaborative process between main campus faculty and online faculty facilitated by SPOE.

Learning Management System

Canvas is the learning management system that houses every Grace class for all locations and modalities and is used for all courses.

Because Canvas provides an established format for teaching and learning, and because it generates reports used for the evaluation of student success, all full-time faculty and part-time instructors are expected to use Canvas. Best practices for accountability are presently being evaluated by the academic office. Part-time instructors have not been, on occasion, re-contracted for failing to use Canvas.

For consistency of learning outcomes, Core courses have a “master shell” prebuilt in the LMS no matter the modality or instructor. The master shell is researched, selected, built, and assessed by main campus faculty who serve as content experts in their particular field. The course master shell is the most updated version of a course and is used for upcoming terms and sections.

Standard elements are required in each course syllabus, and resources necessary for any course delivery are available on the LMS. [Pre-course design checks](#) and [mid-term health checks](#) are conducted on LMS courses to ensure consistency of Akron and online courses with main campus courses.

All students and faculty in all modalities and locations have 24/7 technical support for Canvas and computer-based issues, and all the resources associated with the learning management system in Winona Lake, IN are also provided to all locations and online programs.

Content Experts

The college provides degree options that are expected to be missionally aligned and academically vetted with content experts on the main campus. All of Grace’s online degrees have been designed, therefore, so that course content, assessment, oversight, training, and faculty support align across modalities and locations. The academic office has resumed syllabi audits to assure consistency with established institutional standards, and instructors in other modalities are evaluated in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures (3.C.4).

To achieve this consistency, main campus faculty are to direct the curriculum for the programs, research the course content, create the syllabus course shells, choose the textbooks, and determine the courses to assess. For example, the learning outcomes for the dual credit courses are the same as those for the main campus courses. Each year Grace’s partner high schools must sign an [articulation agreement](#) to comply with conditions as outlined in the [dual credit description](#). Faculty are [expected to evaluate](#) dual credit instructors on instructional delivery, syllabi, textbook and materials, course rigor, and alignment to ensure consistency with main campus courses.

An example of consistency of course outcomes between modalities is Effective Writing, which is offered in four modalities: [residential](#), [online](#), at the [Akron](#) location, and as a [dual credit](#) course. The syllabi demonstrate consistency of course expectations across modalities. The only exceptions are those instances when a high school adds outcomes to ensure they meet state standards, but they may not take away from the outcomes identified by Grace.

An example of consistency of degree program outcomes between modalities is the master’s degree in local church ministry, offered on the [main campus](#) and in [Akron](#), OH. Check sheets demonstrate consistency of curricular expectations across modalities.

Although course elements between various modalities are expected to be consistent, there is freedom for PT instructors to deliver courses in ways that are unique to their own pedagogical style. On rare occasions, exceptions may occur, but do not change the fundamental nature of the course.

An example of a minor departure from the original main campus program is the [B.S. in Biblical Studies](#) in Akron. Its learning outcomes are the same as those for the [main campus program](#), except for the addition of an outcome regarding mentoring included in the Akron program. Additionally, students enrolled in the [main campus](#) degree program choose a minor in addition to the B.S. in Biblical Studies; however, students in the [Akron](#) program all complete the same built-in Ministry

Leadership concentration (15 hours) as well as three summer Ministry Leadership Seminars (18 credits) rather than complete an additional minor.

Online and remote degree options utilize the same assessment plans as the main campus programs. This includes using the same assignment guidelines to generate student artifacts, the same program learning outcome assessment rubrics, and the same schedule for analysis.

Faculty Training and Support

Faculty in alternative modalities are offered training opportunities by main campus faculty and administration. Similar to that which on-campus faculty receive, training includes institutional and program updates, administrative details and protocols, and pedagogy and teaching tips such as ways to use the LMS for more efficient classroom management. There is continuous training of faculty every semester by the Dean of SPOE, including quarterly online training sessions with the personnel of SPOE.

Additionally, main campus faculty are available and accessible to instructors in alternative modalities to assist in planning, content/assessment modification, and course delivery. Support staff in SPOE are also available to help with course deliverables and provide learning management assistance to facilitate student success.

Consortial Arrangements

Grace's program quality is consistent across modes of delivery, including its consortial arrangements. The instructional design of Grace's partnership programs, such as the [Lower Cost Models Consortium \(LCMC\)](#), has been constructed through extensive research with an emphasis on distance education. A consistent framework empowers professors to build state-of-the-art distance education courses and deliver learning outcomes to students (e.g., [The Rize Standard and Quality Matters](#)). Examples of principles and practices in courses offered through LCMC include measurable learning outcomes emphasizing skills and behaviors, projects, flipped classrooms, hybrid-synchronous classes, close workload monitoring, formative assessments, collaboration and positive reinforcement, and embedded soft skill development.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Argument

3.B.1

Since the 2019 HLC Comprehensive Visit and as a result of the 2018 Core Program Review (4.B.1), the [Core Committee](#) revised the Core purpose, description, and program outcomes. To learn more about the Core revision, see [Proposed Changes to the Core Purpose, Description, and Learning Outcomes](#), which includes:

- Proposed new Core purpose and description of the Core
- Proposed new Core program learning outcomes
- Motivation for change of Core learning outcomes
- Alignment with other learning paradigms
- Expanded learning outcomes with suggested action verbs for course objectives
- Rubrics for intellectual and practical skills

Proposed changes to the Core curriculum were [presented](#) to the faculty for an initial review on August 19, 2021, and [adopted by vote](#) by the faculty on September 13, 2021.

The revised Grace Core program learning outcomes, which now address the concerns about the former learning outcomes, state that students at Grace will:

1. Integrate faith and learning across disciplines.
2. Demonstrate foundational knowledge and ways of knowing in multiple disciplines.
3. Cultivate characteristics of maturity in relationships with God, others, self, and the world.
4. Apply knowledge to all aspects of life through intellectual and practical skills.

Differentiated learning outcomes and the Core as it relates to degree levels are addressed in 3.A.1-2.

3.B.2

Alignment with *Philosophy of Education*

Grace believes that an education that emphasizes the integration of faith and learning lays the foundation for and is in concert with the institutional mission, which reads: “Grace is a Christ-centered community of higher education which applies biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service” (see description of [Character, Competence, and Service](#) in the *Philosophy of Education* statement).

The Core curriculum is grounded in Grace’s [Philosophy of Education](#), which emphasizes and explains how God calls individuals to be a certain kind of people (being) called to a life of learning. God has invested people with the requisite skills and resources to learn (knowing) and asks people to convert being and knowing into service to others (doing) as a way of expressing love for and service to him.

See also 1.A.2 and 1.C.2-3.

In addition to the *Philosophy of Education*, Fink’s taxonomy, NACE career-readiness competencies, and the American Association of Colleges and Universities essential outcomes also informed the revision of outcomes (see proposed changes document previously discussed).

Mapping of Core Outcomes

The Grace curriculum and [Core learning outcomes](#) are designed to integrate faith and learning, impart broad knowledge, cultivate characteristics of maturity in relationships, and develop intellectual and practical skills that Grace believes every college-educated student should possess.

Grace’s Core outcome framework consists of four essential learning outcomes, each of which is composed of expanded applications to the disciplines within a Christian liberal arts education. Students at Grace, therefore, will:

1. Integrate faith and learning across disciplines by:
 - a. Connecting their relationship with God to all realms of life ([BIB 1050](#), [PHI 3010](#), [ECN 3000](#), [SCI 2030](#))
 - b. Synthesizing ideas, disciplines, perspectives, and contexts ([HUM 2000](#))
2. Demonstrate foundational knowledge and ways of knowing in multiple disciplines including:
 - a. Scripture and theology ([BIB 1050](#), [BIB 2010](#), [BIB 3300](#))
 - b. History, arts, and cultural expressions ([HIS 1050](#), [HUM 2100](#))
 - c. Human behavior and social structure ([ECN 3000](#), [PSY 1200](#))
 - d. Science, technology, and math ([SCI 2030](#))
3. Cultivate characteristics of maturity in relationships with God, others, self, and the world by:
 - a. Pursuing a living and active relationship with Christ that leads to purpose and calling ([BIB](#)

[1050](#), [BIB 2010](#), [BIB 3300](#))

b. Practicing awareness of, collaboration with, and service to others, especially engaging with those from diverse cultural backgrounds ([HUM 2100](#), [HIS 1050](#), [COM 1100](#), [PSY 1200](#))

c. Examining influences, strengths, and biases; exploring beliefs and calling; and pursuing self-directed learning ([PSY 1200](#), [FYE 1000](#))

d. Modeling stewardship of personal resources and God's creation ([ECN 3000](#))

4. Apply knowledge to all aspects of life through intellectual and practical skills including:

a. Creative and critical thinking ([COM 1100](#), [HUM 2100](#))

b. Inquiry and analysis ([HUM 2000](#), [ENG 1100](#))

c. Information and technological literacy ([ENG 1100](#))

d. Global and intercultural literacy ([HUM 2000](#))

e. Quantitative reasoning ([MAT 1185](#), [MAT 3200](#))

f. Teamwork and problem-solving ([FYE 1000](#))

g. Written and oral communication ([ENG 1100](#), [COM 1100](#))

Assignments, projects, and exams in Core courses are mapped to learning outcomes as direct evidence of student learning outcomes in the Core curriculum.

Many faculty teaching the Core curriculum use AAC&U's [VALUE rubrics](#) to assess students' original work, a reliable and verifiable evaluation of student performance across sixteen broad learning outcomes.

3.B.3

Grace recognizes the importance of human and cultural diversity as evidenced by its strategic plan and institutional values. Grace seeks to be a place of belonging, recognizing that each person has something unique to contribute (DEI Vision Statement 2), where educational excellence is enhanced by offering students a more diverse learning experience and a more inclusive learning environment (DEI Vision Statement 4), and where cross-cultural learning opportunities are expanded for faculty, staff, and students to support the diverse voices on campus (DEI Vision Statement 5) (see [Strategic Plan DEI Vision statements](#) and Criterion 1.A).

Grace values "engaging the world with intercultural competence so that humanity can flourish" ([Grace Value - Engaged](#)), and "selflessly loving and valuing others as unique, connected, and diverse image-bearers of God" ([Grace Value - Selfless](#)).

Accordingly, Grace provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world through the Core curriculum, departmental courses, and majors. These have elements that focus on multicultural understanding, cultural diversity, and the application of knowledge and skill-building related to graduates' functioning in a cross-cultural or diverse setting (1.A.4).

Core program learning outcomes (PLOs) aim to cultivate characteristics of maturity in relationships with God, others, self, and the world by equipping students to practice awareness of, collaboration with, and service to others, especially engaging with those from diverse cultural backgrounds (Core PLO 3.b) and by examining influences, strengths, and biases (Core PLO 3.c). Also, students at Grace apply knowledge to all aspects of life through intellectual and practical skills including global and intercultural literacy (Core PLO 4.d).

All undergraduate students fulfill a [cross-cultural field experience](#). Students participate in [Go Encounter trips](#), where they engage individuals in cross-cultural settings, develop new perspectives, and learn about global issues by participating in a domestic or international [10-day trip](#) led by cross-culturally experienced faculty and staff (see [2022-2023 Destinations](#)). In addition, students participate in [an applied learning experience](#) as part of their Core curriculum, which enables them to apply the skills learned in class to real-world and changing environments (1.A.4, 3.B).

To enrich diverse and multicultural perspectives in course content, all academic schools conducted a diversity audit of their curriculum content, considering backgrounds, perspectives, or experiences represented in the curriculum for the inclusion and representation of students in degree programs (e.g., [Arts and Sciences](#), [Behavioral Sciences](#), [Education](#), [Business](#), and [Professional and Online Education](#)) (1.A).

The Morgan Library-Learning Center received an Advancing Racial Equity Collection Development Lilly Endowment [grant](#) from Indiana Humanities that will enable the purchase of books for young adults and adults that address the topics of race, systematic racism, and the Black experience. Grace desires for all students to belong and see themselves represented and reflected in the library collection and literature and to learn and understand the experiences of diverse students, cultures, families, and histories through the written word. Grace aims to encourage deep learning and critical thinking and provide resources that support students' development as local and world citizens.

3.B.4

Research and Scholarship

Grace faculty are actively engaged in scholarship and professional activities related to their disciplines. Faculty are expected to maintain a [faculty development plan](#) to keep current in their discipline and contribute in a meaningful way to their discipline. One of the three categories of a faculty member's development plan includes "faculty development, research, and scholarship" defined as a peer-reviewed:

1. Activity or project that improves the expertise of a faculty member with the purpose of helping the faculty member better fulfill his/her role at the college.
2. Use of a scientific or other method of inquiry to discover, interpret, or develop knowledge as related to the faculty member's discipline.
3. Creation, transformation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge related to teaching, research, and scholarly endeavors.
4. Creative endeavors such as productions, exhibits, or professional performances that require a unique skill set related to the faculty member's discipline. The peer review may occur externally, such as through an audition, juried exhibit, or paper accepted for publication, or internally, such as through a presentation at the [Faculty Scholarship Forum](#).

In 2021, Grace began, based on faculty input, offering the [Homer A. Kent Award for](#)

[Scholarship](#) awarded biennially to a faculty member who exhibits [outstanding performance in the area of scholarship](#) and contributes to the institution's culture of academic excellence.

Examples of peer-reviewed faculty scholarship, research, and publications include those in the [Department of Humanities](#) and [the Seminary](#), as well as a notable faculty [presentation](#) at an international business conference.

To celebrate the integration of faith and scholarship, Grace holds an annual [Communitas](#) event that showcases the most exceptional student scholarly achievements from the college. The event is open to the Grace community and is held annually in conjunction with Grace's Spring Day of Worship.

Faculty and students conduct collaborative research as listed below:

- 2018 - [11 Grace students showcase research](#) at the 133rd annual meeting of the Indiana Academy of Science (IAS) in Indianapolis.
- 2018 - [A team of Grace chemistry students and their professor conduct chemical research](#) and discover a new organic compound in their attempt to help eradicate harmful health effects of common toxins.
- 2019 - Two students [design a series of prosthetic hand attachments for a 4-year-old girl](#) from the community born with a limb difference.
- 2021 - [Communication professor and alumna co-author chapter for Lexington Books](#).
- 2021 - [Grace biology and chemistry student partner with professor of chemistry](#) to research alternative electrode materials for safer lithium-ion batteries (LIBs) at a lower cost.
- 2021 - the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams at Grace [launches an Algae Research Team](#). The Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams publication of [Original Research](#) includes numerous studies on the health of the college's local lakes.

All degree programs include comprehensive research papers and various discipline-specific projects designed to familiarize students with common research designs, critical evaluation, and/or basic statistical concepts (2.E). Examples include:

- Research Methods in [Master of Science in Higher Education](#), [Graduate Counseling program](#), and [Behavioral and Social Sciences](#)
- [Professional Project](#) in the Doctor of Ministry
- [Cross-Cultural Internship](#) in the Doctor of Intercultural Studies
- [Senior Design Portfolio & Showcase](#) in the Visual Art program
- [Music Performance settings](#) in the Worship Arts program
- Research projects in [Humanities](#) Capstone ([history](#), [foreign language](#), [English](#), [journalism](#), [communication](#), and [biology](#))
- [Real-life ministry experience](#) in Ministry Studies degrees
- [Business simulation](#) in business degrees
- [Student teaching](#) in the Teacher Education program
- [Clinical practice senior seminar](#) in biology degrees
- [Applied Research](#) in the Degree Completion program

Additionally, all Grace degree programs include [an internship](#), providing students with [opportunities to practice discipline-specific skills](#) in real-life experiences related to their coursework. Though Grace has an [Internship and Practicum](#) policy, these are overseen by each academic school and have unique [discipline-specific processes](#) accordingly.

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Argument

3.C.1

Hiring Practices

Grace values a diverse faculty and staff as representative of its mission and its student body.

A commitment to diversify faculty and staff at Grace who are also in harmony with its mission, doctrinal statement and lifestyle expectations is an ongoing process and is furthered by various initiatives. Departmental goals in human resources include (1) aligning the ethnic and racial composition of employees and students so that the employee race and ethnicity composition reflects the student composition and (2) striving for 10% of the hires to be racially diverse each year.

