

Grace College and Seminary - IN

HLC ID 1757

STANDARD PATHWAY: Mid-Cycle Review

Review Date: 2/27/2023

Dr. Drew Flamm
President

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

2/27/2023

Review Type:

Mid-Cycle Review

Scope of Review

- Mid-Cycle Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

Grace College and Seminary was founded in 1937 with its founding mission being “to know Christ and make Him known.” Today this mission is reflected in a spiritual goal. It’s current mission statement, refined in 2021, states, “We are a Christ-centered community of higher education applying biblical principles in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service.” The mission statement was observed to permeate and be the driving force in all aspects of the College.

Grace, under the new leadership of President Flamm, is continuing to experience growth in enrollment and academic offerings. Its infrastructure and resources appear strong, and faculty and staff are dedicated to seeing their students successful in living out the mission.

Grace is positioned to see continued growth and stability in all areas.

Interactions with Constituencies

Interactions With Constituencies

Cabinet (Total, 7)

President

Provost

Vice President of Financial Affairs, CFO & COO

Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs

Vice President of Administration and Compliance

Associate Vice President of Strategy & Operations

Dean of the Seminary

Vice Presidents-Not Cabinet (Total, 2)

Vice President of Enrollment Management

Vice President of Advancement

Board of Trustees (Total, 7)

Board Chair

Board Vice Chair

Board Secretary

Additional members (4)

Faculty (Total, 50)

Dean of Behavioral Sciences

Dean of the School of Education

Dean of the School of Business

Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences

Dean of Academic Engagement & Success and ALO

Dean of the School of Professional and Online Education

Associate Dean of the School of Ministry Studies

Associate Dean of Students

Director of General Education

Director of Modern Languages

Director of Mathematics Program, Director of General Education

Chair of the Department of Humanities

Chair of Science and Math

Chair of Secondary Education

Chair of Visual/Performance/Media Arts

Director of Student Teaching

Program Coordinator, Global Studies

Additional faculty (Approx. 30)

Staff (Total, 26)

Dean of Chapel and Community Life

Associate Dean of Student Diversity & Inclusion

Assistant Director of Marketing

Systems Manager School of Education

Chief Human Resources Officer

Director of Event Services and Camps

Director of Seminary Accreditation and Assessment

Director of Student Success and FYE

Director of Library Services

Director of Latino Engagement

Director of the Center for Career Connections

Financial Aid Compliance Director

Financial Aid Director

Assistant Director of Admissions

Admissions Counselor

Career Success Coordinator

Student Accounts Coordinator

Student Disability Services Coordinator

Coordinator of Academic Supports Services

Library Director

Electronic Services Librarian

Library Circulation Manager

Student Engagement Librarian

Post Office Supervisor

Deploy Staff

Resident Director

Students (Total, 20)

External Constituents (Total, 7)

Additional Documents

- 2016_DICS_Seminary_Program_Review.pdf
- 2016_DMIN_Seminary_Program_Review.pdf
- 2018_GOAL_Business_Administration.pdf
- 2018_GOAL_Human_Services.pdf
- 2018_History_Political_Science_Program_Review.pdf
- 2018_MDiv_Ministry_Studies_Program_Review.pdf
- 2018_SPOE_MS_Higher_Education.pdf
- 2019_Core_Program_Review.pdf
- 2019_Performing_Arts_Program_Review.pdf
- 2020_ABET_Engineering_Readiness_Report_Sept_Draft.pdf
- 2020_CACREP_Graduate_Counseling_Accreditation_Report.pdf
- 2020_Criminal_Justice_Program_Review.pdf
- 2020_Health_Counseling_Center_Program_Review.pdf
- 2020_Library_Learning_Center_Program_Review.pdf
- 2020_Performing_Arts_Program_Review.pdf
- 2020_Psychology_Counseling_Program_Review.pdf
- 2020_TUG_Ministry_Studies_Program_Review_Revised_2023.pdf
- 2020_Visual_Media_Arts_Program_Review.pdf
- 2021_ABET_Self-Study_Report.pdf
- 2021_Career_Connections_Program_Review.pdf
- 2021_Chapel_Program_Review.pdf
- 2021_Deploy_Degree_Program_Review__MA_and_MDiv.pdf
- 2021_MA_Ministry_Studies_Program_Review.pdf
- 2021_Residence_Life_Program_Review.pdf
- 2022_CAEP_Accreditation_Action_Report.pdf
- 2022_Communication_Program_Review.pdf
- 2022_English_Journalism_Program_Review.pdf
- 2022_Exercise_Science_Program_Review_Template.pdf
- 2022_Mathematics_Actuary_Science_Program_Review.pdf
- 2022_Modern_Language_Program_Review.pdf
- 2022_Natural_Sciences_Program_Review_(March_2023_extended_deadline).pdf
- 2022_SPAs_and_CAEP_Accreditation_Report.pdf
- 21-22_Program_Review_Recommendations_and_Action_Steps.pdf
- 5-Column_Report_Chapel_2021.pdf
- 5-Column_Report_Health_and_Counseling_2021.pdf
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- 5-Column_Report_Student_Affairs_2021.pdf
- 5-Column_Report_Student_Involvement_2021.pdf
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- Campus_Culture_Employee_Wellness_22-23_(1).pdf
- Core_Assessment_Analysis_Report_2021-2022.pdf
- Criterion_Team_Summary_Report_Criterion_1.pdf
- Criterion_Team_Summary_Report_Criterion_2.pdf
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- Criterion_Team_Summary_Report_Criterion_4.pdf
- Criterion_Team_Summary_Report_Criterion_5.pdf
- Dual_Credit_21-22_Evals_by_On-Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_ENG1100.pdf
- Dual_Credit_21-22_Evals_by_On-Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_PHI3000.pdf
- Dual_Credit_21-22_Evals_by_On-Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_PSY1100.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_(Fawcett)_-_Lakeland_Christian_BUS3260.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_(Grossnickle)_-_Lakeland_Christian_BUS3260.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_COM1100.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_ENG1100.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_HIS2050-HIS260.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_PHI3000.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_PSY1100.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_SPA1020.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_Spanish_4.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Lakeland_Christian_MKT2150.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_The_Masters_Study.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_and_Blackhawk_HS_-_SPA1020.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Course_Evaluation_by_On-Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_COM1100.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Course_Evaluation_by_On-Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_ENG1100.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Course_Evaluation_by_On-Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_PHI3000.pdf
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- Dual_Credit_Course_Evaluation_by_On-Campus_Faculty_-_Warsaw_HS_SED1000.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Faculty_Credentialing.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Group_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_ENG1100.pdf
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- Dual_Credit_Group_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_PHI3000.pdf
- Dual_Credit_Group_Correspondence_with_Campus_Faculty_-_Blackhawk_HS_SPA1020.pdf
- Faculty_Satisfaction_Interviews_w_President_Recap_2022.pdf
- Grace_College_Employee_Handbook.pdf
- Grace_College_Mail_-_Fwd_Calendar_Survey_Data.pdf
- Grace_College_Mail_-_Fwd_IRB_Committee.pdf
- Grace_College_Mail_-_Re_HSRB_IRB.pdf
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- HLC_Site_Visit_Schedule.pdf
- IPEDS_2022_Graduation_Rates.pdf
- IRB_Community_Member_Email_Request.pdf
- IRB_Community_Member_Grace_Mail.pdf
- Minutes_-_Assessment_Committee_2019.11.8.pdf
- Minutes_-_Assessment_Committee_2019.12.6.pdf
- Minutes_-_Assessment_Committee_2020.01.24.pdf
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- Minutes_-_Assessment_Committee_2022.09.15.pdf
- Minutes_-_Assessment_Committee_2022.11.17.pdf
- New_Trustee_Orientation_2022.docx.pdf
- New_Trustee_Welcome_Letter_2022.pdf
- Part_Time_Faculty_Credentials_for_Hiring_Arts_and_Sciences.pdf
- Part_Time_Faculty_Credentials_for_Hiring_Behavioral_Science.pdf
- Part_Time_Faculty_Credentials_for_Hiring_Ministry_Studies.pdf
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- Part_Time_Faculty_Credentials_for_Hiring_Science.pdf
- Part_Time_Faculty_Credentials_for_Hiring_SPOE_Bible.pdf
- Part_Time_Instructor_Employment_Agreement.pdf
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- Syllabus_COM1100_Public_Speaking_in_Society_(Akron).pdf
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- Syllabus_COM1100_Public_Speaking_in_Society_(Residential).pdf
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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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace College & Seminary, associated/affiliated with the Charis fellowship, was established to develop a liberal arts college and theological seminary for preparing students for "lives and positions of effective Christian leadership." Since their last review in 2019, Grace has revised their mission statement as part of a new strategic plan, both adopted in 2021. A variety of stakeholders collaborated to recommend the following: "We are Christ-centered community of higher education applying biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service." This mission flows from and aligns with other institutional documents, namely the *Articles of Incorporation*, the *Covenant of Faith*, and the *Philosophy of Education*. Subsequently, The Values Team taskforce revised the *Grace Values* to describe how the mission outcomes of character, competence, and service would become manifest.