Additionally, the 2021 Strategic Plan (1.A.5) includes a focus on equitable hiring practices as evidenced by goal 5 of the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Dimension](#), which states: *By January 2022, we are increasing and incentivizing diverse hires across the spectrum of Grace employees with the goal of 25% diversity in new faculty and staff hires each year of this plan.*

Despite those efforts, Grace has a difficult time meeting its goals in part due to its location and lack of diversity in the local, regional, and state population, and limited approaches to sourcing diverse candidates. Though Grace has seen a slight increase in the diversity of its employees, disparities between the employee race and ethnicity composition and student composition remain. In [February 2021](#), the percentage of Grace minority students was 14.6% and the percentage of Grace minority employees was 10.2%. The hiring of diverse employees from July 2018 to February 2021 was 11.3%

including part-time instructors and temporary employees, and 16.8% excluding part-time instructors and temporary employees.

All job postings at Grace include the following statement: *Grace College and Seminary welcomes diversity, and makes employment opportunities available to all applicants and employees without regard to race, color, pregnancy, age, ancestry, national origin, disability, citizenship status, military status, genetic information, or any other legally protected category.*

The [hiring process](#) by the Human Resources department includes a "checks and balances" system to ensure hiring managers employ fair hiring practices. Hiring managers are responsible to complete the [Applicant Tracking & Candidate Review](#) for HR, disclosing the rationale for the selection of all candidates who have completed a full application to identify and eliminate conscious and unconscious bias and to build a diverse pool of candidates. HR [tracks the diversity hiring statistics](#) and has reported results to the President's cabinet and Board of Trustees.

Diversity Committee

According to the *Faculty Handbook*, the advocacy for policies and procedures that promote recruitment and retention of culturally diverse faculty, staff, and students has been one of the administrative responsibilities of the [Diversity Committee](#). According to the *Faculty Handbook*, these responsibilities include providing best practice guidelines to senior administration on diversity awareness (e.g., recruiting, hiring, and employee training). Academically, the committee is responsible to provide recommendations to the provost for faculty training that addresses matters of diversity within the classroom, faculty hiring practices, and curriculum design/review. The [Diversity Committee](#) is co-chaired by the director of Human Resources, the Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the director of Student Involvement. Currently, Grace is in the process of better delineating responsibilities between the diversity committee and the strategic plan.

3.C.2

Faculty and Student Ratios

Institutionally and in accordance with [Grace's standards for faculty scholarship, teaching, and evaluation](#), Grace has sufficient numbers of faculty members to oversee the curriculum and expectations of student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff, though there are certain academic areas that have been identified as needing additional faculty. During fall 2022, Grace employed [50 full-time faculty](#), four full-time instructors, and 155 part-time faculty members, which produced a student-to-faculty ratio of 17:1, though the ratio is not consistent across all degree programs.

Of the 50 full-time faculty members, five are deans for the residential schools, nine are department chairs, and eight are program directors. Additionally, there are 17 administrators with faculty status not included in the 50 full-time faculty member count who occasionally teach a course in their academic field. The longevity of Grace's full-time faculty contributes to the continuity of our students' learning with [an average tenure of 10 years](#).

The following table represents the number of full-time faculty and staff, and part-time instructors teaching courses at Grace.

	# Course	FT Faculty	FT Staff	PT Instr
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Fall 2021	535	253 (48%)	59 (11%)	223 (42%)
Spring 2022	546	271 (50%)	62 (11%)	213 (39%)

Full-time staff are those administrators with faculty status or other staff approved to teach on a part-time basis. More than half the courses are taught by full-time Grace employees (faculty or staff), which provides continuity in the delivery of Grace's mission in the teaching and learning process. Half the courses are taught by full-time faculty in small classes, which allows significant individual attention on students. The number of part-time instructors, including staff who teach on a part-time basis, however, creates opportunities to consider the continuity to carry out the roles of a faculty member. This will require analysis of whether the continuity of programming in both the Core and degree programs is impacted by the number of part-time instructors.

Faculty and Program Ratios

For the last two years, however, Grace has triggered HLC's Non-Financial Indicator 4-Minimal Full-Time Faculty due to the ratio of degree programs to faculty. Grace is working on various solutions. First, because of common cores, the School of Business and the School of Ministry Studies are restructuring some of their degree programs to utilize concentrations. Second, the CFO conducts a yearly [margin analysis](#) (5.B.3) and collaborates with the provost regarding [findings and recommendations](#) (see recommendations #1 and #3). Third, faculty use annual assessment and program reviews to make informed recommendations about program offerings (4.A.1).

All degree programs have full-time faculty with the exception of five-degree programs in the School of Professional and Online Education (SPOE). Although it was a strategic decision at the time Grace developed its online programs to structure them in this way, Grace continues to evaluate this model as it analyzes its faculty-to-program ratios.

The faculty in these online programs are nonetheless qualified per HLC's guidelines and include, for example, retired full-time faculty, a former retired academic dean, and full-time faculty from other institutions of higher education. The executive dean of SPOE (with faculty rank degreed in the academic discipline) oversees all degree programs in partnership with deans of residential academic schools, faculty members, field experts, directors at additional locations, and instructional designers to develop the curriculum for courses and degree programs. His administrative oversight also includes scheduling, advising, and assigning qualified faculty members to the curriculum.

Faculty Workload

Faculty workload is one consideration in determining the sufficiency of faculty classroom and non-classroom roles. Full-time Grace faculty are contracted to teach a total of [24 credit hours](#) over the fall and spring semesters with an expectation of [500 contact hours](#); however, faculty members may receive [release time](#) for [administrative responsibilities](#), specialized accreditation requirements, [oversight of programs](#) and [scholarship](#) as determined by the dean, chair or program director. For example, approved release time is granted for deans, chairs, and directors; specialized research; and all Graduate Counseling faculty members due to CACREP requirements.

A variety of factors influence [faculty workloads](#) and most faculty members can characterize ways in which their teaching loads are distinct from those of other faculty. While the institution attempts to use equitable factors for faculty to carry out their role and responsibility for student learning, it is difficult to resolve all differences across disciplines. In such cases, the dean, working with the

department chair and in conjunction with faculty members, seeks to work out reasonable faculty workloads across academic disciplines.

See Criterion 3.A. for faculty roles related to student performance and Criterion 4.B for assessment of student learning.

3.C.3

Faculty members at Grace, full- and part-time, typically hold a degree in the discipline or subfield at least one level higher than the level at which they teach. Faculty with tested experience equivalent to the degree in the discipline they teach may also be approved (e.g., [School of Ministry Studies Faculty List with credentials](#)). Additionally, [76% of full-time teaching faculty members hold a terminal degree](#) in their academic discipline. Faculty members without terminal degrees have [tested experience](#), including breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which they teach.

Part-time instructors are required to meet the minimum faculty qualifications for [academic content competence](#) established by the Higher Learning Commission. Moreover, each school has developed discipline-specific standards and guidelines for academic merit. More information on part-time instructors' roles is included in the [On-Campus Part-Time Instructor's Handbook](#) and is outlined within each academic school's policies and processes for hiring, including the [Science Department](#), [School of Arts and Sciences](#), [Visual, Media, and Worship Arts](#), [School of Behavioral Science](#), [School of Business](#), [School of Education](#), [School of Ministry Studies](#), [School of Professional and Online Education](#), [Ministry/Bible Professors](#) in SPOE.

[Dual credit instructors](#) are appropriately qualified and hold [degrees](#) at least one level higher than the level at which they teach. All but one dual credit instructor hold degrees in the discipline or subfield in which they teach or have completed 18 credit hours of graduate study in the discipline they teach. One of the dual credit instructors will complete the last three credits of coursework during May 2023.

Instructors teaching Grace's consortial offerings are also appropriately qualified according to Higher Learning Commission's guidelines for qualified faculty and assumed practices (e.g., [LCMC instructor qualifications](#)).

3.C.4

As specified in the [faculty development plan](#) (3.C.5), Grace expects all ranked faculty members to fulfill their responsibilities as outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*, individual contracts, individual letters of appointment, and at a level acceptable to their department chairs and school deans by [reporting their goals annually](#). A standard faculty workload includes teaching, advising, service to Grace beyond teaching and advising, service to the local or civic community, faculty development and scholarship, and spiritual growth and development, all areas used to periodically evaluate the faculty member (see [5.4 Faculty Scholarship and Professional Development](#)). Meeting these requirements is a necessary condition of employment. Faculty who fail to meet expectations will be counseled by the chair, dean, and/or provost and may have an action plan developed that affects funding requests, promotion requests, or contract renewals.

According to the *Part-Time Instructor Handbook*, part-time instructors have [periodic observations](#) from their department chair or dean. Generally, a first-time instructor is observed at

least once in a session and other instructors are observed no less than every four years. Part-time instructors are notified in advance of any formal classroom observation and given an opportunity to provide documents in preparation for the course. A copy of the classroom observation report is filled out and turned in to the department chair and dean of the school. This is only a part of the information used to evaluate the effectiveness of a part-time instructor. The department chair is responsible to provide any suggestions for improvement or changes in the course when that is deemed necessary.

In 2020, Academic Deans approved the [Dual Credit Course Evaluation Rubric](#) as a way for lead faculty on the main campus to evaluate dual credit instructors.

3.C.5

Processes and resources to assure that instructors are current in their discipline and supported in their professional development include faculty development plans, sabbatical leaves, faculty training, and faculty development.

Development Plans

Full-time faculty members are expected to develop [5-year faculty development plans](#). The [faculty development plans](#) should reflect professional and spiritual growth and development that (1) move the faculty member beyond the basic expectations of their teaching role and/or (2) help them better fulfill those expectations.

These goals guide the distribution of faculty development funds. The institution budgets \$1500 per faculty member for the faculty members to complete their development plan. The deans of each school [review](#) the development of the faculty members in their schools. Failure to meet or make progress on these faculty development goals may affect funding requests, promotion requests, or contract renewals. Deans may also require certain aspects of development for faculty members who have poor course evaluations. This development may require that faculty members meet with exceptional educators to learn how to design a course or manage a course.

Sabbatical Leave

To support faculty in their scholarship, research, and teaching, a ranked faculty member may be approved for a [sabbatical leave](#) for no more than a year within a seven-year period. The application for a sabbatical must be approved by the department chair, school dean, and senior administration. Approved sabbaticals should have a substantial component devoted to scholarship and support the mission of the institution and goals of the department. Since 2019, one faculty member's original sabbatical request was not approved but subsequently has been.

Faculty Orientation

Grace provides a [two-day orientation](#) for all new faculty members and an [orientation](#) for all new part-time instructors before the beginning of the school year to build community, meet with department chairs, and identify the resources and policies to support successful teaching, service, and scholarship. Throughout the first year of teaching at Grace, all new faculty members attend a new faculty group with the provost in which they discuss teaching strategies and offer each other support.

Additionally, all online faculty in the School of Professional and Online Education receive training regarding teaching online when they first begin teaching. Before each semester starts, the staff of

[SPOE provides additional, optional training](#) to all faculty members for best practices in online education and use of the learning management system.

Based on their availability, faculty are also included in the [new employee orientation](#) offered throughout the year. This orientation is focused on administrative and support services at Grace.

Faculty Development

Grace has a variety of faculty development approaches. For example, during the 2018-2019 academic year, Grace developed "[communities of practice](#)" for faculty members. These communities of faculty met monthly to discuss educational and technology practices and the implementation of new practices that had impacted their teaching and learning. This model was prompted by faculty members indicating that [development opportunities were not effectively meeting their needs](#). The response was favorable.

Another example during 2021-2022 was organizing faculty development around criterion teams to engage the campus in learning more about the process of accreditation and contributing to the draft Assurance Argument. Through their collection of evidence and identification of challenges, improvements, and gaps in the operations and academics of the institution, they meaningfully contributed in ways that involved a deeper understanding of their own and others' disciplines and the work of staff and auxiliary services.

Additional faculty development includes the financial support Grace may provide to faculty members pursuing terminal degrees. Faculty and staff members may apply for financial assistance, which is then approved by the senior administration according to departmental needs and institutional priorities.

3.C.6

Faculty are expected to be reasonably accessible to students and colleagues throughout the week to assure that teaching, advising, departmental, and other institutional obligations are met.

- Residential faculty members are to post and maintain a minimum of five regular [office hours](#) per week and include these hours in their course syllabi. Beyond regular office hours, faculty are available for two full days of advising throughout the [academic year](#).
- Part-time faculty members are asked to provide their email and phone numbers so that students can contact them regarding questions in the course. In some cases, part-time faculty members will schedule available office hours before or after their classes.
- Online faculty members are expected to provide office hours for students and connect at least once a week with students. Online faculty members are to respond within 24 hours of receiving a student's question or comment.

3.C.7

Student Support Services

Grace employs a well-qualified student support staff and supports their ongoing training and professional development. The [Employee Handbook](#) provides guidelines for all employees' [performance reviews and for improving job performance](#). All employees are required to complete annual, mandatory training related to areas of [safety](#), risk, and community standards. Additional job-specific training may be required for some employees as determined by their supervisors in

consultation with Human Resources. Training for personal or spiritual development or training of interest to individual employees is also available and may be included in an employee's performance review in consultation with supervisors. Mandatory training completion is tracked by the Office of Human Resources and communicated to vice presidents and supervisors. Failure to complete required training may affect performance reviews (i.e., employee and faculty evaluations) and result in corrective action. Employees are expected to attest annually that they have reviewed the institution's [Statement on Community Lifestyle Expectations](#), [Covenant of Faith](#), and the [Employee Handbook](#).

Examples of qualifications and professional development student support services are listed below:

- [Library and Learning Services Qualifications and Professional Development](#)
- [Residential Life Qualifications and Professional Development](#).
- [Financial Aid Staff Qualifications and Professional Development](#)
- [Academic/Career Advising Qualifications and Professional Development](#)

Every two years, Grace administers the *Student Satisfaction Inventory*, a tool designed to improve the quality of student life and learning by measuring student satisfaction and priorities, demonstrating how satisfied students are and what issues are important to them. According to the [2019 results](#), students rated their satisfaction with services at Grace consistently higher than comparison National Four-year Privates regarding campus staff, library staff, health services staff, counseling staff, and registration staff.

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- 22-23 Faculty Workload - Faculty Handbook (Pages 58-61)
- 22-23 Faculty Workload and Contact Hours - Faculty Handbook (Pages 58-60)
- 22-23 Release Time for Administrative Responsibilities - Faculty Handbook (Pages 45-46)
- 23-24 Faculty Rank and Seniority
- 4.3.2 Part-Time Instructors - 22-23 Faculty Handbook (Pages 39-40)
- 5.3.1 Sabbatical Leave - 22-23 Faculty Handbook
- 5.4 Faculty Development - 22-23 Faculty Handbook (Page 66)
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- Library and Learning Services Professional Development
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- New Employee Orientation Schedule 5-18-20
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- Part Time Instructor Handbook 2021-2022
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- Recruiting Process 2021
- Residence Life Qualifications and Professional Development
- Science - Part-time Faculty Credentialing
- SOMS Faculty List with credentials
- SPOE Part-time Faculty Credentialing
- SPOE Policy on Hiring Part-time Bible Faculty
- Support Staff Training
- Visual Performing and Media Arts Part-time Faculty Hiring

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

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

Argument

3.D.1

Throughout students' educational journey, Grace provides relevant student services, support, and resources. Grace communicates and promotes these services through multiple channels such as:

- Recruiting events and campus visits
- Student orientation, student leadership orientation, and [parent orientation](#)
- Student handbooks, such as the [2022-23 Student Handbook](#) and the [2022-2023 Online Student Handbook](#)
- Documentation, such as the seminary's [Deploy student support services](#)
- Academic advisors and faculty, peer, and student mentors
- [Welcome Weekend Schedule](#)
- Flyers and social media
- Publications, such as the [Exhale](#) magazine and the [Apparently](#) parent monthly email
- Weekly announcements, such as the [Lancer Lowdown](#)

In addition to this messaging, information about student services is available on the Grace College website, Grace's student portal, and the Canvas learning management system for coursework.

Student support services, which may be academic, co-curricular, spiritual, or operational, are intended to support and inspire students as they find a community in which to belong that will move them on their spiritual, educational, personal, and professional journey.

[Research](#) shows that students excel in educational environments that are safe and brave for inquiry and reflective learning; relational and communal; culturally engaging; supportive and human; secure, focused, sacred, and creative.

Accordingly, the Department of Student Affairs has adopted the vision of every student "belonging and becoming in community." Additionally, the departments of Student Affairs and Academic Engagement and Success have collaborated with the [Student Success Committee](#) on the creation of a learner-centered framework designed to support and engage students, provide equity-minded

practice, and focus on how increased success will be achieved.

Grace's [strategic framework for student success](#) is organized around factors of student success that are distinctive to and aligned with Grace's mission, informed by student success literature, and reflective of a thriving and successful student at Grace. The student success framework guides Grace's programs, interventions, and assessments.

At Grace, we believe that students who are thriving do so:

- Spiritually: They are challenged and growing in their character and service.
- Socially: They are connected in diverse and meaningful relationships.
- Academically: They are supported and engaged with their learning.
- Vocationally: They are confident in their major, and equipped for their callings.
- Mentally, physically, and emotionally: They are holistically healthy.

Grace, therefore, provides student services and resources suited to all student populations to support their thriving. Examples of student services and resources available to Grace students both as a whole *and* unique to various student populations include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, race, economics, gender, abilities, first generation, athletes, residence, program, modality, and location. They are listed below around the Grace [factors](#) for student success:

Growing Spiritually

- *Chapel*: [Chapel](#) supports students' spiritual development as it reflects a community of faith, grace, and worship. Students join the whole community to learn how Christian faith applies to all areas of their life and to explore unique topics relevant to their own lived experiences. Because Grace is committed to fostering an environment for [life transformation](#), undergraduate students are required to attend chapel three times a week. Every year, Grace chooses a [campus theme](#) to unite the Grace community around a book of the Bible. Grace chapel is available [online](#).
- *Growth Groups*: "[Growth Groups](#)" is a program of Residence Life providing students the opportunity to deepen their relationship with God and others in Grace's campus community. Each traditional residence hall has a staff of Growth Group Leaders (GGLs) who facilitate weekly group meetings for their floor. Additionally, commuter students are provided connection with a regular growth group through Commuter Liaisons. All first-year students are required to attend growth groups, but all students are encouraged to attend.

Valuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- *Council for Diversity and Inclusion* (CDI) creates support and community among underrepresented groups on campus and generates conversation to promote cultural competency and engagement through celebration, connection, and education. All students are invited to participate in student organizations, clubs, community connections, and [affinity groups](#) such as the Black Student Association, Esperanza Latina, International Student Family, Asian Student Heritage, Native American Student Organization, and SHE (see [2021-2022 CDI Campus Events](#)). Additionally, [student life initiatives](#) related to diversity, equity, and inclusion invite the community into conversation for equitable practices and raise awareness for inclusivity.
- *International Student Services*: The Institute of Global Studies provides guidance and information for [international students](#) during the visa interview process, pre-departure,

orientation, and adjusting to life in the United States.

- *Veterans' Lounge*: The [Veterans' Lounge](#) is a place where students can connect and commune with fellow veterans as well as network and share strategies, information, and support as they adjust to a higher education environment.
- (See 1.C.2-3 for new positions connected to DEI factors.)

Purposeful in their Calling

- *Career-Readiness Support*: The [Center for Career Connections](#) (CCC) educates and prepares students for an effective career launch through intentional and collaborative programming and services, enabling students to explore callings and career pathways, engage in career training and preparation, and articulate their unique areas of strength and career competencies. Helpful tools and resources include advising undeclared students, supporting students in preparing a resume and cover letter, informing students about internships, and guiding students with StrengthsQuest and PathwayU Career Assessment.

Engaged in their Learning

- The Morgan Library Learning Center provides services and resources available to all students for academic progress and persistence on and off campus.
- The [Content Tutor program](#) provides individual and group tutoring sessions that are available for all courses and free to all students. Students generally meet with their tutor for one hour/week or for one-time appointments upon student request to review class notes, answer questions, take informal quizzes and seek support with study tips.
- The [writing](#) and [math](#) labs are free services available to all undergraduate and graduate Grace students desiring help with written or math assignments at any stage of the process.
- Upon approval by the Coordinator of Academic Support Services, Peer Academic Facilitators are assigned to students who would benefit from an accountability partner. The Peer Academic Facilitator meets weekly with students regarding their specific needs, time management skills, and areas that relate to academic progress and all aspects of college life.
- The [Office of Student Disabilities Services](#) provides individualized support and accommodations for students' equal access to education at Grace, including students diagnosed with specific learning disabilities as defined by federal guidelines (e.g., attention, health, hearing, learning, mobility, physical, psychiatric, or vision). Since 2019, results in the [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference between 2017 and 2019 student perceptions of Grace's commitment to students with disabilities. Grace's commitment to students with disabilities in 2019 was rated significantly higher (M=5.80) than in 2017 (M=5.37).
- Research support and [library resources](#) are available, such as books, ebooks, and databases that include Academic Search Complete (3,201 journals in a comprehensive scholarly, multi-disciplinary full-text database), Sage Journals (more than 1200 full-text journals), and JSTOR (more than 12 million journal articles, books, and primary sources in 75 disciplines). Additionally, the librarian collaborates with faculty members to provide research support for programs and courses through [Libguides](#).
- *Grace Theological Seminary Support*: Deploy students in the seminary can access [student support services](#) to be equipped for success in their studies and encouraged toward degree completion and long-term competency in their field.
 - Academic and student advising support (i.e., mentors, faculty, academic advising, orientation, student handbook, library services, Logos Bible software, Right Now Media,

- the Learning Center, learning communities, and the learning management system)
- Institutional student support (i.e., Financial Aid, Registrar, Business, and Information Technology offices; Program Support Manager; software support; and seminary administration)
- Placement support (alumni services, Center for Career Connections, and seminary website)
- *School of Professional Online Education Support*: [SPOE Student Resources](#) are described in the *2022-2023 Student Handbook Online Programs* include class access, student portal, Morgan Library, and Academic Support, System Requirements, Grace Gmail, *Student Handbook*, textbooks, pricing, online writing lab, and tutoring.

[Financially](#) and Personally Supported

- *Student Services Hub*: Since the 2019 HLC visit, Grace has implemented the concept of the Student Services Hub, bringing together Student Account Services, Financial Aid, and the Registrar to better serve the academic and financial needs of students. At the Hub, students can [register for classes](#); process [transfer credits](#); discuss and/or make changes to their majors, minors, courses, and schedules; meet with [Financial Aid](#) representatives; establish payment plans, and pay their student bills with Student Account Services.
- *Technology Support*: The Office of Information Technology is available to all students at Grace. Students have access to OIT staff to obtain setup instructions, report problems and seek technical support for all matters related to computers, software, and printers on campus. The School of Professional Online Education provides additional support for questions pertaining to the Learning Management System and online courses (3.D.4).

Mentally, Physically, and Emotionally Healthy

- *Student Counseling Services*: Counseling services are available for stress-related college or personal issues regarding relationships, trauma, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, or academic performance. Counseling services are available in person or virtually and include private counseling sessions with a licensed counselor or group counseling. According to the [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#), students placed counseling services as the second most important category (M=6.45), and perceived counseling staff care about students to have increased from 2017 (M=6.09) to 2019 (M=6.16).
- *Care Intervention Team (CIT)*: The CIT provides proactive care, centralized support, and developmental interventions for any Grace student in need with the goals of maintaining a healthy campus environment, ensuring the success of all learners, and preventing a crisis.
- *Student Health Services*: [Health services](#) are provided for undergraduate students to meet the needs of students who are ill or injured. A registered nurse is available to assist in medical emergencies and with the care of minor illnesses and injuries.
- *Gordon Health and Wellness Center (GHAWC)*: The GHAWC offers the Grace main campus community a full range of services to promote wellness, physical fitness, and physical activity. The [GHAWC](#) includes a fitness room, an aerobics room, the Fieldhouse, an athletic performance room, a golf room, and a full range of services including a certified personal trainer.
- *Campus Safety*: Grace Campus Safety Department provides proactive safety services for students, employees, and visitors on campus through observation, reports, documentation, and action when necessary. Grace campus safety staff are available 24 hours per day, maintain campus security cameras, and have a strong partnership with local law enforcement for Grace

students' safety. See [Annual Security and Fire Safety Report 2022](#) for more detailed information about Campus Safety's service.

- *Dietary Needs:* [Campus Dining](#) offers a wide range of options to address health, dietary, and allergy needs. Grace food services offers seven meal plans. Over the last four years, Grace has granted from 8 to 12 requests for meal plan options addressing specific dietary needs.
- *Medical Housing Requests:* Medical housing is provided to those students who provide documentation to request special condition housing. Medical housing can include a single room or access to a kitchen. Over the past three years, Grace has typically granted 24-40 medical housing requests each semester.

Connected in Meaningful Relationships

- *First-Year Experience:* The First-Year Experience is a comprehensive program to support first-year students in their adjustment to college life. Grace welcomes and connects students as they transition into the Grace community and explore their goals, strengths, and callings. Central components of the program include [orientation/welcome weekend](#), the [Hike](#), interaction with faculty, the student mentor program, [first-year linked courses](#), student involvement, connecting students to campus services, and academic and vocational advising (1.A).
- *Residential Life and Commuter Life Support:* Grace believes in being not only a learning community, but also a living community and seeks to foster a mentally, emotionally, and physically healthy campus culture for residential students to call home. Grace's residence halls each have their own unique culture, providing residential students [housing options](#) according to what suits them best. Residential life [programming](#) is designed for growth, diverse community, restoration, mentoring, and teamwork. Additionally, commuter students enjoy the commuter lounge and social and cultural events designed to connect them.

3.D.2

Admissions Process

Grace has processes for directing entering students to courses and programs for which students are adequately prepared, beginning with the admissions team. Each applicant to Grace is considered upon his or her own merit. Grace is academically selective in admitting students but may use professional judgment in reviewing student applications, enabling greater flexibility for granting acceptance on a case-by-case basis. This is done by reviewing the student's academic ability with other factors that may be provided such as test scores, references, previous curriculum, Christian commitment, and extracurricular activities.

The [Admissions Policy](#) outlines the admissions process and requirements for all traditional [undergraduate](#) students at Grace. Admissions processes and requirements vary for programs within [Graduate & Adult](#), [Seminary](#), [Online](#), [Military Students](#), and the [Akron Program](#).

For example, each of the master's and doctoral programs in the seminary lists their own [admission requirements](#) by program and directs students to [multiple delivery methods](#) according to student needs.

- [Residential](#) - on-campus programs provide in-person classes and experiences with faculty
- [Online](#) - online programs provide accessible, affordable, and cohort-based ministry training
- [Deploy](#) - flexible, competency-based seminary program featuring applied learning and ministry coaching

- [Hybrid](#) - online and on-site
- [Accelerated](#) - bachelor's and master's in four to five years

Candidacy, Pre-requisites, and Placement

Various programs have candidacy requirements, pre-requisites, and/or placement examinations to ensure that students are adequately prepared. Examples include:

- Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Candidacy - Gatekeeping processes that assess student readiness to advance through the CMHC program in the Department of Graduate Counseling include [candidacy](#), a comprehensive exam, and a portfolio.
- Teacher Education candidacy - Candidacy applicants in the School of Education must achieve a grade of B- or higher in SED 1000, a grade of C or higher in all other SED courses, and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher. Students must either pass all sections of the state-approved basic skills test or earn a composite ACT score of 24 or higher or a combined SAT (reading and math) of 1170 or higher. Candidacy applicants must also complete a *Dispositions Assessment* and a *Candidacy Interview* to continue in the School of Education.
- Master of Business Administration assessment - Students who have a baccalaureate degree from outside of the business field are required to demonstrate a basic level of business knowledge through an online assessment process. Any knowledge areas identified as needing enhancement will require additional online study until proficiency is met.
- Worship Arts auditions - Admission to the Grace [Worship Arts Program](#) requires the completion of an [audition](#) either on campus or through video for all applicants to the program.
- Foreign Language Placement Exam (FLPE) - Students with prior language experience who plan to pursue language study (as a B.A. or language major/minor) take the FLPE online before arriving on campus for the purpose of determining placement. The FLPE is a non-credit-bearing exam.
- Writing Placement Assessment - All students take the *Writing Placement Assessment* to be placed into their first writing course as part of their general education curriculum.
- College Physics prerequisites - Students should complete MAT 1120, MAT 1230/40, ACT math score of at least 26, SAT math score of at least 610, passing of department placement exam, or permission of the instructor.

Provisionally Admitted Students

Provisionally admitted students are provided with additional support to maximize their success in college-level courses. Based on their individual circumstances and standardized test scores, students may be enrolled in preparatory or pre-requisite coursework, such as GEN1000: Academic Fundamentals for College and/or ENG1020: Principles of Writing, a foundational college course designed to prepare students for success in ENG1100 Effective Writing. The Academic Support Services Coordinator meets with students while enrolled in GEN1000 and throughout the year to support their success and thriving.

3.D.3

Academic Advising

As described in the [Advising Policy](#), all Grace students receive academic advising and are assigned to an academic advisor within their intended major department. Academic advising of students is

provided by a designated faculty or staff member for each major (undergraduate) or program (non-traditional, graduate, seminary) or by the Director of the Center for Career Connections for undeclared majors. The Registrar also functions in an advisory role to assist students in course planning.

Advising is designed to develop mentoring relationships with students to enable them to continue to develop academically, as well as personally, spiritually, and professionally. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor [at least once per semester](#) to set up [semester schedules](#), develop academic goals, provide career counseling, and assist in other areas related to students' educational and vocational journey. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the advisor to inform advisees of available campus support services.

Faculty advisors utilize advising functions and [forms](#) on the Grace portal along with printed program check sheets maintained by the registrar to assure that students have completed the necessary requirements for their degree. Additionally, the Registrar's Office is responsible for verifying completion of all program requirements (see [Check Sheet Policy](#) and 2022 development of [revised campus-wide check sheets](#) for Core courses for improved advising). [Audits](#) are available online through the portal for students to access at any time. The [advising alteration form](#) provides a way for a student and advisor to modify graduation plans with the approval of the dean and registrar.

Students in the School of Professional and Online Education have assigned program directors and an academic support coordinator who provide advising, direction, and support through the academic journey.

Students in Deploy have weekly contact with the Assistant Director of Deploy to help with registration and administrative concerns and receive formal theological training from an academic mentor as they participate in active service opportunities at their ministry location. Additionally, faculty members initiate contact with each student in their module at least once a week. According to the *2020 Student Experience Inventory*, students report that their advisor provides [helpful and caring assistance](#).

3.D.4

Grace provides effective teaching and learning through its infrastructure, which includes the following:

Learning Management System

Grace adopted the Canvas learning management system (LMS) during the summer of 2022 to support, enrich and connect students' learning and instructors' teaching. The intuitive and engaging nature of Canvas provides academic support for students' learning. The School of Professional and Online Education hosted [6 Canvas conversations](#) during summer 2022 for training, faculty feedback, and personal assistance.

Morgan Library and Information Resources

The Morgan Library and Learning Center empowers the community of Grace Schools to accomplish educational goals by delivering reliable resources and quality services and by teaching critical thinking and lifelong learning skills. Morgan Library provides access to research materials in a variety of formats: print, electronic, video, and audio.

- 624,436 book titles (15.4% print and 84.6% electronic)
- 353 book titles per student based on current college enrollment
- 110 periodicals subscriptions in print and 174,830 periodicals in electronic format
- 121 database subscriptions, including EBSCO Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Atla Religion
- Database with ATLASerials, SAGE Journals, Proquest, Oxford ebooks, Credo Reference

See also [Morgan Library and Learning Center Highlights](#).

Grace provides students guidance on the effective use of research (2.E) and information resources in a variety of ways. In addition to instruction by faculty members, the library staff provides classroom instruction and support as requested by the faculty members. The librarians collaborate with course instructors to develop classes and [research guides](#) (LibGuides) and recommend resources to enhance students' learning experiences.

Technological Infrastructure

The [Information Technology Overview](#) provides a detailed list of technology resources and services available to students and instructors, including campus-wide wireless network, computing resources, classroom technology, network operations, telephone service, software applications, enrollment reporting, and information security.