Institutional documents indicate that the primary constituents of Grace are its students, but many others are stakeholders of the institution. Grace provided examples of specific components of their curricular and co-curricular offerings that demonstrated a consistent influence of their mission and related statements in their programs and outcomes. For example, the First-Year Experience focuses on welcoming students into and developing the "Christ-center community" described in its mission statement. The learning outcomes of the Grace Core, as another example, align with "applying biblical principles" across the curriculum. The evidence provided also included examples of

programs in each college that demonstrated an alignment with the mission of the College. Examples include use of Micah 6:8 as the foundation of the School of Education mission, “Preparing teachers of character who are competent in the profession and have a heart of service for others.” Where Micah exhorts his audience to “act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God,” the department aligns the instructions of acting justly with Competence, loving mercy with Service, and walking humbly with Character.

Many of the various offices and services that support the mission of the institution provide similar mission statements or specifically state their role in fulfilling the College’s mission in their literature or websites. The chapel program is an obvious example of programming that undergirds the Christ-focused mission of the institution; Growth Groups within the Residential Life program provide opportunities for students to apply biblical principles to their lives for the purpose of becoming more Christ-like in attitude and action; Athletics strives to “[develop] personal character and Christian values.”

The enrollment profile and academic programs described in the Academic Catalog are consistent with those of a liberal arts college with a predominantly undergraduate enrollment. The general education requirements outlined as the Grace Core, particularly the four first-year linked courses and the First-Year Experience program, demonstrate a commitment to providing liberal arts education within a Christian context (see 3.B).

Grace demonstrated that the mission statement is the driving force of all aspects of the College and is visibly present and accessible in appropriate publications and websites.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace College provided evidence to support its alignment with organizations and institutions similarly committed to serving the public good. The College's mission statement specifically commits to "preparing students for service." Academic and co-curricular programming provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to engage in local and global community needs. The Assurance Argument provided several examples of partnerships, programs, and initiatives, both on- and off-campus, as testament to the high priority that serving the public good is to the institution and the diversity of services it provides to the community. Some programming is offered for community participation while other programming, either research or service, benefits the community more indirectly. Examples include providing professional services to area businesses and non-profits, conducting environmental research in regional lakes and streams, and fostering relationships with elderly and youth alike. Community members articulated an appreciation for the services provided and a strong desire to continue partnerships with Grace.

As a non-profit private institution, Grace College is not financially or otherwise obligated to an outside agency. The College's affiliation with the Charis Fellowship, as declared in the *Article of Incorporation*, requires at least half of the Board of Trustee members to be members of a Fellowship of Grace Brethren Church. The affiliation is symbiotic in that the mission and academic culture the institution upholds is framed in a Christian context.

Grace regularly provides services and physical space to fulfill unique needs in the community. The institution provides/sponsors events that benefit the wider community and region. Various employees of the institution regularly serve in community organizations and boards.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace is committed to providing opportunities for students to prepare to engage with a diverse, multicultural society. The learning outcomes of the newly adopted Grace Core is evidence of making good strides in their commitment to and demonstration of the relationship between its Christian mission and the diversity of society. Curricular maps of the Core learning outcomes demonstrate an alignment with career readiness outcomes outlined by the AAC&U and NACE. In addition, the Center for Career Connections works with students preparing for job placement and provides different types of experiential learning opportunities.

An attention to preparing students for a diverse world and working with those from diverse cultural backgrounds is found specifically in the Core's third learning outcome, which states that students will "cultivate characteristics of maturity in relationships with God, others, self, and the world."

All students are required to complete a cross-cultural field experience, of which there are multiple options. Go Encounter trips, for example, send students on domestic or international experiences to engage with a culture other than their own. Grace also lists over a dozen elective courses that also include cultural learning outcomes that emphasize "multicultural awareness, intercultural competence, and/or civic engagement."

Similarly, Grace provides numerous programs, processes and activities for helping students to grow in intercultural competence, civic and cultural engagement, and in career-readiness. These experiences stem from four main institutional entities: Council for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI), the Institute of Global Studies, the Center for Career Connections, and the Student Involvement Office.

Despite the numerous opportunities for preparation in this area, Grace acknowledges there is room for growth as NSSE results indicate students' lack of ability to understand people from other backgrounds and in developing informed citizens.

There has been a particular focus to increase and improve efforts in the area of Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion. The previous DEI strategic plan concluded in 2020 of which most of the goals were mostly or partially met. The new Institutional Strategic Plan, approved in 2021, includes a specific focus on DEI. Recent hires demonstrate a commitment to creating a community that supports and acknowledges the value of diversity. These include the hiring of an Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion, a Director of Latino Engagement (formerly a Latino Liaison) and a Director of Student Success and FYE. Furthermore, a current employee was appointed as its first senior women's administrator.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Rationale

Grace College is attentive to ensuring that the vision, the goals, and the Christian context of the institution are adequately reflected in its mission statement and is operationalized in its strategic plan. The mission aligns with other significant documents as well as its educational offerings, co-curricular programming, external partnerships, and circles of influence. Grace's curriculum and connections with the community are intentional in preparing students to serve the public needs and to work with others of different backgrounds and cultures. Recent efforts demonstrate a commitment to creating an environment and culture that respects the differences of others.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The institution provided evidence, through a presentation made to the employees of Grace in May 2021, that members of the institution developed a new mission statement and a statement of values in the context of a new strategic planning process that began in October 2020. In the Open Forum on Mission and Integrity, faculty described meetings with various internal stakeholders to discuss changes in the mission and the development of the values of "Thriving, Selfless, Engaged, Authentic." The institution also provided excerpts from the minutes of the Board's April 2021 meeting showing that the then Executive Vice President and Vice President of Advancement presented the new mission statement to the Board, which they approved at the same meeting. The mission reads: "We are a Christ-centered institution of higher education applying biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service." The 2021-2023 Board Handbook includes the newly adopted Mission Statement.

Grace provided a copy of the Board Handbook, which describes the structures and processes in place to help ensure that Grace operates with financial integrity. For example, the Budget Procedure is outlined in section V.G., the audit of Financial Statements is outlined in section V.F. and the role of the Financial Affairs Commission is described in II.F.i.c.

Copies of the audit statements provided by FORVIS, Grace's independent accounting firm, and excerpts of minutes from meetings of the Board show that the institution follows processes related to review of audits, budgets, investments, and sale of properties by the Board.

The institution provided as evidence published documents that demonstrate transparency regarding its academic operations and compliance with federal regulations. The documents provided included the Academic Catalog and Academic Policies which are available on Grace's Student Right to Know page. The Student Handbook can be found on the portal. For example, a link to the Satisfactory

Academic Progress (SAP) policy is found in the Student Right to Know Page and a link to the SAP policy is found in the Academic Catalog, both links leading to the Financial Aid website. In addition, the policy on student academic integrity can be found in the Academic Policies webpage and the Student Handbook under Services and Policies. Academic Integrity is more fully discussed by the institution in Component 2.E.

Grace provided two valuable documents to support its argument that it acts with integrity in its human resources operations: The Employee Handbook and the documentation of annual compliance training in matters such as FERPA and sexual harassment. In addition, the Employee Handbook provides guidelines on reporting complaints related to employment discrimination and sexual harassment. Similarly, The Faculty Handbook provides procedures for resolving grievances in Section 4.5.

Evidence showed that vendors who provide auxiliary services do so in harmony with Grace's mission and values. For example, the nurse providing health care maintains membership in American College Health Association (ACHA) and is expected to practice according to its ethical and professional standards. Grace's athletic trainers are expected to follow the institution's policy on examination of sensitive areas for athletes.

As demonstrated in its Assurance Argument and verified during the team visit, Grace establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Evidence provided by Grace supports its argument that it has systems and people in place to ensure the accuracy of representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure, and accreditation relationships. At the interview with the Deans Council, the Dean of the School of Professional and Online Education discussed the process and timeline for reviewing changes to the Academic Catalog every two years, with addendums used to capture changes in the intervening year. In an open forum, it was noted that some but not all PLOs are posted on the website. Grace stated that this would be corrected.

The Deans Council meeting minutes of September 20, 2022 show that the institution is aware that faculty and deans need to be in communication with marketing to ensure that information about academic programs is consistent and accurate. The Vice President for Enrollment Management verified that he meets regularly with the Provost and the Manager of Marketing to discuss academic programs and recruitment of new students.

Grace provided a spreadsheet showing that web pages are reviewed and approved on a regular basis. For example, the spreadsheet showed that the Student Right to Know Page was checked and approved on February 2, 2023. The Vice President of Administration and Compliance oversees the Student Right to Know Page which includes cost to attend Grace.

Listing accreditations along with links to the accreditation agencies helps to communicate that the information provided is accurate.

Governance structure is made available through the institution's website where administrative leaders and board members are listed. The organizational charts provided were verified onsite in discussion with various leaders and their direct reports.

Grace provided evidence to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through community engagement, experiential learning, and religious purpose. Grace's brand promise is stated as, "Grace College is a Christ-centered community engaged in thoughtful

scholarship and career preparation that develops compassionate, confident, and skilled graduates who *lead lives of purpose.*" Thoughtful scholarship is evidenced via the Office of Faith, Learning, and Scholarship, while lives of purpose can be linked to promotion of community engagement. In particular, in the meeting with the Deans' Council, the Dean of the School of Business described the example of accounting students providing volunteer income tax assistance in collaboration with local accountants for local residents with limited means. In this particular case, experiential learning is linked to career preparation. The First-Destination Survey is available on the Student Right to Know Page and provides data on career outcomes for Grace undergraduates. In keeping with best practices, Grace should include a knowledge rate (number of responses divided by the number of graduates). The 2022 report shows a 90% level of excellence among graduates who responded to the survey, indicating the percentage of graduates who are employed full-time or enrolled in graduate school.