Examples of upgrades in Grace's campus networks since 2018 include:

- Fiber optic (from 1 to 10-gigabit backbone) in the majority of main-campus buildings (21)
- Campus network in Miller Field locations and dormitory spaces (4) located off the main campus
- Internet connection to Indiana's high-speed higher education network and Internet2 (from 1 to 10 GB)

Educational Infrastructure

To support effective teaching and learning and the expansion of new programs and initiatives, Grace has increased its [classroom and lab space](#) on its main campus over the last decade.

- 2014 - Purchase of William Male Center to house the School of Ministry Studies and the Graduate Counseling program.
- 2017 - Renovation of the basement of the Male Center for the Worship Arts program.
- 2018 - Renovation and expansion of the Cooley Science building to include the Dr. Dane A. Miller Science Complex, math department, and Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams.
- 2018 - Renovation of Gordon Health and Wellness Center to temporarily house science courses and permanently house exercise science and nursing.
- 2018 - Renovation of East Hall for the Engineering program.
- 2022 - Addition of dedicated [rehearsal space](#) in Male Center.

Grace houses the following [educational space](#):

McClain Hall	6 classrooms 1 lecture hall (capacity 350)
Science Center	6 classrooms lecture-style 1 lecture hall (capacity 60) 7 laboratory-style classrooms
Morgan Library	1 classroom
East Hall	2 lecture-style classrooms 1 laboratory-style classroom
Gordon Center	3 lecture-style classrooms 3 laboratory-style classrooms
Mount Memorial	6 classrooms Pottery Studio Art Studio Photography Studio
Male Center	2 classrooms Music performance lab Music practice rooms
Manahan Orthopaedic Capital Center	2 classrooms 1 lecture hall (capacity 120)
Philathea Hall	4 classrooms Theater/classroom (capacity 124)

The growth in enrollment has created a strain on large classroom spaces and Grace has begun to consider creative solutions if enrollment continues to increase.

Laboratories and Performance Spaces

Grace provides scientific laboratories, clinical practice sites, and performance spaces to students and

instructors necessary to support effective teaching and learning as appropriate to Grace's offerings.

Exercise Science Labs

In 2017, two new lab spaces were added to the Gordon Health and Wellness Center for the exercise science program. One lab serves as a space for assessment of [VO2 max](#) (volume of oxygen maximum), body composition, muscular strength, balance, and flexibility. The other lab is a functional training space. This allows students to practice exercise instruction and organize groups for workouts.

Scientific Laboratories

The Dr. Dane A. Miller Science Complex houses new and updated classrooms and laboratories for the Department of Science and [Mathematics](#). [The Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams](#), located in the complex, is dedicated to limnology and science education. The Lilly Center's Learning Lab houses the world's first freshwater virtual aquarium.

Clinical Practice Site

Thanks to a \$150,000 grant from [K21 Health Foundation](#), a local private foundation focused on improving health and wellness for residents, Grace has a [cutting-edge simulation lab](#) for Grace's bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) program in partnership with Bethel College. The nursing lab includes two simulation labs, a monitoring room, and a debriefing room for the nursing program. The simulation mannequins display neurological and physiological symptoms, injecting greater realism into scenario-based training to provide enhanced training for future nurse professionals.

Performance Space and Fine Arts Resources

Grace supports and hosts creative arts professionals, lecturers, artists, [musicians](#), and [actors](#) and sponsors unique cultural and educational experiences. [Mount Memorial Hall Art Gallery](#) hosts institutionally funded exhibitions of regional and national artists as well as senior student and faculty exhibitions in the Visual Performing Arts Program.

Grace also prepares students for the rapidly advancing technology and methods of today's modern worship industry through its Worship Arts program, providing student access to [a cutting-edge recording studio, a fully outfitted performance space, a high-tech MIDI lab and classroom space](#) located in the lower level of the William Male Center and providing opportunities to perform in the community through the [Festival of Music Events](#).

Additionally, sponsored events such as the Department of Humanities' hosting of the [Actors from the London Stage](#) or the Winona Lake Jazz Festival featuring [Grammy-Nominated Thana Alexa](#), have invested in the students and faculty of Grace. Grace's on-campus theater performance space, the Little Theatre in Philathea Hall, has limited capacity, accessibility, and dated technology, though Grace accesses the Winona Heritage Room as a public performance space for larger events.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

Although Grace has strengthened its procedures to make curriculum changes and in doing so aligned those proposals with elements of HLC's change application, creative solutions are still necessary to bring its ratio of programs to full-time faculty into compliance with HLC as well as to align curricular offerings with students' intended majors.

Grace assures that course content, assessment, and oversight align across modalities and locations to achieve consistency and comparable learning experiences for students.

As a result of a program review, Grace constructed a revised Core curriculum that effectively addresses its concerns about the Core's former learning outcomes.

Although Grace remains committed to diversifying its faculty and staff to improve the representation of its mission and student body, and in fact has seen some very nominal growth, it has had difficulty meeting its goals due in part to its location, lack of local and regional diversity, and limited approaches to sourcing candidates.

The sufficiency of Grace's faculty is noted in part by a strong student-to-faculty ratio overall; however, Grace must continue to address its ratio of degree programs to full-time faculty as well as the disparity in class sizes.

Currently, Grace is in the process of faculty hiring and evaluating faculty workload. Growth in Grace's student body has created constraints on its large classroom spaces, another area in which Grace is seeking alternative solutions.

Student success, advising, academic, and support services are holistically provided to meet the needs of Grace's student body.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Argument

4.A.1

Program Reviews

During the 2019 visit, the evidence revealed that Grace's Program Review Schedule needed to be revised, that all Program Reviews were to be completed by the Four Year Comprehensive Review scheduled during Spring 2023, and that 50% of all Program Reviews should be completed within a two-year period, prioritizing those reviews that had not undergone recent program reviews.

Grace College & Seminary has met HLC's concern by revising and publishing the [Program Review Schedule](#), completing 17 out of 35 programs (or nearly 50% of all programs) by 2021, completing the year-to-date remaining program reviews scheduled in 2023, and [publishing](#) completed Program Reviews in the Learning & Assessment Google Site (available on-site or by request) (see [2020 Academic Program Review - Visual and Media Arts Sample](#)). Assessment coordinators completed the Curricular and Co-Curricular Program Reviews according to the [Program Review Policy](#) using the program review templates.

The [Academic Program Review Template](#) includes the following elements:

- Program purpose statement
- Comparability of degree program
- Institutional effectiveness data
- Instructional effectiveness data
- Institutional assessment data
- Program learning outcomes
- Faith integration
- Library support of the curriculum
- SWOT analysis
- Summary, recommendations, and action steps

Programs with specialized accreditation submit self-studies in lieu of program reviews.

The [Co-Curricular Program Review Template](#) includes the following elements:

- Program purpose
- External comparison
- Policy and communication audit
- Staffing and professional development
- Institutional effectiveness
- Program outcomes review
- Annual program assessment review
- Faith integration
- SWOT analysis and strategic planning recommendations

Since the 2019 HLC Comprehensive Visit, Grace has acted upon some of the findings of Program Reviews as summarized in the Strategic Planning Recommendations portion of the [Program Review Recommendations](#). Since 2019, Grace has requested and been approved by HLC for nine new programs, including an Eco Art Major (B.A., B.S.), Eco Art Minor, Public Health Minor, Exercise Science with Fitness and Nutrition Concentration (B.S.), Professional Communication (B.A., B.S.), Sustainable Agriculture (B.S), and Radiology (B.S.) (see [Academic Affairs and Faculty Meeting Minutes](#)).

Further, the process of reviewing programs has resulted in the elimination of the B.A. in Illustration, which was restructured as a concentration of the Visual Communication Design B.A. (see [Academic Affairs and Faculty Meeting Minutes](#)), a new hire (see [Director, School of Arts and Sciences Partnership Programs Job Description](#)), and budget adjustments (Criterion 5). New academic programs also include combined degrees through partnerships Grace established with John Patrick University, Purdue University, and the Lower Cost Models for Independent College Consortium (LCMC) (see [LCMC Consortial Agreement Sample](#)).

In addition to meeting the concerns noted by HLC, Grace identified areas of improvement in the process of evaluating program reviews:

1. Documenting commendations on program strengths and recommendations on areas of growth for each program review. Upon evaluating the program review document, vice presidents and deans complete a “Response from the Dean or VP and Memorandum of Understanding,” which is subsequently submitted to the provost (see [VP/Dean Administrative Response and](#)

[Memorandum of Understanding Template](#) and [VP/Dean Administrative Response - Sample Library/Learning Center](#)).

2. Aligning [degree programs](#) with the catalog, the [2022-2023 Academic Organization](#); Jenzabar, the institution's student information system; and the registrar. As a result, Grace identified a need to re-evaluate academic programs in areas such as nomenclature, concentrations, and oversight of degree programs.
3. Adding a budget line for program review improvements. During fall 2022, the provost and CFO met to discuss the addition of budget funds specifically allocated to program review improvements.

Despite Grace's policy to review all programs within seven years, program reviewers demonstrated a strong commitment to the HLC's request for all program reviews to be completed within a four-year span. In the process, Grace recognized a need to better support program reviewers through the program review process; the [Assessment Committee](#) is soliciting feedback from faculty and staff during 2022-2023 to evaluate the process for reviewing programs and to inquire about ways to provide additional support and assessment training. Presently, support for completing program reviews and PLO assessment has been primarily through work sessions or individualized meetings (4.B), and [training modules](#) and [resources](#) are mostly made available through the Learning & Assessment Google Site (4.B).

4.A.2

Transcription of Credit

According to its [Transfer of Credit Policy](#), the Registrar's Office, the School of Professional and Online Education, and the Academic Affairs Office evaluate transcripts for the purpose of granting credit. Evaluation of transfer credits may be conducted in consultation with a department chair or program director. Students who transfer general education courses to substitute for integrated courses in the [Grace Core](#) must transfer courses from each discipline represented in the integrated course. The registrar and program director evaluate integrated courses for credit on an individual basis. Students with an undergraduate degree from a non-accredited institution who are seeking admission to an adult-degree completion, graduate, or seminary program are evaluated by the program director in consultation with the chair and the dean according to the [Non-Accredited Institutions Policy](#). Other forms of prior learning that Grace evaluates for credit include the [International Baccalaureate](#), [Advanced Placement](#), and [CLEP](#) exams that meet levels of proficiency as indicated through their respective scores.

Specific departmental transfer credit policies are included in the academic catalog, including [Foreign Transfer Credits](#), [Department of Graduate Counseling CMHC Transfer Credit Policy](#), [Grace Theological Seminary](#), and [Associate of Science in Liberal Arts](#).

4.A.3

Transfer Credit Policies

Grace evaluates all the credits that it transcripts, and its standards and processes for evaluating transfer credits follow the [Transfer of Credit Policy](#) and procedures for [traditional transcript evaluation](#) and [unofficial transcript evaluation](#). In most programs offered at Grace, 50% of the courses needed to complete a degree granted by Grace are required through Grace, though there is no limit to the number of credit hours eligible for transfer to Grace from schools accredited by agencies

recognized by the Council for Higher Education Association (CHEA) or the Department of Education (DOE). Transfer credits from non-accredited institutions must be approved by the School Dean and follow the standards outlined in the [Non-Accredited Institutions Policy](#).

The policy for [Credit by Substitution, Exam, or Experience](#) outlines how degree-completion students can earn credit for prior learning experiences. Students who enroll at Grace with professional certifications earn one credit for every twenty hours of instruction for the certificate. Students can also earn prior learning credit by completing a portfolio of their work and having it evaluated by the Dean of the School for Professional and Online Education and the Academic Support Coordinator. Students requesting a substitution for credits needed to fulfill their degree requirements at Grace must first obtain approval from the institution. Individual graduate programs and the seminary may have specific policies related to the substitution of credit in their catalogs.

4.A.4

Academic Authority and Academic Rigor

Faculty members play an important role in the development and oversight of the institution's curriculum and are integral to ensuring the quality of education offered at Grace. The *Faculty Handbook* describes [faculty qualifications](#), [standard workload and teaching](#), and [expectations for employment](#).

Faculty appointees must have achieved [a high level of competency in their fields of specialization](#) and must [possess an advanced degree](#) in the field of instruction for which they are appointed. Expectations for [faculty development and scholarship](#) ensure ongoing, active, and relevant improvement of faculty expertise to better fulfill their role.

The [authority granted to the faculty](#) of Grace includes the adoption, revision, and [requirements](#) of curricula; requirements for admission, retention, and graduation of students; policies regarding advanced standing and honors programs; approval of the granting of honorary degrees, and recommendations to the Board of Trustees of those who have met requirements for degrees, diplomas, and certificates. [Faculty members vote in committees and as full faculty](#) on issues related to the proposal, revision, elimination, structure, and content of the curriculum related to degree programs and general education. Faculty advisors assure completion or prerequisites to ensure the curriculum sequence is followed. See Criterion 3.A.2 regarding the process and [policy](#) for the creation and revision of curricula.

Grace provides three types of high school dual credit programs. In two of the programs, high school students are enrolled in courses with other residential and online college students. High school students in the [Jump Start](#) program attend courses with the residential students at the Winona Lake campus. High school students can also complete an [A.S. in Liberal Arts](#) through current residential and online programs. Moreover, Grace partners with high schools to offer [dual credits](#) to students enrolled in Grace's [Dual Credit Program](#) based on the availability of qualified instructors (see [Dual Credit Information Sheet](#)). Courses in the Dual Credit Program are designed by ranked faculty to ensure the learning outcomes and course rigor are met, and they are [observed](#) and [evaluated](#) by faculty of record in the degree program. The [articulation agreements](#) ensure that dual credit courses offered in partner schools are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to the college curriculum. Instructors in high schools must meet [faculty qualifications](#) for teaching the course. The Academic Support Specialist in the School of Professional and Online Education oversees compliance with the articulation agreements.

Grace maintains and exercises authority over access to learning resources at its Winona Lake, IN, and Akron, OH locations as well as online courses.

The institution's library has [extensive online resources](#) designed to empower the learning community to accomplish educational goals by delivering reliable resources and quality services and by teaching critical thinking and lifelong learning skills. All students have access to learning resources needed for degree completion. Online students can also access Learning Center resources through e-mail and video conferencing. As members of the Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI), Grace students have access to resources held within other libraries in PALNI. According to the [Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction 2019 Inventory](#), students are satisfied with the library resources and services available (6.04 on a 7-point scale) and find the library staff helpful and approachable (6.24 on a 7-point scale), which represents a 0.03 increase since 2017.

4.A.5

Specialized Accreditation

Grace maintains the following specialized accreditations:

1. Graduate Counseling: Grace's MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling was approved in 2021 for an accreditation extension through March 31, 2029, from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs ([CACREP](#)).
2. Grace Theological Seminary: Grace's MDiv, MA in Chaplaincy, MA in Intercultural Studies, MA in Local Church Ministry, MA in Ministry Studies, DMin, and Doctor of Intercultural Studies are accredited by the [Association of Theological Schools \(ATS\)](#). Grace is a member in "good standing" with an upcoming comprehensive visit scheduled in Spring 2025. In June 2022, Grace received ongoing exception status to the five-year experiment approved in 2017 to offer the complete MDiv and MA in Local Church Ministry programs "using a non-residential, competency-based model of theological education (called [Deploy](#))."
3. Teacher Education: The School of Education was originally accredited by the [National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education](#) (NCATE) and received a recommendation for accreditation with no Areas for Improvement (AIFs) from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) during the Spring 2022 CAEP comprehensive visit. The CAEP Council reviewed the [site visit report](#) and [granted accreditation](#) at the initial-licensure level in October 2022. Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) at Grace are also accredited at an initial level by the [Indiana Department of Education](#). Specific teaching degree programs are recognized by the corresponding Specialized Professional Association (SPA) (e.g., special education, math education, social studies education, English education, and foreign language education) and the Indiana Department of Education (e.g., elementary education, business education, and life science education). Grace is also accredited by [ACSI](#).
4. Engineering program: The program started in Fall 2018 and aligned its [outcomes and processes to pursue accreditation](#) with the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). The Engineering program is a newly accredited program with [accreditation action](#) extending from October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2024.
5. School of Business: Currently in Candidacy Status with [ACBSP](#), the School of Business programs were previously accredited by [IACBE](#). The School of Business plans to submit an ACBSP report during 2022-2023.

4.A.6

Institutionally, Grace evaluates the success of its graduates through NACE's [First Destinations Survey](#), a post-graduation survey that captures information regarding how new college graduates fare in their careers within six months of graduation. Results on employment and graduate school rates are disaggregated by school and presented to all faculty annually ([2018](#), [2019](#), [2020](#), [2021](#)).

Another institutional measurement to evaluate alumni's success in work and life is the [Gallup Alumni Survey](#), which explores graduates' perceptions of their college experience and their attachment to their college after graduation.

Of the critical college experiences that Gallup identifies as contributing to engagement at work, 58% strongly agree that their professors cared about them as a person, 76% had at least one professor that made them excited about learning, and 28% had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams. In reflection on their educational decisions, 80% indicate that they are extremely satisfied or satisfied with the education they received from Grace.

Academic departments conduct discipline-specific direct and indirect measures of graduate success. Examples of current and graduate student success include:

- School of Education - the Indiana Department of Education Completer Satisfaction Ratings (CSR) [graduates](#) survey and the Employer Satisfaction Ratings (ESR) [principal's](#) survey for graduates' 1st to 3rd year as a teacher. The state provides Teacher Effectiveness Ratings, also measured through the Professional Teacher Work Sample.
- School of Business - a one-year-out graduate [survey](#) for program-level improvements.
- Graduate Counseling - Yearly tracking of graduates' [licensure rates](#).
- School of Ministry Studies - self-reported annual alumni survey
- Engineering - The 2021 engineering graduates boasted a [100% first-time pass rate](#) on the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) Mechanical exam on their first try.
- Accounting - Accountant (CPA) [pass rates are the highest-ranking](#) of all Hoosier institutions in the "first-time, small program" category. The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) report evaluated the 2019 pass rates of 239 institutions nationwide. Grace ranked first in Indiana and 26th overall.
- Mathematics - [Success stories of four exceptional Grace graduates](#) (i.e., entrepreneur of a no-code tool for data science company, intellectual property attorney, senior research analyst, and data analyst).
- Nursing - The 2022 graduates of Bethel University's School of Nursing at Grace College secured a 100% NCLEX pass rate, surpassing the national average pass rate by 14%.
- School of Arts & Sciences - An alumna from the communication department became vice president and partner of a marketing business within a few years of graduation. See [Goshen News](#); an alumna from the communication department received a [doctoral scholarship](#) and [co-authored a book](#) with faculty.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Argument

4.B.1

Grace College & Seminary has demonstrated a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through the ongoing assessment of student learning by reevaluating the *process* and *practice* for conducting educational effectiveness assessment (see summary document of [Assessment of Student Learning at Grace College](#)).

Evidence for improvement of processes and practices includes the revision of templates for reporting annual PLO assessment (see [Program Learning Outcomes - PLO - Documents](#)) during fall 2019. Furthermore, the Accreditation Liaison Officer created a [Learning & Assessment Google Site](#) during spring 2020 and the Assessment Committee adopted the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) [Transparency Framework](#) during the spring of 2020 (see [04-20-2020 Assessment Committee Meeting Minutes](#)).

Grace's two primary processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of its academic and cocurricular goals are its *Annual Assessment* and *Program Review*. Grace's failure to consistently follow an established assessment process and review cycle was addressed in 4.A.

Annual Assessment

To improve processes for the annual assessment of student learning since the 2019 HLC comprehensive visit, Grace's Learning & Assessment Google Site has become the repository for documenting the improvement of student learning. The documents that are part of annual assessment reporting include [Curricular PLO Plans](#) and [Reports](#) as well as [Co-Curricular PLO Plans](#) and [Reports](#).

The template of the PLO *Plans* includes program learning outcomes, assessment methods, performance targets, implementation schedule, and curriculum mapping. PLO *Reports* include PLOs, assessment methods, performance targets, improvements, and a narrative summary in response to questions regarding implementation (see English Dept. samples of [2020-2021 Program Learning Outcomes Plan](#) and [2020-2021 Program Learning Outcomes Report](#)).

Note: Instructions for reporting were adapted during COVID. Whereas assessment

coordinators are instructed to report a third of their program learning outcomes annually on a three-year rotation, they were given the option to report on a minimum of ONE program learning outcome during 2019-2020 (see [End of Year Assessment Email Update](#)).

Program Review

Although Grace had not been consistently conducting program reviews, it was in the initial stages of implementing program reviews as established by Grace's policy. This included the comprehensive program review of the Grace Core, which started in 2017, spanned 2018, and was completed in January 2019.

Subsequently, as a result of its 2018 program review, the Core Committee conducted an assessment of the Core Program Learning Outcomes later that fall. The [assessment of Core Program Learning Outcomes](#) in the Program Review uncovered in part that outcomes were not consistently measurable.

Hence, the first recommendation of Grace's 2019 Core Program Review was "1. to increase coherence of a distinctive, engaging, and missional Christian liberal arts education core curriculum by aligning student learning outcomes with Grace mission and values, national standards for twentieth-century liberal learning, and career readiness." The action step was to "reframe and revise core outcomes to align with the mission, AAC&U LEAP outcomes and NACE career readiness competencies" (see 2019 [Core Program Review](#)).

See 3.B.1 for revised core purpose, description, and 3.B.2 for mapping and a sample assessment of the revised Grace Core ([2020-2021 Grace Core Program Learning Outcomes Assessment](#)).

Though elaborate and comprehensive mapping was part of the former Core curriculum [approved in 2009](#), the evidence provided in the Reaffirmation Review 2019 Final Report was neither complete nor explicit. Examples of this extensive mapping of the 2009 Core curriculum included the following:

1. Mapping Core outcomes to college-wide goals of strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service, (see [Core Mapping to Institutional Goals - Character, Competence, and Service](#))
2. Mapping Core courses to Core Outcomes and Core Relational Framework (see [Grace Core Course Mapping REVISED 06-29-2018](#))
3. Mapping Core course assignments to Core Outcomes (see [Mapping Core Assignments - SCI2000 Science Matters Sample](#)).

The need for a more comprehensive curriculum mapping exercise that clearly articulated the connection between college-wide learning, Grace Core outcomes, and programmatic learning outcomes became areas of focus in the HLC Reaffirmation Review Final Report (April 24, 2019), resulting in [an Action with Interim Monitoring](#). (See [Monitoring Report and Staff Analysis Letter dated December 16, 2021](#)).

Additionally, since the 2019 HLC Comprehensive Visit, Grace has included curriculum mapping as one of the required components of the [Curricular PLO Plans](#) for all academic degree programs included in the annual program's assessment. The curriculum mapping exercise includes determining how the sequencing of courses leads students to achieve the desired program learning outcomes. Assessment coordinators responsible for overseeing assessment indicate courses in which concepts from PLOs are introduced, where students complete a formative assessment that allows them to

receive feedback on areas of needed growth, and when students achieve intended program/departmental knowledge, skills, and/or disposition through a summative assessment (see [Mapping Portion of PLO Plan Template](#)).

Program Learning Outcomes Audit

In 2019, HLC found that program learning outcomes needed to be strengthened and asked that an audit of all programmatic outcomes be completed to ensure measurability, alignment with mission, and adherence to best practices.

Since the 2019 HLC Comprehensive Visit, the Assessment Committee conducted a PLO audit of all its curricular and co-curricular program learning outcomes. On February 1, March 1, and April 5, 2021, the Assessment Committee evaluated PLOs according to SMART criteria, identifying whether PLOs were specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and targeted (see [PLO Audit Sample](#)). Each program learning outcome was evaluated by two committee members according to criteria as defined below.

A SMART PLO was defined in the following way:

- contains a **specific** and single action verb that clearly demonstrates what the learner will know, do, or feel.
- specifies **measurable** and observable cognitive, affective, or behavioral learning experiences.
- is academically **attainable** and realistic to the level of the degree program.
- is **relevant** to and aligns with the degree, program type, and mission of the institution.
- is **targeted** to the student.

Following the audit, committee members met with assessment coordinators to provide feedback in the context of school meetings, departmental meetings, assessment meetings, or one-on-one meetings (see [04-12-2021 School of Ministry Studies Meeting Minutes - Sample](#)).

4.B.2

Assessment of Student Learning

An area of focus in the 2019 HLC Reaffirmation Review Final Report revealed the need “to present evidence indicating how the assessment of student learning outcomes is used to improve student learning, including allocation of appropriate resources.”

Since the 2019 HLC Comprehensive visit, Grace has met HLC’s concern in reporting how the assessment of student learning outcomes is used to improve learning as evidenced through the [Program Learning Outcomes annual assessment of PLOs](#). To strengthen the assessment, a narrative portion was added to the PLO Report Template in 2019 that includes questions concerning improvements. Six of the nine narrative questions focus on improving student learning and the allocation of resources.

1. List improvements/actions derived from PLO Assessment.
2. What other information do you need so that you can develop a plan of action for improvement?
3. Are there areas of improvement that will require funding not currently available in your budget? If so, please explain the need and estimate of the cost to make the necessary

improvements.

4. Are there any improvements that are not reflected in your assessment plan results but were made during the assessment process? Please describe.
5. If applicable, list the costs of the assessment activities incurred by the program/department/school.
6. What is the status of proposed changes/plans in last year's Outcomes Assessment Report? Were changes/improvements initiated or completed? What have you observed about the changes you made?

See examples of evidence for improvements through the allocation of resources reported in the 2020-2021 PLO annual assessment (see [2020-2021 PLO Reports Summary of Recommended Improvements](#)).

See examples of financial reports for the budget allocation by major areas ([athletics](#), [Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams](#), [seminary](#)).

4.B.3

Grace is committed to the continuous improvement of curricular and co-curricular programs for student learning, engagement, and student success. Processes and practices for assessing student learning and engagement are informed by [institutional mission](#) and values, college student population, best practices, and institutional and programmatic accreditation requirements.

[Assessment at Grace](#) is structured around the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) [Transparency Framework](#). The NILOA Transparency Framework was developed to help institutions conduct educational effectiveness assessments and organize and present information about student learning to various constituencies on and off campus. The Assessment Committee [adopted](#) the NILOA Transparency Framework in 2020 to inform Grace's assessment cycle, processes, and practices.

For example, annual [Program Learning Outcomes](#) assessments and the [Program Review process](#) demonstrate that Grace is meeting excellent educational standards (Criterion 3). Schools, departments, and programs conduct assessments to give evidence that stated learning outcomes are being met. Effective assessment systems and strategies undergird a philosophy of continuous improvement and academic excellence in the Grace learning community. Assessment of student learning and focusing on persistence and completion are ways in which the institution improves and, thus, assures the quality of its teaching and learning.

Best practice also suggests academic schools use a variety of methods to assess student learning and overall program effectiveness. Grace uses [direct evaluation and indirect feedback](#); formative and summative artifacts; and [surveys of faculty](#), entering students, [ongoing students](#), [graduating students](#), and alumni.

The [assessment committee's role](#) is significant in providing leadership for [developing and implementing assessment processes](#). The responsibility of the committee, which is composed of representatives from each academic school, the library, and student affairs, is the oversight of [academic](#) and [co-curricular](#) assessment practices, as outlined in the faculty handbook (see [sample Assessment Committee minutes](#)).

Though Grace has made significant progress in developing assessment processes and methodologies

that reflect good practice, the institution is still growing to meaningfully embed assessment practices within the system for a “shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education” (AAHE Bulletin, November 1995, p. 7).

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

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

Argument

4.C.1, 4

Grace College & Theological Seminary is committed to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates.

Persistence, retention, and completion are defined at Grace in accordance with HLC's [Student Success Glossary of Terms](#) and have the following calculations and goals:

- **Persistence** - Grace is committed to student thriving ([Schreiner, 2010](#)) and the advancement of holistic student success through [equity, quality, and completion](#). In 2020, the [Student Success Committee](#) began a process to define student success around eight student success factors (i.e., growing spiritually; valuing diversity; equity and inclusion; purposeful in their callings; engaged in their learning; financially and personally supported; healthy - holistic well-being; connected in meaningful relationships; and equipped with knowledge, skills, and experience) and to develop a [strategic framework](#) including practices, programs, interventions, policies, assessment methods, theological foundations, and theoretical bases. Additionally, during spring 2022, Grace worked with a consulting firm (CLA) to develop a predictive and analytic tool (i.e., app called the Early Warning indicator [EWI]) designed to identify students most at risk of not persisting. The registrar monitors students' academic progress as outlined in the [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#) policy.
- **Completion (rate)** - Grace's completion rates are calculated according to IPEDS and utilize six-year rates as performance indicators (or 150% of degree program length). Grace's completion target is [70% six-year graduation rate](#). Of the most recent freshman cohorts (starting in 2012), two out of four cohorts have exceeded the target:
 - 2012: 69.6%
 - 2013: 70.5%
 - 2014: 68.5%

- 2015: 70.1%
- **Retention (rate)** - Grace tracks retention in two ways:
 - Billing cohort retention (for budgeting and tracking all students)
 - First-time, full-time (FTFT) student cohort retention (standardized national reporting that does not account for transfer students).

The retention rate target is established by comparing the past 1-2 years of actual retention-rate data by each billing cohort and by establishing a target that aligns closely with the actual retention rates. For comparison purposes, Grace tracks disaggregated retention numbers by FTFT cohort rates, first to second year.

For overall fall-to-fall retention of [first-time, full-time students](#), Grace has established a [78% target](#) for freshman to sophomore retention rates. [Over the past five years](#), Grace has exceeded this goal three times:

- 2017: 84.2%
- 2018: 84.3%
- 2021: 80.6%

Grace has begun to rebound from the “pandemic dip” in retention it experienced in 2019-2020. The following shows the fall-to-fall retention for each cohort from fall 2021 to fall 2022.

BILLING COHORT RETENTION TO BUDGET	Fall 21 Census	Fall 22 Census	Retention Rate	Budgeted Census	Budgeted Rate	Variance to Budget
2122 Cohort	469	376	80.2%	366	78%	2.17%
2021 Cohort	349	290	83.1%	286	82%	1.09%
1920 Cohort *	262	163	62.2%*	155	59%	3.21%
Totals/Average	1080	829	76.8%**	800	74%	2.7%

*Most of the students leaving from the 1920 cohort left via graduation.

**The total retention of 76% accounts for all students leaving either through withdrawal or completion of their academic program.

Grace’s FTFT First to Second Year Retention rate improved by 3.2% during 2022-2023, but still fell 1.4% short of Grace’s 5-year average and goal of 80% (see [chart](#)).

In addition to these institutional targets, academic or co-curricular areas may also have retention and completion goals. The 2021 Strategic Plan included a retention goal for [student affairs and athletics](#) to attain pre-pandemic retention (>80%) and graduation (>68%) by Fall 2022.

Additionally, the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) focus of the strategic plan has disaggregated retention goals to increase the first-to-second-year retention rates of Black, Latinx, and First-Gen students annually by 2.5% over the pre-pandemic 5-year averages and increase graduation rates of Black, Latinx, and First-Gen students by 5% over the 5-year average by 2024.

The Strategic Plan Team formerly and regularly [reported](#) to the Cabinet on progress toward that goal and presently reports to the President's Strategic Council.

4.C.2

All data used to calculate completion and retention rates come from the Office of Information Technology (OIT). Following the census date of cohort retention, OIT provides by semester a [Cohort Retention Report](#) disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, generation status, and athletic involvement.

OIT also shares and publishes IPEDS data disaggregated by subgroups on retention and completion in the [Fact Book](#) located on the Grace portal (e.g., Fast Facts, Enrollments by School, Ethnic Diversity of Traditional Undergrads, etc.).

Internal stakeholders (e.g., board, cabinet, academic deans, student affairs directors, academic program directors, Retention Task Force, Student Success Committee) conduct thoughtful analysis of data on student retention, persistence, and completion.