By its assurance argument and as verified during the site visit, Grace presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The Board recently affirmed its commitment to internal board development. The institution provides examples of development through invitation of external speakers such as the president of Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU), a representative of the Education Advisory Board (EAB), and the president of Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI). External speakers covered topics such as religious liberty, the state of higher education, and the enrollment landscape. Speakers from within the administrative leadership also provide the Board with opportunities to stay informed about settled and ongoing lawsuits and to review proposals regarding substantial reduction in expenses put forward by a diverse committee of faculty and staff, Aspire to Action Committee. This committee's report helps to support the argument that the board listens to the voice of internal constituents.

New Board members receive an orientation that includes an introduction to the President, the Trustees, Board organization and policies, and high-level issues facing Grace.

In addition to following its own policies regarding board development (see Board Handbook, III.F.ii), the various excerpts of minutes provided in 2.A and 2.B show that the Board carries out its duties with respect to regular meeting, appointment of a president, and review and approval of budgets.

As shown, Board development reflects priorities to preserve and enhance Grace. Its commissions or standing committees reflect the many dimensions of Grace: Academic Commission, Advancement, Marketing, and Enrollment Commission, Financial Affairs Commission, Risk and Compliance Commission, Seminary Commission, Student and Athletic Commission. For example, the Advancement Commission was kept informed of the progress of capital campaigns as shown in excerpts of minutes from their February 2019 meeting.

In addition to the above with respect to the proposal by the Aspire to Action Committee, excerpts of Board minutes provide examples of invited internal stakeholders representing perspectives of students, faculty, and staff. The Board receives formal reports such as Academic Program Reviews prepared by faculty and department chairs via the Provost at the Academic Commission meetings. The Dean of the Seminary meets quarterly with commissions of the Board of Trustees. The Deans meet with the Provost as he prepares reports to the Academic Commission of the Board to bring forward challenges and concerns.

In the process of hiring their current president, the Board hired a search firm that conducted listening sessions to get a sense of the needs of the campus community. Through surveys the Board understands that the faculty feel "stretched."

The institution identifies the Charis Fellowship as an external constituent. Grace provides an example of a discussion between the Board and the Fellowship centered around common interests regarding international recruitment and ministry and the status of Grace Schools as a University versus as a College.

The Board preserves its independence from undue influence through its Conflicts of Interest Policy, as detailed in Appendix D of the Board Handbook. Board members must annually disclose conflicts of interest, described as occurring "when an individual's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the organization. Personal interests include direct interests, as well as those of family, or other organizations a person may be involved with or have an interest in." In addition, the Board Handbook contains language proscribing political partisanship and provides guidelines related to the conferral of honorary degrees so that they are not given solely for "personal friendship, political expediency, exchange of favors, or financial contribution."

When asked about the role of the Board in shared governance during the peer review visit, the Board chair referenced the Bylaws: to ensure that Grace meets its mission, to ensure the long-term welfare of the institution, to ensure that Grace has adequate financial resources, to ensure that the Board members are qualified to carry out its responsibilities, and to serve as a final body for appeals at Grace. Board members discussed receiving reports from vice presidents of functional areas of the institution to help in strategic deliberations. For example, the Board approved a maximum price increase in tuition and a separate one in room and board, allowing the appropriate administrative leadership teams to set the final increase.

The Board Handbook acknowledges that day-to-day operation is delegated to the president, who is responsible for the development of faculty and employee handbooks. In turn, the Faculty Handbook describes the role of faculty as, "Faculty members play an important role in the development and oversight of the institution's curriculum and are integral to understanding the teaching and learning needs of students and faculty in the educational process." Faculty meeting minutes show that faculty approve certificates and approval of new program proposals.

In addition, although the Chief Financial Officer was asked to perform a marginal analysis by the Board, the Board explained that this was to help inform conversations about viability of academic programs at the level of vice president, the provost, and deans.

While the Board delegates day-to-day operations to the administration, their overall support is keenly felt by administrators such as the Vice President of Enrollment Management, who cites Board support as one of the top reasons for traditional undergraduate enrollment growth.

The Board, therefore, makes decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity and viability.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The institution makes clear that academic freedom and freedom of expression are grounded in its mission as a Christ-centered institution that expresses a pride of place in the Bible as a foundational source of truth found in the Covenant of Faith. Faculty and students engaged in the pursuit of teaching and learning sign statements to agree to this covenant. Within this context, students are given broad latitude to explore topics starting in the first year seminar inquiry project. Faculty suggest topics such as social justice, racial justice, immigration, and identity formation. The syllabus excerpt that shows example inquiry project assignments would not be unfamiliar in other colleges.

The Core Curriculum, built on the foundation of a Christian liberal arts tradition, supports a model of free inquiry within the context of Grace's faith commitments. For example, the assessment assignments for the Core Curriculum Science course focuses on enduring questions, but open to the answers that students explore and bring (see 3.B).

As shown in Component 3.B and through the list of scholarship from the Department of Humanities in the Faculty Forum, faculty find freedom to pursue a wide range of research topics. Deans are given \$1500 per full-time faculty to allocate in support of research, scholarship, creative activity, and professional development. According to one faculty member in the Seminary, he has been supported in his professional development work with the Anglican Communion.

By its assurance argument and verified through the site visit, the institution demonstrates commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning in the context of its faith commitments.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace provides oversight to ensure regulatory compliance and ethical behavior on the part of students and faculty conducting research. The institution has the Human Subject Research Committee (HSRC) that functions as the institutional review board. The Standard Operating Procedure document provided by the institution lists as one of the purposes of review as: "That any research is conducted in an ethical manner and in compliance with established standards." The Grace HSRC requires from all principal investigators who submit a proposal a CITI Social-Behavioral-Educational certification. The members of the HSRC also receive appropriate CITI training. Documentation provided by Grace shows that while they have Grace-affiliated members, they do not yet have a community member for the 2022-2023 academic year. It has been difficult for the institution to find a local community member who is not affiliated with Grace, as specified in the HSRC Handbook. Given the desire to have a community member be local, it has been challenging in particular to find someone who is not in some way affiliated with Grace. However, because of Federal guidelines and the value shown by a past community member's contributions to the operation of HSRC, the HLC visit team strongly encourages Grace to focus on recruiting and filling this vital position in the committee.

As discussed by Grace in Component 2.A, the business office, the CFO, and the controller provide support for larger grants and the progress reports they require.

Students at Grace receive guidance in the ethics of research and the responsible use of information resources. As evidence, the institution provides a list of courses where students receive direct instruction in ethical research and responsible use of information. For example, the syllabus for BHS 2400, Research Methods in the Social Sciences, shows that their first learning outcome is: "A student who completes this course will: Explain the various elements that are a part of the empirical method including ethics, variables, validity, and reliability." In addition, the syllabus for AAD 6130, Comprehensive Capstone Project in the MS of Athletic Administration, notes: "Some Capstone project [sic] may need approval from the Grace College Institutional Review Board (IRB). Any projects involving surveys or interviewing must have this approval before beginning the project."

Outside of specific majors, all incoming students take the Effective Writing course where they encounter the learning outcome: "Integrate sources into their writing while clearly distinguishing their own words and ideas from others' and avoiding plagiarism, misrepresentation, and other unethical uses of sources." In addition to the direct instruction, the Library and the Writing Lab provide guidance related to proper use of resources and citations.

To show that the institution enforces its policies related to academic honesty and integrity, Grace provides a listing of academic honesty infractions and the sanctions associated with the infraction. Enforcement of policy is coupled with clear expectations consistently included in the syllabus for each class at Grace.

From the Assurance Argument and from the site visit, it is clear that Grace's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

From the evidence provided and from the site visit, the team is confident that Grace strives to act ethically, responsibly, and with integrity. The institution establishes, follows, reviews, and revises policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior by its board, administration, faculty, and staff. These policies and processes touch specifically on academic freedom and responsibility on the part of faculty and students and on the responsible acquisition, discover, and application of knowledge by faculty and students. The institution is transparent and has processes in place to help ensure the accuracy of its representations, including making evidence available to students and the public. The Board carries out its responsibilities to help ensure the integrity of the institution, starting with its key roles of upholding Grace's mission and appointing and supporting the president.

Like many institutions, Grace continues to work to meet its goal of acting ethically, responsibly, and with integrity. The HLC team urges the following:

- Ensure that PLOs for all programs are made publicly available.
- Include the knowledge rate in its publication of First-Destination Survey results.
- Appoint a non-affiliated committee member to the Human Subjects Research Committee.

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).

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace College offers undergraduate and graduate courses at levels including associate, baccalaureate, and masters. Structurally, the credit hour policy adheres to the federal definition specifically allowing for competency-based learning experiences utilizing alternative modalities to be equated to traditional, seat-time-based credit hours. This policy provides faculty with a framework for addressing direct instruction and out-of-class student work while allowing for alternative modalities of instruction including laboratory, field experiences, internships, practicums, blended, and online modalities.

Several of the programs offered at Grace are externally accredited and require reporting of completer preparedness and licensure pass rate data for national examinations. For example, student achievement of 100% on the licensure exam was reported for Clinical Mental Health for 2021-2022 and shows the acquisition of knowledge at an appropriate professional level. Additional information for overall retention, graduation rates, and student achievement in education, business, and seminary are publicly available on their Student Right to Know website.