Examples include:

- The [Student Success Committee](#) analyzes student data and took action by participating in “care calls” during COVID.
- The CFO prepares a [three-year cash budget forecast](#) that includes targeted retention rates for each class in order to achieve Grace's budget goal. These were [presented](#) to the Board of Trustees during the 2022 Spring Board Meeting (slides 12-13).
- The Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA) [analyzes](#) the *Cohort Retention Report* and regularly provides updates to the [Cabinet](#).
- The Director of the Center for Career Connections presents results of the First Destination survey in faculty meetings (see [Spring 2022 Faculty Meeting](#)).
- The VPSA regularly provides [written updates](#) to the Student Affairs Commission and full board. During its spring 2022 meeting, the VPSA was invited to give a [comprehensive report](#) on student success and retention initiatives to the full board.
- The VPSA regularly reports to the [Student Affairs staff](#), who use data to track retention by group year-to-year.
- During the spring of 2022, the CFO and VPSA developed a [week-to-week retention report](#) with updates on retention reported by billing cohort and disaggregated by subgroups. Data is presented regularly to the Cabinet and the Academic Deans.
- Completion data [by major](#) are provided to program faculty for the institutional effectiveness portion of their program reviews. Though Grace does not track completion within the specific major, the data reflect the degree conferred by cohort within each major. Grace promotes retention by advising students in the selection of their degree program and supporting them in their vocational journey through academic means (e.g., [Freshman Foundations and their “calling”](#)) and through co-curricular means (e.g., the [Center for Career Connections resources and programming](#)).
- A Retention Task Force meets bi-weekly to analyze data and consider general and specific

actions to improve student persistence.

4.C.3

Departments utilize data on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make data-informed decisions for action to improve educational quality and student success.

In 2018, the Retention Committee requested more [focused tracking of specific student populations](#) (i.e., ethnic, first generation, provisional acceptance, commuter). In 2020-2021, Hispanic retention was just over Grace's 5-year average at 65.5 (5-year avg = 64%), but over 10% lower than the average for all students. Accordingly, a staff member working in Latino community relations and recruitment was reassigned during summer of 2021 to student affairs to invest in retention and the improvement of the student experience for Hispanic students. Additionally, first-generation student retention was down significantly at 67.1% (5-year avg = 75%). The Director of Student Involvement spearheaded efforts to better serve and connect first-generation and transfer students by hiring student liaisons to assist in these programs.

During 2019-2020, Grace's overall retention went down significantly. The pandemic was undoubtedly a factor; however, the Fall to Spring retention for this class was down 3%, demonstrating a downward trend prior to COVID-19. Yet, the hire of an Associate Dean of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity corresponded with a 40% increase in the retention of Black students (from 69% in 2018-2019 to 100% in 2019-2020).

During 2021-2022, Grace established an [agreement](#) with CLA, a data analytics company to develop a predictive model of student retention through an app called the Early Warning Indicator (EWI). The EWI provides a prediction score to help identify students at risk of dropping out and, for budgeting purposes, better predict retention rates for each student based on student demographics (i.e., distance from campus, race and ethnicity, housing status, first generation) and student engagement (i.e., housing status, campus employment, athletics, GPA, and hours enrolled). This software also helps Grace estimate the value of certain interventions based on net tuition and auxiliary revenue.

Data collected by the Retention Task Force have led to interventions such as outreach emails to students, [care calls](#) to students on business holds, and additional financial aid assistance. In the 2021-2022 academic year, the Retention Task Force made decisions about [HEERF grant applications](#) from students with financial needs due to COVID-19. Financial aid and student affairs collaborate when staff identifies a student at risk of departure. They review the student's financial aid package and alert the academic advisor and hall director.

One of the improvements that Grace made using information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs was to create the new position of the Director of Student Success and FYE in August of 2022. The Director of Student Success and First Year Experience is responsible to provide holistic and culturally responsive support to students, to oversee the First Year Experience, to facilitate guided pathways to students' postsecondary credentials and careers, and to collaborate across campus for policy and procedural improvements toward equitable student outcomes. Essential responsibilities include holistic student support, the oversight of the First Year Experience, and student success policy and processes.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

Grace has worked extensively to address HLC's concerns about its practice of consistent program review and met those concerns in various ways including revising its review schedule, conducting the required reviews, and publishing those reviews on its Google site. Templates for academic and for co-curricular program reviews guided the completion of the reviews to ensure all the necessary elements were considered.

In addition to completing its program reviews, Grace has acted upon findings, including those related to new and eliminated curricula, hiring, budget adjustments, and resource allocation.

Further, Grace identified areas of improvement in the annual assessment process, the program review process, support for program reviewers, and assessment training.

Grace faculty maintain academic authority over the curriculum, rigor, program delivery, and access to learning resources.

Grace uses evaluation, such as specialized accreditation and destination and other surveys, to determine program quality and student success.

As a result of program reviews, various academic programs saw improvements, and the Grace Core was revised to increase the coherence of the curriculum and align learning outcomes with Grace's mission, national standards, and career readiness. Assessment coordinators now ensure curriculum mapping occurs and that concepts from PLOs are included.

Grace responded to HLC's concern that PLOs needed to be strengthened by conducting an audit of all programmatic outcomes to ensure measurability, alignment with the mission, and adherence to best practices.

Grace continues to work toward meaningfully embedding assessment practices within a system and culture of institutional improvement.

Aspects of institutional improvement and use of data and evidence-driven decisions are now more readily incorporated into Grace's operations through the use of tools, methodologies, and reports shared among departments. Specifically, Grace has committed to more formalized practices to understand student retention, persistence, and completion.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Argument

Grace College & Seminary's practice of shared governance is evidenced by the broad participation and input from members of its campus community regarding policy, planning, and procedures as they relate to its operations, academics, and mission. Much of this input is through the committee structure but also occurs through natural work groups.

Directors, deans, and other staff help administrators with the everyday operations of the institution. Within the [educational structure](#), deans oversee their respective schools and often delegate responsibility to department chairs and program directors (3.C). Faculty and school leadership develop curricular changes and school-specific policies. The Dean of the Grace Core provides overall leadership to the Core Committee and the Core lead faculty.

5.A.1, 3

Shared Governance

The governing board protects the institution's mission, ensures it has adequate financial resources to operate, possesses final decision-making authority, and delegates management of the institution to administration and faculty (2.C.5). The board considers the priorities of its internal constituents to preserve and protect the institution (2.C.2), and it reviews the interests of its internal constituents when making decisions in the best interest of the institution (2.C.3). A member of senior administration is the staff representative on each of the board's commissions (2.C.3). Board members also served on the [Strategy Task Force](#) with faculty and staff (2.A.1).

The administration ensures the effective operations of Grace's core enterprise – higher education – by

assuring the implementation of policies set by the board, identifying best academic practices, and facilitating effective communication between all members of the campus community. The [purpose of cabinet](#), the highest level of administration, is to collaborate, make decisions, and take action on key institutional objectives through mutual accountability and a clear understanding of what is happening across the organization to ensure mission alignment. Guests are invited to cabinet meetings to provide input and to aid in cabinet decision-making (e.g., campus nurse, facilities, HR, work/life balance committee, athletics).

With the appointment of a new president in July 2022, the cabinet was restructured, and the institution returned to a [provost model](#) after having had a VP of academic affairs for several years. The following senior leaders now serve on the cabinet:

1. Dean of the School of Ministry (liaison to seminary board commission)
2. Executive Director of Advancement Operations
3. President
4. Provost (liaison to college academic affairs board commission)
5. Vice President and Dean of Students (liaison to student, athletic, and enrollment board commission)
6. Vice President of Administration and Compliance (liaison to risk and compliance board commission)
7. Vice President of Financial Affairs (liaison to financial affairs board commission)

Policies requiring board approval are usually presented first to the executive committee or a board commission by the senior administrator to request subsequent approval by the full board (e.g., guidelines for approving faculty emeritus).

Faculty members are responsible for the academic affairs of the institution (2.C.5), which includes the adoption and revision of curricula; requirements for admission, retention, and graduation of students; policies regarding advanced standing and honors programs; and approval of the granting of honorary degrees.

With this authority, faculty members vote either in committees or as full faculty on issues related to the proposal, revision, elimination, structure, and content of the curriculum related to both the liberal arts and those within particular majors and minors. Faculty also vote for faculty representation on some institutional committees, to approve the [Academic Policy Manual](#), and designated portions of the [Faculty Handbook](#) if the changes directly affect the work life of the faculty members. Staff with faculty status, such as the librarians and the registrar, are voting members of the faculty.

Faculty provide input into administrative decisions such as faculty compensation, workload, and general faculty policies in the [Faculty Handbook](#); financial decisions, such as those related to new or existing degree programs; and faculty organization, such as committees and the school structure.

Shared governance also involves active participation by faculty on regular and ad hoc committees (3.C.2). The composition of committees sometimes necessitates assignment of faculty to more than one committee because of a faculty member's position or area of expertise. Of note is the [Committee on Faculty](#), which is responsible for addressing the views of the faculty as a whole by providing feedback and consultation to the administration on [matters of importance](#) to both faculty and institutional standards.

Faculty, particularly deans and department chairs, have a significant role in budgeting (5.B.3) and

[strategic planning](#), and their distinct qualifications enable them to use their decision-making authority to evaluate the competence of their peers ([Faculty Promotion Committee](#)) and ethical research practice ([IRB](#)). They actively participate on search committees, including those for positions outside academia that require faculty collaboration and understanding of curriculum and contribute to departmental standards and policies associated with hiring faculty.

Administrative policies (e.g., [Program Review Policy](#) and [Copyright Infringement](#)) do not all need faculty approval but depending on the nature of the policy and the degree to which it impacts faculty, their input and comments are typically sought. The updated [Intellectual Property Policy](#) had feedback from numerous deans and faculty members. Policies unique to the work of a faculty member, however, are typically reviewed and approved by faculty (e.g., rolling contracts) or done so in close consultation with the administration (e.g., workload determination).

Substantial changes to HR policies affecting all employees are generally presented to the senior administration for review and approval (e.g., PTO, FMLA, and short-term disability policies; health care plan changes). The Chief Human Resources Officer generally makes more minor changes after consulting with his VP. Similarly, significant changes to student affairs, campus safety, business office or other area policies may be presented to the cabinet for input and approval. Minor revisions can be implemented following consultation between the office staff, director, and/or VP. New and revised policies have input from offices affected by the policy (e.g., new [security camera](#) policy) and may be brought to the cabinet for approval depending on the policy's purpose and scope.

The Retention Task Force composed primarily of staff and student affairs professionals initially convened to award [HEERF grant money](#), but now meets with a new objective to use data points to identify and intervene with students at high risk [of withdrawing](#).

The former cross-functional [President's Advisory Council](#), composed of directors and other campus leaders, addressed [topics](#) of importance to the campus (e.g., health care, COVID and remote work, employee survey and culture, revised employee performance evaluations, employee recognition, diversity, religious exemptions, presidential search updates, strategic plan, budget and master plan). Recognizing the opportunity to clarify the role and responsibilities of the PAC, the new president restructured this cross-functional group as the [President's Strategy Council](#) beginning fall 2022 to focus on efficiency, collaboration, decision-making, strategic plan implementation, and sharing institutional data. Cross-functional groups have also participated in the [strategic planning process](#), campus master planning, the development of institutional [values](#) and [policies](#), and [HLC lead team](#) and [criterion groups](#).

The institution formed the cross-functional [Aspire Task Force](#) in 2018 and resumed this in [2019](#) to develop cost-saving and revenue-generating recommendations, most of which were implemented (5.C.3).

Other cross-functional groups, the [Campus Preparedness Teams](#), met to prepare for the return to campus following the 2020 COVID shutdown and later for [scenario planning](#) for any resurgence in 2021. The initial group also included the student body president who was assigned to the sub-committee drafting the campus commitment/pledge.

Students have contributed to the operations of the institution in meaningful ways such as representation on the [Dining Committee](#) where it provided data to the committee through two food surveys co-authored by students. Concerns from students led to changes in the [Creative Arts and Culture](#) curriculum, and facility accessibility in accordance with ADA compliance. At least one

member from each varsity sport serves on the [Council for Student-Athletes](#) to promote improved communication between the athletic department and student-athletes, review relevant institutional policy changes, and design and implement programs that encourage academic achievement, health promotion, social responsibility, general life skills awareness and community service.

[Student senate](#) is a formal means for students to consider matters of importance to the student body through its committees such as the Alpha Renovation, Residence Life, and Campus Safety Committees. Senate negotiated parking flexibility on weekends, solicited rationale for institutional decision-making to improve communication (e.g., the reason for parking assignment enforcement), provided feedback regarding proposed institutional changes (e.g., the use of flex dollars), requested resources (e.g., a printer in a location where students frequently study), and brainstormed student-centered spaces for the strategic plan. Student Senate has helped lead the changes to the curfew policy and open dorm hours and was asked to comment on the new peaceful assembly policy. One suggestion from senate – to cut cable access due to lack of student use – saved the institution \$30K per year. Additionally, the senate is a venue for the general student body to understand the senate’s purposes or to propose ideas. The [student body president](#) meets monthly with Grace’s president and informally communicates information to him on matters about which she believes he should be aware. The former VP of Advancement also solicited ideas from the senate for student spaces that resulted in funding [igloos](#) for winter meeting locations.

The School of Education and School of Business have student committees to offer guidance and direction to the schools and programs. Students on the Teacher Education Committee have helped identify gaps between the elementary and secondary programs, which led to the appointment of a secondary education chair and the development of workshops and conferences for secondary education students. The "Student CEOs (Council & Events Organization)" in the School of Business connect the faculty to the student body, organize events, and act as a sounding board for new ideas within the school. Most recently they provided input into ways for faculty members to engage prospective students.

Course evaluations (3.A.1, 3.C.4) are used to solicit student feedback at the course level and used by many programs as part of their assessment plans (i.e., program reviews).

The registrar assures accountability to academic policies in collaboration with the deans, faculty, and staff as needed. Policy revisions are presented to the [Academic Affairs committee for approval](#); depending on the nature of the revision it may also be presented to the academic deans, the full faculty, or staff (2.A).

5.A.2

Grace uses data reports and dashboards to make informed decisions in the best interest of the institution and its constituents. Used for a variety of purposes including improved campus-wide communication, academic and other accountability, budgeting, retention, policy development, and strategic thinking, data and dashboards are used by individuals, groups, committees, and the board as relevant to their decision-making. Examples of these data include:

1. Admissions Chart - weekly
2. BudgetPak Management Software (5.B, 5.C.5)
3. Cash flow report
4. [CIRP Survey - annual](#)
5. [CLA Prediction Model](#)

6. [COVID Dashboard](#)
7. Employee Survey (2019, [2021](#), 2022)
8. [Enrollment Snapshot - monthly](#)
9. Marginal Revenue Analysis - annual
10. OIT data: [Annual IT survey](#) (students, employees), CampusWorks OIT [assessment](#) and [recommendations](#)
11. Program reviews
12. Recruitment [Goals](#) - weekly
13. Sexual Assault Climate Survey (2017, [2022](#))
14. Statement of financial activities
15. Student Satisfaction Inventory and NSSE surveys - bi-annual
16. Student Learning Outcomes

Grace is in the development phase of an institutional dashboard to measure its overall “health,” key measurements related to the four institutional focus areas as developed by the president: spiritual vitality, financial responsibility, student success, and faculty staff thriving. Grace plans to develop two to three ratios for each focus area and review those monthly with senior leadership and the board. This initiative, which is part of the CFO’s goals for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, will enable Grace to practice ongoing assessment and ensure public visibility towards Grace’s strategic initiatives and goals (1.A).

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Argument

5.B.1

Qualified and Trained Operational Staff

As reported in the [2021-2022 Institutional Update](#), Grace employed 104 full-time administration, 57 part-time administration, 14 full-time staff, and 7 part-time staff. Grace's [analysis of positions](#) breaks down instructional and non-instructional staff. The report shows that after a decline in all FT and PT positions in 2019 and 2020, the number of FT and PT positions has increased in 2021 and 2022.

The [college's organizational chart](#) details the structure of academic schools, non-academic areas, educational services, and student support services at Grace.

Grace has processes to ensure employees are appropriately qualified and trained based on job-specific competencies, performance evaluations, and allocated resources for professional development opportunities, regardless of campus location or program modality (3.C, 3.D).

Grace's hiring practices set ideal qualifications and experience for all employees. For example, the senior leadership is appropriately [qualified, experienced, and trained](#) within their areas.

Grace follows a position approval [hiring](#) process for all open positions. [Requests from a hiring manager](#) are first reviewed by human resources for benchmarking purposes when creating, revising, or refilling a vacant position. All position requests are then reviewed by senior administration and evaluated according to need and alignment with budgetary needs.

Additionally, departments conduct periodic benchmarking (e.g., [Campus Safety](#)), and use consultants to determine viability, need, or impact when determining staff qualifications and departmental sufficiencies.

- In 2019, the departments of Admissions and Financial Aid conducted a comprehensive audit with [Healy & Associates](#) for a thorough review of staffing. Recommendations were made and generally followed. Based on the recommendations of Healy & Associates, Grace added two new admissions counselors totaling six positions based on desired enrollment growth from 2019 through the current year to best serve deposited students and prevent melt.

- In 2020, Grace conducted an [audit of online enrollment with ADV Consultants](#) that subsequently made staffing recommendations for the online enrollment team. Following that audit, Grace increased the marketing staff to support the unique online marketing/outreach needs of online enrollment. Both of these audits contributed to determining staffing needs (see [Departments of Admissions and Financial Aid Staff listing](#)).
- In 2022, the Office of Information Technology conducted a [technology assessment](#) with [CampusWorks](#) and collected data from [faculty, staff](#), and [students](#) to determine the sufficiency and quality of services to the institution, which led to upgrades in technological infrastructure and the hiring of the associate director of information technology and enterprise applications.

For the past 7-8 years, an [analysis of positions](#) has been used by the business office and cabinet to periodically monitor the number of part-time and full-time employees by department, with a goal to merge this with student information to evaluate trends and compare them to benchmarks. Additional goals for this data are to capture PT faculty in the analysis and to involve HR as it evaluates potential technology resources as tools to gather and analyze employment data.

Financial Infrastructure

Grace has the resources and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations for all its residential, online, and Akron programs. Since 2018, Grace has seen an increase in financial resources as a reflection of strategic growth and net assets, providing a resource base to support existing operations and planning for the future.

The increases in endowment (from \$18.9 million in [2018](#) to \$22.5 million in [2021](#)), total revenue (\$40.8 million in 2018 to \$41.7 million in 2021), net assets (from \$44 million in 2018 to \$45.7 million in 2021) and contributions and grant income (from \$6.5 million to \$8.4 million) have been a result of sustaining student enrollment, successful campaigns, and the expansion of new programs and initiatives.

Grace has seen a [growth in enrollment](#) in each of the past two years. Grace's traditional undergraduate enrollment has been the highest in institutional history for two of the past three years.

Grace has a high reliance on enrollment-driven revenues, including tuition, room, and board; however, Grace's [net tuition revenue](#) has improved over the past two years due to enrollment improvement and retention.

Grace has also made significant progress in fundraising efforts, with [\\$39.8 million](#) raised from over 7,000 donors in its 2019 [ASPIRE Campaign](#), \$190,000 raised from nearly 500 donors for the 2020 ["Bring Them Back" Campaign](#) to assist students affected by the pandemic, and help them return to campus, and \$5.5 million raised for its 2021 [Alpha Dining Hall renovation](#).

The [ASPIRE campaign](#) was inspired by the [strategic plan's](#) vision for programs, facilities, and scholarships to promote educational excellence, a connected community, a culture of innovation, and sustainable affordability. The campaign provided [funds to improve the school's infrastructure](#) and growth of academic programs according to market demand. For example, since 2017 Grace has launched several new, high-demand academic programs including mechanical engineering, digital marketing, and worship arts, while making significant investments in other programs such as exercise science, chemistry, and nursing. Through the ASPIRE Campaign, Grace also made investments in its [dining hall](#) renovation and expansion, innovative updates in its [Institute of Global Studies](#), and additions to its athletic facilities including its first-ever track and field complex, a new

competition-level soccer stadium, and a rebuilt softball diamond. In addition, the school reshaped campus traffic flow and added new green space to beautify and enhance its outdoor space.

Since 2018, Grace has secured several new grants and endowments:

- [ARPA grant \(\\$17,000\) - Morgan Library, 2022](#)
- [Advancing Racial Equity Collection Development grant \(\\$967\) - Morgan Library, 2022](#)
- [Chatlos Foundation \(\\$10,000\) - Deploy, 2022](#)
- [Don Wood Foundation \(\\$150,000\) - Department of Engineering, 2021](#)
- [K21 Health Foundation grant \(\\$150,000\) - Grace College Nursing Equipment, 2018](#)
- [Kern Family Foundation \(\\$200,000\) - School of Ministry Studies for blended MDiv, 2018](#)
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- [NetVUE grant \(\\$50,000\) - Vocational Programs, 2022](#)
- [K21 \(\\$25,000\) - Bike grant, 2021](#)
- [Lilly Endowment \(\\$951,297\) - Indiana Youth Programs on Campus and \\$50,000 planning grant](#)

Technological Infrastructure

The [Office of Information Technology](#) at Grace manages technological resources to support operations. Due to recent staff losses and the difficulty of filling open OIT positions in 2022, Grace partnered with a local IT service organization owned by a Grace alumnus to provide Helpdesk and Network/Infrastructure support on a permanent basis. Winona IT creates a unique solution for Grace that provides two helpdesk individuals on campus at all times during the school year. Additional support coverage scales to meet any needs that arise and after-hours coverage (3.D).

Physical Infrastructures

To support the continuous growth in student enrollment and the increase in housing numbers (i.e., from 791 in 2009-10 to 949 in 2022-23), Grace built [three residence halls and purchased two more residential spaces](#) since 2012. While total capacity fluctuates slightly due to voluntary overloading of some rooms and underloading other rooms due to medical exemptions, Grace's total residential capacity is approximately 1025 beds, which aligns with the 2022-2023 budgeted projection of [440 new students a year](#) and 80% of full-time undergraduates living in residence halls.

Grace's room occupancy percent is over 92% compared to 78% during fall 2021. The 2022 Fall housing breakdown was:

Overall	Capacity	Placed	Available	% Capacity
Alpha	191	171	20	89.5%
Encompass	23	22	1	95.7%

Indiana	128	120	8	93.8%
Kauffman	31	26	5	83.9%
Kent	102	98	4	96.1%
Lodge	69	65	4	94.2%
Lofts	80	73	7	91.3%
Omega	165	160	5	97.0%
Westminster	116	106	10	91.4%
Beta	94	80	14	85.1%
Boyer	12	11	1	91.7%
Gamma	16	16	0	100.0%
Total: On Campus	1027	948	79	92.3%

Thus far, Grace has been able to make minor renovations to most office and department spaces to accommodate the operational needs of the institution; however, Grace also recognizes that the strategic goal of growth in athletics has created challenges with Grace's athletic and recreational spaces. There are preliminary discussions, therefore, regarding the impact of growth in athletics on not only athletes but also the general student population, especially in the context of [revisions to the campus master plan](#).

See 3.D for additional information on physical and technological infrastructure.

5.B.2

Grace's strategic plans outline goals that align with the mission, future opportunities, and emerging needs. Following the [completion](#) of the Aspire Strategic Plan in February 2020, Grace began the process of a new strategic plan with the desired completion date of April 2021. Despite the challenges of urgent, ever-shifting operations through COVID-19, [Grace faculty and staff](#) rose to the challenge of completing a new plan, which the Board of Trustees [approved](#) in April 2021. The 2021 strategic plan articulates the work Grace currently believes to be necessary over the next three years. This prioritization allows the institution to translate strategies into actionable, accountable, and realistic work plans while keeping sight of the mission of the college.

The [2021 Strategic Plan](#) included a revised mission statement and core values, vision statements for each area of focus (dimensions), and their corresponding goals. The goals set in the strategic plan are realistic yet ambitious. The 2021-2022 key goals as listed below were met.

- Ensure an unrestricted budget surplus that results in positive cash flow. (Finance, Facilities, & Risk)
- Eight new academic programs, specifically for TUG students, added to the catalog in conjunction with partners like Purdue, RIZE, and John Patrick University. (Academic Affairs)
- Update the campus master plan by December 2021 and begin the silent phase of a comprehensive campaign by April 2022. Facility considerations will include academic spaces, student spaces, and dorms. (Student Affairs & Athletics; Advancement; Finance, Facilities, & Risk; Academic Affairs)
- Incentivize syllabus/curricular adjustments that enhance the inclusion of diverse voices and increase the use of more inclusive populations and practices in recruitment for new hires. (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion; Academic Affairs)
- Complete curriculum review within the seminary that leads to greater awareness and reputation and continued growth in enrollment (goal of over 200 students throughout next academic year). (Seminary)
- Best practices improvement in enrollment and marketing, along with the addition of new programs, will lead to 460 new TUG students in fall 2022. Online/Grad new student goal: fall 2021-161, spring 2022-110. (Enrollment & Marketing)

The college monitors progress on the implementation of each dimension (area of focus). Dimension owners monitor progress using monthly check-in worksheets (see April 2022 below) and lead work sessions to assess progress. Through these various levels of oversight and reporting, the college can track achievement and make adjustments as needed. A primary responsibility of the newly reorganized President's Strategy Council is to monitor the progress of the strategic plan. Additionally, strategic dimension progress reports are [presented to the Board of Trustees twice yearly](#), providing an opportunity for feedback.

April 2022 Strategic Dimension check-in spreadsheets:

- [Academic Affairs](#)
- [Advancement](#)
- [Campus Culture and Employee Wellness](#)
- [Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion](#)
- [Finance, Facilities, and Risk](#)
- [Marketing & Enrollment](#)
- [Student Affairs & Athletics](#)
- [Seminary](#)

Although the strategic plan had clear dimensions and annual goals, a concern emerged from the board, cabinet, and dimension chairs about the lack of a central and primary institutional goal to connect the dimensions to a common vision. A key institutional goal, therefore, was added to the [2022-2023 Strategic Plan](#) in the spring of 2022: “So that we can better invest in student success and employee well-being, we will improve operational cash flow by \$750,000 through additional revenue and operational expense stewardship, with the ultimate goal of eliminating our current operational cash flow gap of \$1.75 million by fiscal year 2023-24.”

5.B.3

Budgeting and Monitoring Expenses

Grace has a well-developed budget process for budgeting and monitoring expenses. On an annual

basis, operational initiatives and the budget process are prioritized in alignment with the strategic plan, program review strategies, and the institutional effectiveness policy (5.C).

Monitoring expenses is a multi-faceted process that works to assure that all expenses align with budgetary requests. Monitoring occurs for all budget managers via access to [Budget Pak](#). YTD budgets are available in real-time as well as year-end projections.

In the [budgeting process](#), each budget manager submits a budget for the next fiscal year to their supervisor by January 31st. Budget managers meet with the CFO and Controller to discuss their respective areas, which involves over 40 separate meetings. One of the questions on the agenda is how the allocation of resources enables the achievement of respective program learning outcomes. Other items on the agenda include budget proposals and changes from the former year, staffing needs, and capital spending (see [2021-2022 Budget Process Email](#)). Budgets are then approved by the supervisor and senior administrator responsible for that portion of the budget. Requests are consolidated into an initial institutional budget that goes to the President for review. The President and senior administration team review the budget request in light of projected revenue for the following year.

Senior administrators evaluate capital expenses to determine how much an area will receive for capital expenditures for the next year. Once this is determined, the specified area completes a ["Detailed Capital Project Request"](#) form, including information about the project in order to track that project through completion. This tracking allows the Business Office to know that the departmental area is within its determined amount and that the specific project is within the amount specified on the request form. Once this is established in the budget and expense system, the department can follow the same purchasing process as they do for other expenses.

In some cases, budget preparers are asked to reduce projections. Adjustments are made based on revenue and priorities within the institution. Once a preliminary budget is produced, it goes to the [board for approval](#). The budget is then updated after enrollment numbers are finalized in the fall semester, and the board approves the [final budget based on actual revenue](#).

Grace has a decentralized purchasing process in which budget managers can purchase necessary items for their respective departments. Business office procedures, such as supervisor approval of expenses, guide the approval process. The business office tracks invoices, payments, and capital expenses using a project code to compare spending with budgeted cost.

Grace also allows people who oversee budget lines to have [institutional credit cards](#). Receipts for purchases using these credit cards must be submitted to the supervisor for approval. These approvals then go to the Business Office for final approval. Major expenses require supervisor approval.

The Business Office creates [management summary reports](#) that track actual expenses versus budgeted expenses, which may guide adjustments to the budget. The management report is reviewed with [senior leadership](#) and the board on a monthly basis. The monthly management reports include an overall financial summary, a [monthly detailed financial report](#), and a [monthly cash flow](#) report. The management reports are reviewed in order to ensure the execution of Grace's primary institutional strategic goal for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Since 2019, additional initiatives have been incorporated into the [budget forecast](#). The 3-year cash budget presented to the Board in [April 2022](#) included targeted retention rates for each class in order to achieve the college's budget goal.

Marginal Analysis Project

The Vice President of Financial Affairs developed a [marginal revenue analysis](#) to analyze class sizes, structure, and class offerings each semester. The creation of the report has undergone several drafts in [collaboration with the Provost and Academic Deans](#). Traditional undergraduate, graduate and seminary degree-seeking students are included in the analysis. Reports are created that show the student net tuition revenue (NTR) less faculty compensation costs to deliver the marginal contribution by subject (prefix) code, major, minor, student program, course format, term, course level, sport, and faculty course division, course department, and rank. The marginal revenue analysis is updated every semester and contributes to a database of comparative information. Ongoing discussions occur with [senior administration](#), [deans](#), and faculty in order to implement Grace's highest priority recommendations while maintaining or improving the contribution margin (see [2021-2022 Marginal Analysis](#) recommendations) (2.A.2).

5.B.4

Grace has seen positive growth in its change in net assets over the past three years. Grace's most recent fiscal year ending April 30, 2022, [reported a change in net assets of \\$6.6M compared to \\$4.9M as of April 30, 2021, an increase of 35%](#). This followed a negative change in net assets of (\$1.3M) as of April 30, 2020. The enrollment growth Grace has experienced in addition to operational expense stewardship has helped Grace ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

See 5.C.6 for additional information regarding budgetary investments into educational departments, faculty, and operations.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

5.C.1

Grace College & Theological Seminary is intentional about allocating its resources [in alignment with its mission and priorities](#). As part of Grace's commitment to institutional effectiveness, strategic plans provide the institution with a systematic and ongoing process to anticipate and respond to major changes facing the operations of the organization for informed decision-making.

Aspire Capital Campaign

Grace [allocated](#) the [Aspire campaign](#) funding of [\\$38.5 million](#) toward advancing the [Aspire Strategic Priorities](#). \$10.5 million was allocated to achieving the strategic priority of *Educational Excellence*, which included building and renovating the [Dr. Dane A. Miller Science Complex](#) and developing new academic programs and cross-institutional partnerships (4.A.1). \$8.7 million was allocated to advancing the strategic priority of *Culture of Innovation* by funding the seminary's Competency-Based Theological Program ([DEPLOY](#)) and the [Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams](#), which provided research and educational opportunities for Grace students and the community. \$13.5 million funded [student scholarships](#) and supported Grace's annual fund to accomplish the strategic priority of *Sustainable Affordability*. \$7.1 million was designated toward the strategic priority of *Connected Community* and contributed to the student experience through developing third spaces, such as [Encompass Hall](#) housing the Institute of Global Studies, and redesigning athletic fields.

See [Aspire Final Report](#) for history, process of strategic plan creation, and constituencies involved.

Current Strategic Plan

The current [strategic plan, approved by the board in April 2022](#), articulates the work Grace currently believes to be necessary over the next three years. The prioritization of these goals allows the institution to translate strategies into actionable, accountable, and realistic work plans while keeping

sight of the mission of the college (5.B.2).

A common institutional goal was added to the [2022-2023 Strategic Plan](#) to better align Grace's resources with its priorities: “So that we can better invest in student success and employee well-being we will improve operational cash flow by \$750,000 through additional revenue and operational expense stewardship, with the ultimate goal of eliminating our current operational cash flow gap of \$1.75M by fiscal year 2023-24” (5.C.4).