Continued specialized accreditation demonstrates regular, systematic, and continuous assessment of performance against discipline specific goals and relevant standards, tracked results over time, documented modifications and/or innovations and their overall effects on expected outcomes. Evidence was provided that ensures that measures used for programmatic review and improvements produce data that are valid, consistent, and actionable. For example, the School of Education met expected level of employer satisfaction with completers as evidenced by a strong focus on lesson planning, instructional presentation for face-to-face and virtual environments, strong backgrounds

with instructional models, professional behaviors, ability to accept and apply constructive criticism, and presentation of moral strength. During the meeting with external constituents, employers pointed out that graduates' moral strength has helped them work with diverse populations through reflection and empathy. Not only does this demonstrate compliance with expected outcomes within the profession but also demonstrates alignment with the institution's mission and student learning outcomes.

New curricular proposals are reviewed through a faculty-reviewed process prior to implementation. The Procedures for Curriculum Changes includes policy and procedures for changes to existing courses, changes to general education courses, new courses, new programs or elimination of programs. This process addresses monitoring, evaluating and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the program as well as relevancy to the learner and professional standards and expected competencies in the career(s) targeted by the program.

In addition to processes for curricular changes, the annual Faculty Development Report and Plan includes professional development and other activities necessary for effective teaching. This quality improvement process includes reflection on the achievement of goals and identification of obstacles interfering with goal attainment. Each college is provided \$1500 for each faculty development per year. Faculty are expected to appropriately use these funds to support efforts to remain current within their disciplines, improve teaching efficacy, and/or participate in scholarly activities. In addition to funding, the administration provides opportunities in which faculty can request release time to engage in significant assessment initiatives or implement significant high impact curricular activities. For example, a faculty member in the business program was granted a course release to facilitate the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program. This program provided students with experience and preparation for the IRS exam while providing a public service to an underserved community.

Grace utilizes advisory boards for programs to ensure discipline curriculum is current and relevant for industry employers. The Engineering faculty sought industry leaders for guidance prior to the development of their curriculum and will continue to meet with their advisory board as the program matures. Education faculty meet biannually with their advisory board to review outcomes data and address contemporary issues in practice and implications for curriculum changes. During the meeting with external constituents, it also became evident that their partnerships with K-12, Chamber of Commerce, community foundations, and local industry leaders influence curricular and programmatic offerings that directly impact the student experience and provide appropriate services to the surrounding community. One K-12 administrator remarked that Grace education students fill a majority of the open positions. Grace education majors begin their experience with the community schools in their freshman year. Early access to the K-12 classroom and careful guidance of the faculty produces well-qualified and career ready teachers.

Grace reports program learning outcomes at the undergraduate and graduate levels. These learning goals differentiate program levels and set the foundation for faculty and administration to expand and focus on program design, content development and application of knowledge and skills specific to each program. Examples provided demonstrated appropriate scaffolding between associate to bachelor's degree as well as bachelor to master's degree.

The institution submitted their annual PLO assessments which assess whether or not program learning outcomes align with the mission, differentiate between other degree programs at the same level, assess the desired learning behavior, allow for appropriate measurement of learning, and are academically appropriate for the specific level of degree completion. The example from the

Counseling program shows consistency in developing an understanding of the subject matter while also differentiating between students in different programs to ensure the knowledge was applicable in the students' professional careers. While they were able to effectively demonstrate differentiation between multiple bachelor and master's programs within the self-study, the documented annual process might be strengthened by including differentiation of outcomes between undergraduate and graduate degree levels especially for their 3+1 programs. The current annual PLO assessments process is a promising practice to demonstrate how each program contributes to the institutional learning outcomes.

It is necessary for Grace to continue in the development of assessment criteria for student learning goals at both the undergraduate and graduate levels to ensure students are making progress toward or achieving institutional benchmarks. The relationship between overall student learning goals and program-specific student learning goals shows how the institution is ensuring consistency in student achievement of these goals as required by Criterion 4.

Grace has multiple methods for ensuring consistency of program quality and learning goals across modes of delivery and through dual credit programs. Leveraging technology, the learning management system allows for collaborative course and program development between faculty on the main campus and in online programs. Faculty are required to use Canvas and the pre-established master course shells. These shells are created by content experts on the main campus. The syllabi for ENG 1100, Effective Writing, demonstrate the practice of consistency of course expectations across modalities. Lead instructors facilitate pre-course and mid-term checks to mitigate for inconsistencies between like courses taught within the division. While SPOE online courses, such as ENG 1100, utilize the same course shells and syllabi, lead instructors reported an inability to access these divisional online courses in real time. Access to all like courses would enhance the transparency between divisions and allow for evaluating consistencies in the quality of teaching and alignment with institutional and discipline standards.

Additionally, Grace has multiple measures in place for dual credit courses offered through high schools to ensure the quality of education. Articulation agreements require annual compliance 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. Deviations from the expected outcomes are permitted if high school partners need to add to the College's outcomes to demonstrate compliance with state standards. However, it was observed that not all course level learning outcomes in dual credit courses use the same outcomes as Grace (see 4.A). During the open forum on teaching and learning, faculty did convey awareness of the expectation for consistent evaluation but revealed this is often a struggle when balancing high teaching loads and managing dual credit instructors located up to an hour away from campus. This concern will need to be addressed as Grace continues to manage and/or expand its dual credit offerings.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

In 2019, Grace College was required by HLC to engage in comprehensive curriculum mapping to clearly articulate the relationship between college wide learning goals, Core outcomes, and programmatic learning outcomes. The January 2019 Core Program Review also noted concerns about the organization and measurability of the Core Learning Outcomes. Documentation in the *Proposed Changes to the Core Purpose, Description, and Learning Outcomes* suggests the process for managing significant and appropriate changes was intentional, reflective, faculty-led, and informed by a wide range of data. Adopted by faculty in fall 2021, the Core Program Learning Outcomes are specific, measurable, and achievable. More so, the new outcomes not only align with the college mission but are aligned with contemporary national standards for learning and career readiness. The use of Fink's Taxonomy provides a structure beyond cognitive learning and includes the Human Dimension (including spiritual and moral development) addressing the values and aspirations of the college's holistic approach to learning. The revision creates a pathway for a more systematic approach to college-wide assessment, higher order learning, and institutional effectiveness as demonstrated in the alignment with LEAP and NACE outcomes.

The college-wide student learning outcomes and the larger general education program connect genuinely to the institution's Christian mission, strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service. The Philosophy of Education is consistent with the evangelical and pietistic commitment of Grace's Brethren heritage. The crosswalk table provided aligns expected outcomes with specific courses, assignments, direct measurement of learning, and action taken to close the

assessment feedback loop.

Beginning in 2017, Grace challenged its community to ensure that students, faculty, and staff of all backgrounds are treated with dignity and respect. The revised Core Program Learning Outcomes (3b, 3c, and 4d) address awareness of others, examining biases, and application of knowledge through global and intercultural literacy. The Cross-Cultural Field Experience, HUM 2000, is a required learning opportunity. The course learning objectives support examination of other cultures, biases, and self-reflection practices. Skill development in this required course includes initiating engagement with those from culturally diverse backgrounds, examining influences and biases, and global and intercultural literacy. Faculty were quick to assess learning in this revised course and determined that students misunderstood the assignment's main objective and how it is different from the film analysis. As a result, faculty will implement a presentation format and will create additional scaffolding for the assignment.

Grace College reports utilization of a diversity audit of curriculum content. With no prescribed format for the audit, faculty listed the topics taught and resources used. During the open forum on teaching and learning, faculty were able to articulate how this exercise led to changes within their programs. For example, the Communication program was able to determine the feasibility of offering an intercultural minor which was also corroborated by their academic program review. History identified the need to add upper-level coursework. As the college moves forward with this practice, it would benefit the College to adopt a specific framework that addresses the combination of teaching, pedagogy, curriculum, theories, attitudes, practices, and instructional materials that grounds students' culture, identities, and contexts throughout the individual programs.

While Grace is considered a teaching college, faculty and students participate in scholarship and research in several different ways. In review of the expectations set forth by the Faculty Development Plan, faculty are required to engage in development, research and scholarship. Faculty Scholarship Forums provide an opportunity for five to eight faculty members to annually share their scholarship with peers on campus.

Likewise, students engage in research design, critical evaluation and basic statistical concepts across all degree programs. Several examples demonstrate that graduate programs continue to establish track records of relevant scholarship, applied research and professional development. Noted in the 2019 self-study, the Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams continues to demonstrate outstanding collaborative work in undergraduate research. The Lilly Center employs Grace students as early as their freshmen year to help manage scientific studies, develop, and facilitate K-12 programs, and help manage collaborative projects within the community. Collaborative research efforts between faculty and students foster quality and excellence as teams contribute to new knowledge and enhance best practices.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace College's Assurance Argument illustrates the importance of increasing the diversity in both staff and faculty positions at the institution. Considering location, lack of community diversity, and limited strategies for recruitment, it has been difficult for Grace College to achieve its expected goal of 25% diversity in new faculty and staff hires each year. During the meeting with the Deans Council, individual leaders shared strategies such as reaching out to closing institutions, utilizing discipline specific list serves, and consulting HR for ways in which to increase diversity in both faculty and staff. As Grace continues to fall short of its expected outcome, it may be necessary to seek outside assistance to gain visibility and diversify applicant pools.