Among the 2022-2023 strategic initiatives, the following have been identified as directly aligning with the key institutional goal for the future allocation of financial resources, human resources, or other necessary resources:

- [Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion](#):
 - Implement at least one new initiative – potentially an Employee Resource Group (ERG) - to increase the sense of belonging, well-being, and success of employees of color at Grace.
 - Co-sponsor (with Academic Affairs) a faculty workshop on student success, inclusive pedagogy, and positive student-faculty interactions - include part-time faculty.
- [Student Affairs & Athletics](#):
 - Utilize the new Early Warning Indicator (EWI) portal, Maxient reporting, and case management software, and a modified ad hoc retention committee to intentionally improve or maintain retention rates for all disaggregated student groups.
 - Develop a plan for updates and improvements to the GHAWC, specifically the fieldhouse, athletic training, and fitness center by October 2023, the 20th anniversary of that facility. Consider adding a membership charge for outside users upon completion of updates.
 - Implement at least two new initiatives (clubs, campaigns, interventions, etc.) to increase the sense of belonging and success of underrepresented student populations at Grace.
- [Advancement](#):
 - A primary focus on unrestricted giving with \$1,068,000 raised through donor retention of 65% and broader engagement of major donors in unrestricted giving.
- [Finance, Facilities, and Risk](#):
 - Implement at least two new revenue enhancements for the 22-23 academic year that will generate an additional \$1.2M in revenue and allow for additional investments in new staffing positions on campus.
 - Investigate the opportunity of performing a campus-wide LED lighting project upgrade that will provide energy savings sufficient to offset the costs of the upgrades.

Grace is presently working on a [scorecard](#) to represent key performance indicators on student success, fiscal responsibility, faculty/staff thriving, and spiritual vitality. A draft has been presented to the cabinet, though is still in process.

5.C.2

As part of the assessment of student learning, the Reaffirmation Review 2019 Final Report specified the inclusion of a policy and process to ensure “the systematic collection and dissemination of evidence that provides documentation of institutional improvement,” including “how information is shared so that decision-makers can effectively plan and budget for the future” (Final Report, Criterion 5.D, p. 55).

The institution met HLC's concern by formulating a process and a policy that will systematically collect, evaluate, and publish evidence annually to demonstrate and document the extent to which it operates within its institutional mission and supports continual institutional improvement (see [Institutional Effectiveness Policy](#)).

The purpose of the policy is to affirm Grace's responsibility and commitment to engage in improvement and accountability for achieving student educational outcomes in alignment with the college's mission. Its systematic and continuous assessment of the institution's effectiveness is achieved through established, clear, consistent, and sustainable practices and processes informed by institutional mission and values, student outcomes, and institutional and programmatic accreditation requirements.

Institutional effectiveness activities are shaped by Grace's strategic plan and assessment of student learning in curricular and co-curricular programs through program learning outcomes assessment and program reviews. Assessment results are used to inform programmatic and administrative decisions, strategic planning, budget requests, and resource allocations.

It is an institutional expectation that each division and unit will reference and incorporate its assessment outcomes during the annual budgeting process. The cabinet, the board, and the budget managers use data gathered for strategic initiatives, program outcomes assessment, and program reviews to reach budgetary decisions.

Additionally, financial planning follows procedures and checklists as defined in the [Accounts Payable Procedure](#), [Journal Entries Procedures](#), [Monthly Close Calendar Checklist](#), and the [Grace Year End Audit Checklist](#).

5.C.3

Grace works to solicit feedback using formative and summative processes to advance institutional goals. Through planning meetings, listening sessions, surveys, and processes across internal and external stakeholder groups, the Grace community engages Grace's direction and progress in relation to goals and strategies to best meet needs for student success and institutional operations.

Aspire Strategic Planning Process

CREDO Consulting was hired in 2016 to assist Grace with the creation of a strategic plan. Grace took a collaborative approach to strategic planning involving constituents on and off campus. Senior administration took initial leadership of the plan during a planning retreat with CREDO in April 2016. Faculty and staff then participated in a [workshop session](#).

Throughout the collaborative approach, four priorities emerged - Educational Excellence, Culture of Innovation, Connected Community, and Sustainable Affordability. A Stewardship Team and Theme Teams were then created.

The Stewardship Team was created to provide ongoing leadership and implementation of the plan. Theme Teams were established around each priority to define initiatives and were each led by a member of the Stewardship Team.

Listening sessions were held a number of times throughout the creation process. Employees were engaged during monthly GEMs. The [Alumni Council](#), [Parent Council](#), [various community members](#), and [students](#) were also brought together for a number of listening and input sessions. In the spring of

2017, the [Grace Board of Trustees approved the ASPIRE Strategic Priorities](#), which were developed by strategic teams of staff, faculty, and students. These initiatives were then assigned to initiative owners who [developed milestones and the possible financial cost](#) to complete the initiative. The strategic plan [stewardship team reviewed](#) these initiatives and their progress toward completion on a six-week cycle basis.

Current Strategic Plan Planning Process

The planning process for the institution's current strategic plan (1.A.5) began in [October 2020](#) with the board's expectation that the school completes the process by April 2021. The [Strategy Task Force](#), composed of administration, faculty, and board members was appointed to oversee eight strategic dimension teams. Faculty and staff were invited to become part of dimension teams led by faculty and administration. Dimension Teams developed strategic priorities for the upcoming three years that were presented to the [President's Advisory Council](#) for discussion and feedback.

The full board was apprised of the institution's strategic planning process, including multiple times to ensure their understanding, involvement, and approval. This included an [overview](#) of strategic dimensions and the core values team. A core values team led by the VP of Academic Affairs and composed of faculty and academic deans was also appointed to develop the institution's core values. The 21-22 Strategic Plan was [approved](#) by the board following a review of the framework and plan. The revised 22-23 strategic plan and [22-23 budget](#) were [approved by the board in April 2022](#).

Additional Examples

Employee Surveys

Grace conducted an employee engagement survey in 2019 and 2021 to solicit feedback from its employees and is presently planning its next survey.

The top priorities identified in the [2019 survey](#) were related to [Leadership](#), [Learning & Development](#), [Service and Quality Focus](#), and [Work and Life Blend](#). To effectively respond to employee feedback and concerns, priorities were [assigned](#) to cabinet members for analysis of current and potential action.

Subsequently, the cabinet's analysis of the survey results informed [Goal 2](#) of the *Campus Culture and Employee Wellness* dimension of the 2021-2022 Strategic Plan. Another survey was launched in 2021. The [2021 Work-Life Management Survey Facts](#) were reviewed with the Cabinet and the [Presidential Advisory Council](#).

The cabinet and committee continue to implement an action plan in response to the survey. A summary and results from 2021 were reported to the board, cabinet, and the President's Advisory Council and resulted in [institutional action](#) and a strategic plan goal for 22-23.

Student Survey

Grace regularly administers the CIRP, the American Freshman Survey created by the Higher Education Research Institute that shows the demand for academic programs from full-time, first-time students across the U.S. The instrument collects extensive information that allows for a snapshot of what Grace incoming students are like before they experience Grace. Key sections of the survey examine:

- Established behaviors in high school
- Academic preparedness
- Admissions decisions
- Expectations of college
- Interactions with peers and faculty
- Student values and goals
- Student demographic characteristics
- Concerns about financing college

The [2020 survey results](#) were shared [formally](#) with faculty by the VP/Dean of Students and the [2021 results](#) were shared [informally](#) between the VP, admissions, and other student life professionals. Grace used information from the CIRP and other institutional data to develop the Student Success Program (5.C.1) and invest in the Center for Wellbeing (and new director positions for each) to, in part, address an aspect of Grace's key institutional priority: student success.

Alpha Renovation

During the Aspire Strategic Plan, Grace solicited [feedback from students](#) by conducting a hall meeting about students' perception of an ideal third space. Three initiatives in the [Aspire Strategic Plan](#) were to build a new student commons (strategic priority 3.3.3), create innovative spaces (SP 2.3.2), and create more outdoor gathering spaces (SP 3.3.2). Students' feedback regarding multiple dining experiences, spaces to socialize, comfortable seating, and open atmosphere contributed to the remodel and expansion of Alpha Dining, one of several capital projects.

5.C.4

Planning and Revenue

The [5-year plan to balance the budget](#) was presented to the board in 2019. The CFO later revised the plan with some additional initiatives. The updated plan, a [3-year cash budget forecast](#), was presented to the board during the April 2022 meeting and provided budget assumptions, which included a targeted retention rate for each class in order to achieve the budget goal.

One specific strategy to balance the budget came about when Grace recognized that the revenue model it had used over the last decade was not financially sustainable. Several changes were put in place starting in the 2021-2022 academic year to address these challenges, such as that each student cohort had fixed tuition throughout their matriculation based on their first year of enrollment.

To identify a more sustainable model, a task force composed of board members, senior administration, faculty, and staff came together to [strategize and formulate changes to the model](#), including tuition and fees. The changes were [presented to the board](#) as part of the budget approved by the board in April 2022.

Starting with new students enrolled during fall 2022, Grace [eliminated the two free summer courses](#) that were originally part of fixed tuition pricing for traditional undergraduate students, [implemented a one-time cost-sharing fee for students in fall 2022](#) due to inflationary costs, and [unfroze](#) tuition starting with Fall 2022's incoming class.

The changes will contribute to the ongoing improvement of the institution's revenue.

Planning and Enrollment

In 2021, the CFO conducted an extensive analysis on a model of [margin analysis](#) for academic departments. He presented recommendations to the executive committee of the [board, cabinet, deans' council](#), and individual deans. This model has been used for preliminary budgeting discussions and 2-year planning purposes (5.B.1).

Planning and COVID-19

During the pandemic, Grace appointed a cross-functional [Campus Preparedness Implementation Team](#) to draft policies, procedures, and guidelines for operations as the campus prepared to re-open in fall 2020, then in 2021 a [Scenario Planning Task Force](#) was appointed to address needs related to a fall return to campus. This planning took into consideration the potential changes in enrollment and revenue due to the pandemic.

- Grace designed a [webpage](#) on which COVID-related policies that impacted students (e.g., masking and distancing mandates, health practices, leave, accommodations, remote teaching/learning, campus dashboard) were publicly available. The page also included archived campus messages.
- Once approved by the State of Indiana to offer telebehavioral health services during COVID-19, Grace's counseling services implemented an [informed consent](#) to advise student consumers about the ethical considerations of telebehavioral health.
- Reports regarding the institution's response to the pandemic were made to the board, which endorsed the initial decision to close the campus on March 12, 2020.
- Grace provided information regarding Grace's COVID mitigation strategies to [parents](#) of new students. [Students and employees](#) were regularly updated regarding the status of the institution and changes to mitigation strategies. Although ultimately unnecessary, Grace communicated its preliminary plans to implement the federal [OSHA ETS mandate](#).

5.C.5

Technology Advancements

During 2020-2021, the [Office of Information Technology](#) implemented several new technology upgrades for the Grace campus to support the potential of in-dorm learning and virtual meetings for students on campus should that be needed due to the COVID-19 pandemic: (1) infrastructure improvements to a 10GB network and internet capacity for all residential facilities and several administrative and classroom buildings implemented; (2) upgrade of three host machines that support 45+ servers and disk storage for the campus; and (3) a cybersecurity sweep of all of Grace servers and network with an outside firm, prompted by the Solar Winds hack that affected many organizations in the United States.

One of the vision statements of the Finance, Facilities, and Risk dimension of the current strategic plan is to use resources for digital transformation in order to provide a rich and relevant technology experience for faculty, staff, and students. Specifically, IT met its goal by conducting an operational assessment of Jenzabar with the business office, registrar, and HR/payroll. It also identified the areas for training or operational effectiveness and established a tiered execution strategy.

Subsequently, CampusWorks conducted an assessment on IT in early 2022. In response to the [recommendations](#), Grace hired an associate director for enterprise applications and integrations (5.B.1).

Various campus offices have adopted new technology to further campus goals such as new budgeting software (BudgetPak), the transition to a new learning management system (Canvas), the adoption of a new client relation management system in admissions (Slate), new student conduct software (Maxient), new web-based retention prediction tool (CLA), and new personalized video software for admitted students (Idomoo).

The Economy and Federal Support

In 2021, Grace announced [affordability measures](#) for fall 2021 incoming students by offering free tuition through a combination of federal, state, and institutional aid for low-income families.

Like all universities across the U.S., Grace was significantly impacted by COVID-19 during the fiscal years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022. Consequently, Grace experienced interrupted business operations and significant budgetary concerns. Similarly, students and their families experienced the negative financial impact of COVID. As part of the three separate stimulus packages provided by the federal government, Grace received three separate emergency relief grants. The three grants were provided under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). Each grant had two components; one was to provide funds for institutional use and the other to provide [emergency grants directly to students](#). Grace received a total of [\\$8.1M in grants](#). Of this amount, \$4.4M was provided to students and \$3.7M was allotted for institutional use.

See 1.C.3 for institutional planning anticipating evolving demographic change and globalization

5.C.6

The Reaffirmation Review 2019 Final Report stated that the institution “should provide documentation that the institution uses the data from the assessment of student learning in its planning and budgeting processes with specific attention to reallocation of resources” (Final Report, Criterion 5.C, p. 53). Since the 2019 HLC Comprehensive Visit, the institution has met HLC’s concern.

Student Outcomes

In addition to documenting and submitting needed resources in the PLO annual assessment and program review process (see [2020-2021 PLO Reports Summary of Recommended Improvements](#) and [2020 Summary of Program Review Recommendations](#)), a comprehensive, collaborative process is undertaken yearly for budgetary purposes by the institution. Starting in February 2021, budget managers met with the CFO and Controller to discuss their respective areas. Over 40 separate meetings occurred including one with each academic school. One of the questions on the agenda was how the allocation of resources enabled the achievement of respective program learning outcomes. Other items on the agenda included the 2021-2022 budget proposal and changes from 2020-2021, staffing needs, and capital spending (see [2021-2022 Budget Process Email](#)).

The evidence gathered from the budget meetings impacted two main decisions in the allocation of resources for the improvement of student learning outcomes. Though budget cuts were implemented throughout the organization due to COVID, there were no cuts in any of the academic school operating budgets to ensure that the quality of instruction and student learning were not impacted. Additional funds were also spent on instructional resources and faculty development to equip educators through the shift from face-to-face to remote instruction during the pandemic.

Secondly, faculty development funds were reallocated to the budgets of individual schools from the Academic Affairs Office, which allowed deans to better distribute funds based on individual faculty development plans leading to improved student learning.

The budget was presented to senior administration and to the Board of Trustees in April 2021 for final review and approval (see [April 2021 Board Meeting Minutes](#)). The CFO and Controller will continue to hold annual budget manager meetings and integrate the respective program learning outcomes for each school into the budget planning process.

Additionally, the new [strategic planning process](#) became concurrent with the budget process in December 2020. One of the eight strategic dimensions was “finance, facilities and risk,” which focused on financial performance, technology, facilities, risk, and compliance. A primary goal of this strategic dimension was the achievement of a balanced budget, ensuring adequate resources to meet Grace’s institutional mission and student outcomes as documented through assessment and program review recommendations.

Operations

In 2021-2022, Grace Schools achieved a [break-even cash flow year and had a zero balance on its line of credit at year-end](#). Grace is also [assessing and revising the campus master plan, originally created in 2017](#), to ensure adequate academic facilities and resources (see [updated 2021-2022 campus master plan](#)). The overall budget allocation took into consideration the entirety of the strategic plan. The strategic team’s ultimate desire is to [align goals with Grace’s mission](#) and tie back all financial and budget decisions to Grace’s mission, values, and goals.

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

Grace College & Seminary's practice of shared governance and planning is evidenced by the collaboration between the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. Policies and procedures guide these relationships and the decision-making process.

Grace has strengthened its practice of data-based decision-making, adopting several new technology enhancements and tools recently, notably the marginal revenue analysis, to analyze data, improve accountability, and make informed decisions in the best interest of the institution.

Grace's qualified operational staff carry out the administrative and support functions of the institution. The number of employees has been increasing over the past two years - a necessary trend to accommodate growth in enrollment.

Increased financial resources reflect strategic growth and net assets. Budget processes involve collaboration, accountability, and strategies to create a financially sustainable budget. Addressing its physical infrastructure will manage enrollment growth and corresponding housing needs.

The strategic plan's key priority creates a common purpose for the plan's goals, themselves aligned with the mission to address emerging campus needs. Accountability in the plan occurs regularly, and Grace is developing a dashboard of KPIs for further accountability.

A new institutional effectiveness policy and new processes and documentation about the coordinated ways in which student learning outcomes are used in planning, budgeting, and resource allocation met the HLC's 2019 concerns.

Sources

There are no sources.