Prior to the visit in 2019, Grace's ability to meet its teaching and administrative responsibilities was cited as an issue of concern for the commission and led to monitoring report in the 2019 comprehensive visit. At that time, the institution possessed 52 full-time faculty members (from IPEDS and internally shared data), resulting in a faculty to student ratio of 19:1. The ratio dropped from 20.6 to 19 in the previous reporting cycle and began moving in a positive direction. However, according to IPEDS 2021 data, Grace reported a 20:1 student to faculty ratio. Administration acknowledged that increasing the number of full-time faculty is a priority. For the current academic year, there are nine open positions, 7 replacement positions and 2 new faculty positions. According to

the *Academic Affairs Strategic Initiatives for 2023-2024* provided at the time of the visit, two to three additional faculty hires will be submitted to the CFO and Senior Cabinet for the 2024-2025 academic year to manage workload issues expressed by faculty. The Provost expressed a goal of increasing the number of full-time faculty from 52 to 60 at the time of the visit.

Faculty qualifications are outlined in the Faculty Handbook. These policies govern all faculty from full professors to dual credit instructors at the affiliated high schools. The qualification definition is provided for faculty with terminal degrees as well as those with tested experience. On site, the Provost provided clear documentation of expected credentials and tested experience defined by each discipline within the college. Language was consistent with HLC's Assumed Practices, B.2 Faculty Roles and Qualifications. Twelve files were evaluated, and each demonstrated congruency with academic credentials or tested experience as defined by the discipline.

Grace clearly articulates policies for faculty evaluation and demonstrates continued good practice in this area. Students can evaluate all courses. This data is then systematically analyzed by relevant academic directors. Full-time faculty members develop individual five-year plans, which are reviewed annually by the appropriate dean. Overall review of performance and completion of development plans impact funding, promotion, and contract renewals. Part-time faculty are also systematically observed by relevant supervisors. First-time instructors are observed at least once in their first session and returning instructors are observed no less than every four years.

Grace provides onboarding activities that include orientation into the role and expectations for new full- and part-time faculty. All new faculty are expected to participate in peer discussions facilitated by the Provost. Likewise, new online instructors are highly encouraged to meet with the instructional support manager for orientation to the learning management system as well as discuss best practices in online teaching and learning. Beyond the first year, faculty then engage in faculty development plans with the goal of honing classroom skills as well as remaining current within their disciplines. The College provides financial support, approximately \$1500 per faculty, for professional development. The Professional Learning Community Model is also embedded into the 5-year faculty development plan and offers a collaborative focus on teaching and learning. Each group selects a contemporary teaching and learning issue, conducts research and implements an action item. Sabbatical leave is also granted to ranked faculty seeking to devote time to scholarship, support the mission of the college or achieve goals set by the department.

The Faculty Handbook outlines a requirement for all faculty to serve as academic advisors. Availability for student inquiry is defined by residential full- or part-time status or by delivery modality, specifically online. Residential full-time faculty must maintain a minimum of 5 office hours per week and 2 full days for advising per the academic calendar. Part-time faculty are required to provide contact information and schedule appointments as necessary. Online faculty are expected to respond to student inquiries within 24 hours, post available office hours, and make a connection at least once a week. Advising notes are documented on their secure intranet. Discussed in greater depth in 3.D, data supports that students perceive their academic advisors to be knowledgeable, approachable, and concerned with their success.

Staff Performance Reviews are conducted on an annual basis to provide employees and supervisors the opportunity to discuss job responsibilities, recognize achievements, address development opportunities, and identify priorities for successful completion of goals whether supporting institutional initiatives, departmental objectives, or personal development. Four examples were provided in which student services departments demonstrated qualifications and professional development appropriate for their areas of expertise. It may be advantageous to create a consistent

reporting format and align with the Ruffalo Noel Levitz data survey items specific to student services. This practice may inform annual performance evaluations as well as indicate specific training and development needs.

All employees are required to complete annual, mandatory training related to areas of safety, risk, and community standards. Mandatory training completion is tracked by the Office of Human Resources and communicated to the appropriate leader(s).

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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).

Rating

Met

Rationale

In spring 2020, Grace worked to clearly articulate a comprehensive framework including seven Student Success Factors:

- Growing Spiritually
- Valuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Purposeful in their Calling
- Engaged in their Learning
- Financially and Personally Supported
- Mentally, Physically, and Emotionally Healthy
- Connected in Meaningful Relationships

Each success factor is adequately supported through departmental support, programming, policy, or procedures to meet the needs of the appropriate student populations. For example, the institution supports Student Success Factor: *Engaged in their Learning* in multiple ways. The Morgan Learning Center offers tutoring and writing services for students. These include subject based tutoring and online or in-person writing appointments delivered by the Writing Lab Services and are provided to both undergraduate and graduate students. Additionally, the Office of Disability Services offers federally compliant accommodations for students with documented disabilities. In 2019, the College demonstrated awareness of a relatively low satisfaction score as compared to peer institutions. Student perception of the College's commitment to serving students with disabilities has demonstrated a positive increase in median scores from 5.37 to 5.80 over a two-year period.

With regard to Student Success Factor: *Financially and Personally Supported*, data from the HLC Student Survey demonstrates that financial aid received the lowest score among all items (M=3.5). Comments from students suggest that there is limited access to information and/or limited understanding of responsibilities regarding borrowing money to finance a student's education.

During the site visit, it was shared and observed in targeted conversations with students and staff that students may confuse the roles and services provided by Financial Aid and Student Accounts. Financial Aid staff shared several examples of programming offerings but also indicated that these programs demonstrated low student participation. Different strategies may be necessary to enhance student understanding of financing degree attainment.

Grace is moderately selective in admitting students but does use professional judgment in reviewing student applications to determine a student's academic ability with other factors including test scores, references, previous curriculum, Christian commitment, and extracurricular activities. Such practice enables greater flexibility for granting acceptance on a case-by-case basis. Students that are provisionally admitted are required to enroll in GEN1000: Academic Fundamentals for College and ENG1020: Principles of Writing in their first year. Through these support courses, students are scheduled to meet with the Academic Support Services Coordinator.

Several programs have specific candidacy requirements, pre-requisites, and placement examination to ensure adequate preparedness of their enrolled students. Differences in program requirements are clearly articulated in the Academic Catalog and program handbooks.

Grace uses a traditional approach to offer student advising services as guided by its current Advising Policy (effective June 1, 2019). The policy states that academic advising is provided by designated faculty or staff and clearly articulates the responsibilities of both the student and the faculty/staff in the advising relationship. The Director of Career Connection continues to serve as the advisor for undeclared majors. Additionally, the Registrar functions in a secondary advisor role. Advising services appear to be readily available to online learners. The 2020 Student Experience Inventory for DEPLOY students demonstrated very high levels of satisfaction regarding helpfulness (5.86) and care (5.79) provided by advisors (scale of 1 to 6). The HLC Student Survey results support the DEPLOY survey findings and demonstrate that most students agree/strongly agree that academic advisors provide accurate information and are available to assist, 4.26 and 4.37 respectively. Likewise, the 2019 RNL data supports that students perceive their academic advisors to be knowledgeable, approachable, and concerned with their success. For the past four years, student retention data has been above the expected outcome of 78% as determined by the Student Success Committee (see 4.C).

Overall, Grace's Assurance Argument provides evidence of an infrastructure and resources necessary to support teaching and learning. In summer 2022, the college transitioned to Canvas to enhance the learning and teaching experience. Faculty development opportunities addressed course building basics, course imports, grading, rubrics and customization. Faculty addressed issues of student transition to the new learning management system by providing an orientation to individual courses and the new design structure. They reported that several students expressed familiarity with Canvas due to prior learning experiences. Faculty noted the need for additional training as they continue to optimize Canvas functions including how the outcomes feature can assist with direct measurements of learning.

The Office of Information Technology is responsible for services in three broad areas: 1) end user and helpdesk services, 2) network and infrastructure services, and 3) database/enterprise application services. Fiber optic upgrades including 265 access points, access to a high-speed higher education network, and planned computer/printer replacement cycles supports contemporary practices to meet the needs of the Grace learning community. Likewise, Grace has kept pace with technology in multiple learning spaces such as nursing simulation along with performance and recording studios. Classroom and lab space has remained a priority to meet the growing needs in Worship Arts and

STEM programs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

Grace College offers undergraduate and graduate courses at levels including associate, baccalaureate, and masters. Policies and practices monitor, evaluate, and improve the overall effectiveness and quality of the programs as well as ensure that discipline curriculum is current and relevant for graduates and industry employers. Learning goals are differentiated at each program level and set the foundation for faculty and administration to expand and focus on program design, content development and application of knowledge and skills specific to each program.

The revised Core Program Learning Outcomes are specific, measurable, achievable, and align with the college mission and national standards for learning and career readiness. The revision creates a pathway for a more systematic approach to college-wide assessment and connect to the institution's Christian mission. The Philosophy of Education is consistent with the evangelical commitment and aligns expected outcomes with specific courses, assignments, and high impact learning experiences.

Faculty qualifications are clearly outlined in the Faculty Handbook for full professors to dual credit instructors at the affiliated high schools. Defined qualifications and tested experience are consistent with HLC's Assumed Practices, B.2 Faculty Roles and Qualifications. While qualifications are clear, Grace has struggled to fill open positions. The Academic Affairs Strategic Initiatives for 2023-2024 calls for two to three additional faculty hires and an expressed a goal of increasing the number of full-time faculty from 52 to 60 in the near future.

Grace clearly articulates policies for faculty evaluation and demonstrates continued good practice in this area. Review of performance and completion of development plans impact quality of teaching, promotion, funding, and contract renewals. Additionally, staff performance reviews are conducted on an annual basis to provide employees and supervisors the opportunity to discuss job responsibilities, address development opportunities, and identify priorities.

Providing an articulated framework in 2020, Grace worked to clearly support this structure through departmental support, programming, policy, or procedures to meet the needs of the appropriate student populations. Advising services appear to be readily available to residential and online learners. Data supports that students perceive their academic advisors to be knowledgeable, approachable, and concerned with their success.

Overall, Grace provides evidence of an infrastructure and resources necessary to support teaching and learning. Likewise, Grace has made consistent strides with ever-changing technology needs in multiple learning spaces such as nursing simulation, recording studios, classroom, and lab space.

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.

Rating

Met With Concerns

Rationale

Grace established a systemized and formal plan and process for academic program review (APR) following the 2019 HLC reaffirmation of accreditation visit. The 2019 visiting team determined that Grace appeared to be “in the beginning stages of a systematic program review process that links assessment to planning and budgeting.” The team recommended a monitoring report that included a requirement that all program reviews would be completed by the time of the 4-year review in spring 2023. Grace responded to HLCs request in a letter to the IAC on May 2, 2019, and stated that, “We had started a process and schedule that would have all programs reviewed in five years, with over 50% reviewed within two years. We are currently adjusting that schedule to have all programs reviewed in four years.” Although Grace does not have all APRs completed at the time of this visit, they provided evidence that they will meet the 4-year mark by completing all APRs by December, 2023.

The program review process developed by Grace since the 2019 monitoring report includes the following elements:

- Program Review Policy
- Program Review Schedule (Curricular and Co-Curricular)
- Program Learning Outcomes (all programs)
- Program Learning Outcome Plans (Curricular and Co-Curricular)
- Program Learning Outcome Reports (Curricular and Co-Curricular)
- Curriculum Maps
- Annual Student Learning Assessment Data Reports
- APR Repository (Learning and Assessment Google Site)
- Syllabus Template
- VP/Dean Administrative Response to APRs
- Budget Line Additions

The 2019 visiting team addressed the need for Grace to "complete an audit of all programmatic outcomes to ensure measurability, alignment with mission, and adherence to best practices." Grace performed this audit and it was confirmed during the site visit that all PLOs have been reviewed and revised. Oversight of this process was done by the Assessment Committee.

Grace also demonstrated that student learning assessment data is part of the program review process. Annual Student Learning Assessment Reports showed that this data is required as does the Curricular Program Review template. This template also includes sections for summary, recommendations, and action steps. Because the program review process was developed in the span of the past four years and revisions and creation of new PLOs took place during this same time period, there was limited time to collect, report, and use student learning assessment data in this cycle of APRs. However, the Core Assessment Report, 2021-2022, was a good example and provided evidence that this assessment process is effective. The Core report stated, "The assessment of assignments for BIB 3300, HIS 1050, ENG 1100, and FYE 1000 stand out as exemplary among assessment practices at Grace College." During the site visit, faculty also reported that the assessment practices used by the Core faculty is a model for other programs for the coming cycle of APRs. It was noted by the visiting team that the next program review cycle will allow sufficient time for data collection and analysis to inform curricular revisions and programmatic improvements for all programs. Although direct assessment methods were not reflected in most APRs, indirect assessment methods such as benchmarking, surveys, and observations did inform curricular and program changes. The next HLC visiting team will want to follow up to confirm that student learning assessment data is being used effectively to inform programmatic changes. See 4.B for further statements regarding assessment.

According to the Program Review Policy, APRs are reviewed every seven years. Deans, department chairs, program coordinators, faculty members, institutional staff, and external reviewers are part of the review team. The dean of the particular academic school oversees the completion of the program reviews. Program reviews are submitted to the academic dean, and chief academic officer. Senior administration use APRs for institutional planning and budgeting and the board of Trustees receives completed program reviews (see 5.C).

Although Grace established a program review plan and process that ensures the quality of educational offerings, equivalency in learning outcomes at the course level (CLOs) between all residential, online, and dual courses was not found. Approximately 50% of dual credit courses did not use Grace's CLOs. As well, it was found that CLOs in same titled courses between residential and

online courses were not always the same. The HLC team recommends that Grace submit a monitoring report, due December 1, 2023, demonstrating that all courses and programs, titled the same, use the same course and program level outcomes across all modalities. As well, all dual credit courses must use the same CLOs as Grace's residential courses.

Transfer policies are stated in various policy documents and in the Academic Catalog:

- Transfer of Credit
- Core Courses
- Non-Accredited Institutions
- Foreign Transfer Credits
- Department of Graduate Counseling
- Grace Theological Seminary
- Associate of Science in Liberal Arts

The traditional Transfer of Credit Policy outlines the scope of the policy, definition of advanced standing, and course transfer determination. Along with a Non-Accredited Institutions Policy, Grace evaluates prior learning which includes the International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, and CLEP exams. A policy also exists for Credit by Substitution, Exam, or Experience.

Transcripts are evaluated for transfer of credit by personnel in the Registrar's Office, the School of Professional Online Education, and the Academic Affairs Office. Consultation with with department chairs and program directors may also occur.

Guided by policies in the Faculty Handbook, the Board of Trustees Handbook, and confirmed in meeting minutes, faculty members exercise authority over the quality of education, rigor of courses, and development of curriculum at Grace. The Faculty Handbook, section 3.1, under Faculty Authority and Responsibility states, "The authority granted to the faculty of the college and seminary shall include adoption and revision 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." As stated in Procedure for Curriculum Changes policy, effective May 13, 2021, "New and revised curriculum, whether initiated by the department, school, or the administration, is evaluated and endorsed through a faculty review process prior to its implementation." This review process was confirmed in Academic Affairs and Faculty Meeting minutes.

Learning resources are made available to all students at Grace which includes its two locations in Winona Lake, IN, and in Akron, OH, and all online students. All students can access the online resources from the institution's library. Grace is a member of the Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI) which gives all Grace students access to other libraries. Online students also have access to the Learning Center through email and video conferencing.

The Faculty Handbook clearly outlines faculty credential requirements and expectations for growth and performance. Faculty undergo an annual progress review and evaluation and a Faculty Development Plan is drafted at the end of the first year of teaching. The plan documents growth and performance which is used for considering promotions and contracts. The department chair and/or dean evaluate the faculty in this process.

Grace provides accreditation information on their website for its specialized accreditors. It is in good

standing and maintains accreditation with the following specialized accreditors and associations:

- CACREP - Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
- ATS - Association of Theological Schools
- NCATE - National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
- CAEP - Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
- Indiana Department of Education (Educator Preparation Programs, initial level)
- ACSI - Association of Christian Schools International
- ABET - Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
- ACBSP - Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs

Grace evaluates the success of its graduates through various means. Results of the First Destinations Survey was provided in the Assurance Argument for 2018 through 2021. Grace also uses the Gallup Alumni Survey to evaluate alumni success. Data from this survey showed that 80% of their graduates are extremely satisfied or satisfied with the education they received at Grace.

Other measures of satisfaction and success of graduates, both direct and indirect, are performed at the departmental level and graduate success data were reported in the following APRs:

- School of Education - Indiana Completer Satisfaction Ratings (CSR) and Employer Satisfaction Ratings(ESR)
- School of Business - One-year-out survey
- Graduate Counseling - tracking of licensure rates
- School of Ministry Studies - annual alumni survey
- Engineering - pass rates on the Fundamentals of Engineering Mechanical exam
- Accounting - CPA pass rates
- Mathematics - success reports of exceptional graduates
- NCLEX pass rates
- School of Arts & Sciences - success report

There was evidence that the results informed program changes.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

In comparing Grace's syllabi, the HLC team found that not all courses that are titled the same share the same learning outcomes. Learning outcomes must be the same across all modalities and in dual credit courses. An interim monitoring report is due December 1, 2023 demonstrating that all course and program learning outcomes are the same in all courses and programs that share the same title.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Following the 2019 HLC Reaffirmation Review Report, Grace developed an effective assessment and program review process as discussed in 4.A. Program directors oversee and facilitate the process. Further oversight is given by the Dean of Academic Engagement & Success in collaboration with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Academic Deans, and the Assessment Committee. The NILOA Framework for assessment was adopted by Grace to help structure the assessment process as verified in the Assessment Committee meeting minutes of April 20, 2020.

Co-curriculum plans and reports are also in place and are utilized to make improvements. Staff members in particular are involved in this process. Co-curricular events support academic learning and vice versa, thus the assessment process involves faculty and staff working collaboratively to ensure student success.

Grace designed an academic Assessment Plan that includes the following components:

- List of person(s) responsible for assessing PLOs and reviewing results
- List of PLOs
- Assessment method
- PLO implementation schedule (3-year cycle)
- Program mapping
- Identifiable trends
- Plan of action for improvement
- Budget requests, if needed

The Curricular Program Learning Outcomes Report includes:

- Program Learning Outcomes
- Assessment Methods

- Performance Target
- Results
- Improvements Planned or Made in Response to Result

Grace addressed the assessment and program review concerns of the last HLC visit in its Interim Report. HLC responded to the Interim Report dated December 16, 2021 and stated, "On behalf of the Higher Learning Commission, staff received the report on program review including resource allocation based on outcomes; systematic use of evidence to improve performance. No further reports are required." With Grace's attention to HLC concerns, great strides have been made in assessment and program review procedures and processes. Although evidence showed that Grace is in the process of following their Assessment Plan, the team concludes that Grace must continue to work on the areas of collection, analysis, and usage of student learning assessment data. As outlined in 4.A, with the next cycle of APRs there will be sufficient time to collect and analyze student learning data to close the loop on the assessment process. Further, although PLOs have been revised and created to ensure measurability, it was noted that there is inconsistency at the course level regarding measurability. As well, not all syllabi listed CLOs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.)

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace has defined goals for persistence, retention, and completion as seen in their student success initiatives. In a document dated April 3, 2020, the Student Success Committee reviewed the purpose & goals of the committee. They further defined eight student success factors to improve persistence and outlined the next steps necessary to accomplish these factors. The eight student success factors were:

- 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
- Equipped with knowledge, skills, and experience

Data from the 2019 Student Satisfaction Inventory report was used to determine overall student satisfaction with their experience at Grace College. Strengths and challenges were noted in the report. The Strategic Framework for Student Success plan was then developed to address practices, programs, preventions & interventions, etc., that would address student success factors. Grace also instituted the Early Warning Indicator, an app identifying students at risk. The Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy further defines the federal government's Department of Education mandate that students must make satisfactory academic progress to receive student financial assistance. This is monitored by the Registrar.

Grace provided data from IPEDS Completion rates with six-year rates used as performance indicators. They have established a completion target of 70%.

The cabinet in collaboration with other committees such as the Retention Committee and Student Success Committee set the expected student retention outcome. Although Grace has established 80% as their retention goal, the budget is set at 78%. Data showed that the goal exceeded this percentage in 2017, 2018, and 2021. The 2021 Strategic Plan also addresses retention and completion goals that include co-curricular areas and first-to-second-year rates of Black, Latino, and First-Gen students.

The Office of Information Technology reports completion and retention rates in a semester Cohort Retention Report. This office also disseminates IPEDS data on retention and completion in the Fact Book on Grace's portal. Grace provided nine examples in the argument of various internal stakeholders reviewing and using this data to make informed data-driven decisions. One example stated that "the VPSA regularly reports to the Student Affairs staff, who use data to track retention by group year-to-year."

Grace reported that departments also utilize data on retention and persistence to improve student success and quality of education. Examples were provided in the Assurance Argument to support that data were used to inform decisions. As an example, the new position of the Director of Student Success was created in August of 2022 following retention, persistence, and completion data analysis and information.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rationale

Grace demonstrated that it is effectively structured to provide a quality education in "a Christ-centered community of higher education applying biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service." The institution showed that it is responsible for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and that it evaluates the effectiveness of student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement. Plans and processes for program review have been brought into HLC compliance. The process of completing all program reviews will be finished December 2023. Student learning assessment data is in its first phase of being collected. By the time the next cycle of program reviews occurs, the collection of student learning data will yield sufficient evidence to inform curricular and programmatic improvements.

Faculty set expectations for student learning and the rigor of the curriculum. Grace designed measurable program learning outcomes that ensure the quality of its educational offerings.

Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of the transfer credit and the quality of credit that it transcripts. Faculty at Grace are committed to excellence in teaching and are qualified to teach in their respective areas.

Although Grace established a program review plan and process, the visiting team found inconsistencies in the use of course level student learning outcomes across modalities and in dual credit courses. A monitoring report is due December 1, 2023 that will demonstrate that all courses that are titled the same share the same learning outcomes.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, Grace demonstrates that its shared governance policies are effective and enable the institution to fulfill its mission. The College shows this through inviting broad participation by its internal constituents in myriad avenues; using data to inform decisions, policies and processes; and ensuring that faculty and other members of the community set academic requirements, policies, and processes through collaborative structures. Some clear examples of collaboration include the strategic planning process; the role of the Committee on Faculty as an avenue for receiving and, where appropriate, escalating faculty concerns; and monthly all employee meetings, called GEMs.

Grace employs participation from its constituents through its committee structure and other work groups. The Board has final decision-making authority in the best interests of the institution whereas management of Grace is delegated to the administration and faculty. With the onboarding of a new president in July 2022, and a return to a provost model of organization, the President's Cabinet oversees the effective operations of Grace at the highest level of administration. The Board Handbook, Faculty Handbook, Employee Handbook and committee composition support the institution's commitment to ensuring representation of its internal constituents in informing decisions.

In addition to shared governance structures and cross-functional teams, Grace's documented

processes and policies exhibit that faculty are primarily responsible for academic affairs of the institution with staff and administration to support, and students to inform faculty work. Committees such as the Committee on Faculty and Faculty Promotion Committee ensure that faculty manage academic affairs while being represented in administrative operations and decisions. Though they do not require faculty approval, faculty comments and input are solicited for administrative policies that impact faculty whereas HR policies are generally presented to senior administration for review and approval. Students are also represented through the Student Senate and the student body president's monthly meetings with the institution's president. Some academic schools have student committees to guide academic programs and course evaluations, which allow student feedback at the course level and are often included in program reviews and assessment. While academic requirements, policies, and processes are developed collaboratively with the administration, faculty and, as necessary, students and staff, a number of Grace community members could use transparency in decisions based on policy as well as clarity and better education on processes. One policy example that needs more clarity and education of faculty, administration, and students includes the non-discrimination policy for employees and corresponding bias incident reporting or other avenues of relief for incidents. A process example that needs more transparency includes the hiring of online part-time faculty in academic programs/departments and the ability to manage course content and quality by those programs/departments.

Grace uses data and dashboards to inform its institutional decisions in real time and pivot as necessary. For example, program reviews, employee surveys, and the IT survey have all resulted in changes implemented by the institution, such as program deletions and additions, new employee satisfaction and belonging initiatives, and even the outsourcing of the information helpdesk and network infrastructure.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

While Grace has seen growth in enrollment and revenue in recent fiscal years, it has simultaneously also invested in its physical campus spaces and taken steps to reduce debt and increase cash flow, allowing it to achieve its educational purposes and mission. Grace has also attempted to stabilize employee numbers. The College grew in total employees in 2021 and 2022 to 230 and 241 respectively, after a decline in number of total employees in 2019 and 2020 to 226 and 216 respectively.

Grace has set ideal qualifications and experiences for all employee positions and, for some administrative offices, possesses sufficient staffing numbers. This is not only documented by policy but also seen in practice through standardized hiring processes that are overseen by administration, vetted by the budget, measured against peer benchmarks, and informed by external partners and consultants. See 5.C for more information about faculty and administrative offices outside of those with documented benchmarks and/or external consultation.

Financially, Grace has increased financial resources through growth in endowment from \$18.9 million in 2018 to \$22.5 million in 2021, total revenue from \$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. This increase is planned to have a direct impact in supporting the increase in enrollment that Grace has achieved in recent years and hopes to continue to realize in future years. Grace has also invested in its technological and physical infrastructure by outsourcing its helpdesk and network infrastructure support, hiring new IT staff, building three new residence halls, and purchasing two more residential spaces since 2012.

Grace completed a new strategic plan that was approved by the Board in 2021. Biannual reports are presented to the Board to monitor progress and allow for additions or changes as needed. These reports indicate a cognition of changing needs and possibilities in light of real time developments, such as markers of financial strength.

The College has an established process for budgeting and monitoring expenses that is multifaceted and considers learning outcomes and educational purposes from the departmental to the institutional level. The annual budgeting process starts at the local level and incorporates budget proposals and changes from the prior year but also allows for staffing and capital spending considerations. Proposed local budgets are elevated to the supervisor and then senior administrator which are then reviewed by the President and senior administrative team. The President and senior administration considers each budget, may make adjustments, and then sends the preliminary budget to the Board for approval in the spring semester, which is finalized after enrollment numbers materialize in the fall semester. In real time, Grace monitors actual expenses on a monthly basis. Cash budgets are prepared for the forthcoming three fiscal years. The consideration of program learning outcomes at the local level each fiscal year combined with the actual realization of increased tuition revenue and net assets for the past three years allows Grace to ensure that its educational purposes and mission are achieved.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Grace engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement and works to allocate its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities. The institution achieves this through its strategic plans. For example, the Aspire Campaign which was developed, launched, and completed between 2016 and 2019 sought educational excellence and a culture of innovation. It connected community and sustainable affordability through 67 initiatives, only 8 of which were not completed but are still being pursued. The remaining initiatives were either completed, completed with continued implementation, or no longer pursued. The Aspire Campaign resulted in the following:

- building and renovating the science complex
- developing new academic programs and cross-institutional partnerships
- funding the Seminary's competency-based theological program
- providing research and education opportunities for Grace students and the community through the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams
- supporting \$13.5 million student scholarships through Grace's annual fund
- developing student spaces such as Encompass Hall housing the Institute of Global Studies
- redesigning athletic fields

Since the completion of the Aspire Campaign, Grace has developed and launched its current strategic plan, which was adopted by the Board in April 2021. Since its adoption, there has already been an update to the plan of improving operational cash flow by \$750,000 in response to Grace's priorities and opportunities due to increased enrollment and tuition revenue.

Grace links its processes with assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and

budgeting. In 2019, in response to the HLC's institutional effectiveness concern, Grace developed, adopted and implemented its institutional effectiveness policy to improve accountability of working towards educational outcomes in line with its mission. Assessment of institutional effectiveness should then inform decisions, strategic planning, budget planning process, and resource allocation. Due to a new program review process and missing student assessment data, it is difficult to fully inform or plan future operations and budget. Plans are currently underway to complete all program reviews and incorporate assessment data in all program reviews, completed and in-progress, by December 2023. As a result, on-campus discussions with administrators and faculty confirm that student assessment data is utilized limitedly, if at all, in program reviews and in annual budget planning. Since the new program review process was recently instituted and the time needed to collect student learning data was limited, the next program review cycle will provide the necessary time to collect, analyze and, use this data to inform budgetary planning (see 4.A).

Grace's planning processes engage internal and external constituents as indicated by the Aspire Campaign, which was completed in 2020, and the 2022-2023 strategic plan. For the Aspire Campaign, Grace worked with a consultant to conduct workshop sessions with faculty and staff and the stewardship team conducted additional listening sessions to inform the plan. For the 2022-2023 strategic plan, Grace engaged internal and external constituents through surveys and a town hall. The 2019 and 2021 Grace surveys of employees indicated declining satisfaction and increasing workload rates, which may pose morale and resource issues as enrollment increases, new academic programs are implemented, and the campus expands.

The College's budget plans reflect the increase in net tuition revenue and enrollment, and some changes have already been implemented due to this increase. For example, in 2019, Grace developed a five-year plan to balance the budget. In April 2022, the CFO revised the plan, a three-year cash budget, and presented it to the Board, which adopted the plan. The revised plan included a more sustainable model and was implemented beginning in Fall 2022 and will ultimately increase Grace's revenue.

While conversations with the Vice President of Enrollment Management indicate a multifaceted plan that contributed to an increase in enrollment, workplace surveys and on-campus conversations with staff and faculty indicate overall burnout and an unmanageable workload due to increased responsibilities and increased enrollment. An employee remarked at one of the open sessions, "We all have a heavy workload."

More specific to faculty, a review of the margin analysis, financial report, the Aspire Final Report, and the analysis of positions indicates that, while program offerings, course offerings and new student enrollment increased in the past two academic years, full-time instructional faculty increased by two by Fall 2022. The 2021-2022 Strategic Plan and the 2022-2023 Strategic Plan address faculty development and training, course load releases, and the addition of new academic programs. The 2021-2022 Strategic Plan also references a goal that "surveys will be used to better understand and provide more equity in compensation and workload across faculty positions." Meeting minutes indicate that two full-time instructional employees will be hired to start Fall 2023 while approximately two-thirds of full-time faculty who attended an open session reported working course overloads beyond the eight courses required, a number confirmed by administration. Students also seem aware of the demanding workload of faculty. One upper-level student characterized the constraints of the calendar and limited faculty course offerings as jeopardizing quality of instruction. Faculty overload has also been acknowledged by the Board, with one Board member mentioning, "The Board is very aware that the faculty feels stretched at the moment." In conversations with the

Provost, Grace intends to increase full-time instructional employees to sixty at a date, and for programs, yet to be determined.

While plans may exist to “provide more equity in compensation and workload across faculty positions”, a *sound* understanding for future action may include the consideration of any or all of the following factors:

- collecting data on the actual number of Grace full-time faculty members who are above the eight-hour course load requirement
- benchmarking average class size against peers
- benchmarking course release criteria against peers
- determining the number of full-time faculty members needed to achieve Grace’s ideal class size
- consulting with existing academic program faculty and non-instructional support staff prior to approval of new academic programs

Grace also includes external factors in its operations and planning. For example, in 2020, in response to COVID, Grace was able to pivot in response to the pandemic and sustain operations, and also adeptly appointed a strategic task force to allow the institution to reopen campus in Fall 2021. In further response to COVID, in 2020-2021, Grace implemented new technology upgrades to support campus virtual needs during the pandemic. In addition, Grace conducted an operational assessment of Jenzabar, its SIS, and identified areas for training or operational effectiveness and established a tiered execution strategy. Lastly, Grace added technology staff to enhance its service bandwidth.

Grace implements plans to improve its operations and academic outcomes. As part of the 2019 Reaffirmation Review, the annual budgeting process now includes the allocation of resources to enable the achievement of program learning outcomes and incorporates the consideration of capital spending and staffing needs. During the pandemic, this resulted in excluding academic school operating budgets from budget cuts and in allocating funds towards instructional resources and faculty development to equip educators through the shift from face-to-face to remote instruction during the pandemic.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rationale

Grace'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. With the Reaffirmation Review in 2019 and new strategic plan, Grace is poised to improve the quality of its educational offerings through program review and institutional effectiveness. While still in progress, program review and institutional effectiveness initiatives have already resulted in the development of new academic programs and the elimination of others. Due to a modified, sustainable budget, increased enrollment and tuition revenue, and growth in philanthropic and grant funding, Grace has a greater financial cushion to respond to future challenges and opportunities. Due to its strategic plan to grow in enrollment, academic programs and campus spaces, Grace should continue to ensure that institutional effectiveness data is collected and utilized; institutional policies and processes are clearly disseminated and effectively implemented; and resource allocations are appropriate.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met With Concerns
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	

Review Summary

Interim Report(s) Required

Due Date

12/1/2023

Report Focus

The HLC team found that not all courses that are titled the same share the same student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes must be the same across all modalities and dual credit courses must use the same outcomes as Grace's residential outcomes. An interim monitoring report is due December 1, 2023 demonstrating that all course and program learning outcomes are the same in all courses and programs that share the same title.

Conclusion

Grace College and Seminary demonstrated that it is positioned to continue to grow and thrive as an institution of higher learning. The mission statement shapes and is aligned to all areas from the goals and strategic plan to its institutional polices, processes, and procedures. As well, missional alignment was found in educational offerings, co-curricular programming, and in circles of influence.

Great strides have been made to ensure quality academic programs. A systemized process for program review has been established. Program learning outcomes have been written for all programs. The revised Core Program Learning Outcomes is an example of measurable and achievable student learning outcomes that are aligned with the mission.

Grace's resources, structures, processes, and planning show that it can support its educational offerings and its new strategic plan provides a clear roadmap for such improvements. Grace demonstrated financial stability with a sustainable budget, increased revenue through enrollment growth and tuition revenue, and growth in philanthropic and grant funding.

A "met with concerns" rating in 4A requires an interim monitoring report due December 1, 2023 demonstrating that all course level student learning outcomes are the same across all modalities and in courses taught as dual credit. Although an interim monitoring report is required, after a thorough review of the Assurance Argument and evidence files, meetings with the Board of Trustees and campus representatives, the HLC visiting team found that Grace College and Seminary is on a clear pathway to see continued growth while providing academic excellence.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met With Concerns

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Not Applicable to This Review

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE:	Grace College and Seminary, Indiana
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Standard Pathway - Mid-Cycle Review
DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:	Year 4 Comprehensive Evaluation. Specific review of compliance with faculty qualifications requirements solely for dual credit faculty has been suspended until the first evaluation occurring on or after September 1, 2025.
DATES OF REVIEW:	02/27/2023 02/28/2023
<input type="checkbox"/> No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements	

Accreditation Status

Control: Private NFP

Recommended Change: no change

Degrees Awarded: Associates, Bachelors, Doctoral, Masters

Recommended Change: no change

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2018 - 2019

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2028 - 2029

Recommended Change: no change

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): Specialist

The institution is limited to offer the following program(s), within the approved program levels listed above: Doctor of Ministry and Doctor of Intercultural Studies

Recommended Change: no change



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Additional Locations:

The institution has been approved for the Notification Program, allowing the institution to open new additional locations within the United States.

Recommended Change: no change

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. Approved for correspondence education courses and programs.

Recommended Change: no change

Accreditation:

* Note on date of accreditation: Accredited as Grace College and Seminary in 1994. Accreditation includes the formerly separately-accredited institutions: Grace College, first accredited in 1976, and Grace Theological Seminary, first accredited in 1982.

Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway: Standard Pathway

Recommended Change: no change

Upcoming Events:

Comprehensive Evaluation Visit - 2028 - 2029

Federal Compliance Review - 2028 - 2029

Monitoring

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Upcoming Events: Due December 1, 2023 an interim report that demonstrates that all course and program learning outcomes that share the same name or title, across all modalities and including dual credit, are the same.

(No Upcoming Events)

Institutional Data

Educational Programs

**Recommended
Change: no
change**

Undergraduate

Associate Degrees	2
Baccalaureate Degrees	66

Graduate

Master's Degrees	10
Specialist Degrees	0
Doctoral Degrees	2

Certificates

1

Extended Operations

Active Branch Campuses

(NONE)

Recommended Change: no change

Active Additional Locations

- UNITED STATES, 754 Ghent Road, Akron, Ohio, 44333
- UNITED STATES, 565 S Cleveland Massillon Rd, Fairlawn, Ohio, 44333
- UNITED STATES, 2325 Medina Road, Medina, Ohio, 44256
- UNITED STATES, Grace Church Building-Norton Campus
3970 Cleveland-Massillon Rd., Norton, Ohio, 44203

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Recommended Change: no change

Contractual Arrangements

(NONE)

Recommended Change: no change