Self-Study Report Draft as of March 8, 2026
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Institutional Context and Mission
Founded in 1865, Lehigh University is a premier coeducational, nondenominational, private residential research university that offers a distinctive academic environment for undergraduate and graduate students from across the globe. Firmly rooted in its mission of teaching, research, and service, Lehigh prepares students to become leaders through outstanding teaching by internationally recognized faculty who also perform groundbreaking research to meet the needs and challenges of society. Through academic rigor, an entrepreneurial mindset, and collaborative interdisciplinary opportunities, Lehigh challenges its students to become the leaders of the future.

Today, Lehigh University is among the most selective private research universities in the U.S. Academic programs are offered through five colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science, College of Education, and College of Health. Graduate and doctoral programs are available across all colleges, providing both disciplinary depth and interdisciplinary collaboration, supported by a residential undergraduate experience and a growing range of graduate and professional programs. Student outcomes, including first-year retention and six-year graduation rates, remain strong, reflecting the university's commitment to academic support and experiential learning. Enrollment has grown by 12% over the past decade, with approximately 5,986 undergraduates and 1,923 graduate students in 2025 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Ten-Year Enrollment Trends (2016–2025)
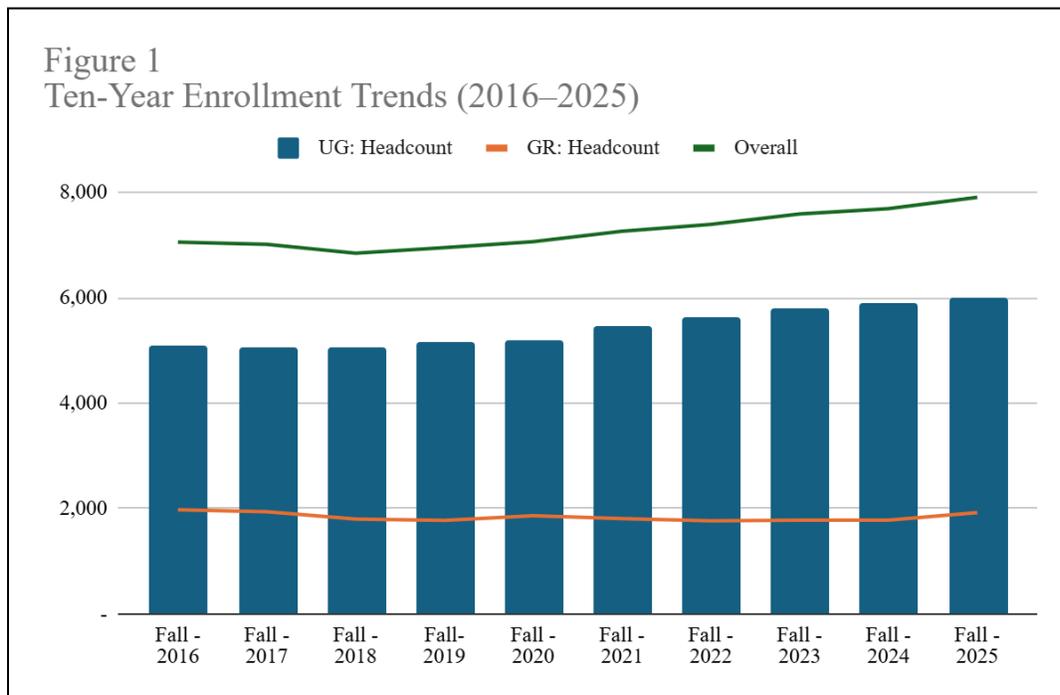
Lehigh employs approximately 600 full-time faculty, including more than 465 tenured or tenure-track faculty, and approximately 1,335 full- and part-time staff. A student–faculty ratio

of 11:1 allows students to work closely with their professors. First and second year undergraduate students live on campus in residence halls and specialty housing options. Students engage in leadership development activities and participate in more than 200 clubs and organizations around social, academic, cultural and intellectual activities.

Lehigh participates in NCAA Division I sports, fielding 26 teams for men and women, as well as approximately 40 annually intramural and club sports. The varsity baseball, men's cross country, women's cross country, field hockey, women's golf, women's lacrosse, men's soccer, women's soccer, men's swimming and diving, women's swimming and diving, volleyball, football, men's and women's basketball, men's lacrosse, men's golf, men's tennis and softball teams have all won Patriot League Championships, and some sports, including men's wrestling which has long competed in the Eastern Intercollegiate Wrestling Association (EIWA), have reached NCAA tournament championship level. These experiences support holistic student development and align with Lehigh's mission of preparing students to lead with knowledge, integrity and purpose.

Governance and Organizational Structure
Lehigh University's administration includes senior academic and administrative officers, such as college deans, vice presidents and vice provosts, who provide leadership for the institution's academic, financial, operational and strategic functions. Working with the president, this group supports the advancement of the university's mission and strategic priorities (Evidence 7.017: University Administration).

Lehigh operates within a shared governance framework that includes an engaged board of trustees, senior leadership, faculty governance bodies and administrative leadership. Faculty play a central role in curriculum oversight, academic standards and assessment, while administrative units support the academic mission through coordinated planning, operational effectiveness and student services. This governance structure promotes transparency, accountability and alignment between mission, planning and resource allocation, reflecting Standards I and II. Strategic planning and institutional improvement processes, including publicly available dashboards tracking key metrics such as research funding, retention and graduation, support evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement, consistent with Standard VI (EVIDENCE 7.020: Strategy Dashboards).

Strategic Direction and Institutional Priorities
Lehigh University's research strengths span its five colleges and are supported by approximately $45 million in externally sponsored funding in FY24, continuing a steady upward trend from approximately $26 million in FY18. Lehigh has made targeted investments in research, including the establishment of the College of Health in 2019, the construction of the Health, Science and Technology Building (HST) and strategic faculty hiring supported by competitive startup funding. Lehigh University has recently reached the milestone of attaining the Carnegie classification of Research 1 status, signifying very high research spending and doctorate production. Table 1 illustrates the federal research funding by agency from 2018 to 2024. The University continues to adapt to changing federal grant administration, using data-informed strategies to sustain research productivity.

TABLE 1 FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDING BY AGENCY (FY18–FY24)

Source of Funds	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY 24
Source: NSF[1] Higher Education Research and Development Survey (HERDS)							
Note: All figures in thousands of dollars							
Federal Agencies (Total)	25,834	26,554	26,816	29,051	36,535	39,909	44,850
DOD[2]	2,689	3,725	3,470	3,372	3,504	5,433	9,569
DOE[3]	4,026	3,614	3,882	4,508	5,730	6,430	5,453
HHS/NIH[4]	4,258	5,253	4,605	6,853	10,051	8,985	10,252
NASA[5]	103	134	69	150	157	391	318
NSF	11,480	11,304	12,443	11,749	13,029	14,720	15,367
USDA[7]	23	68	14	0	10	134	135
Other	3,255	2,456	2,333	2,419	4,054	3,816	3,756

1 U.S. National Science Foundation
2 U.S. Department of Defense
3 U.S. Department of Education
4 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/National Institutes of Health
5 National Aeronautics and Space Administration
6 U.S. Department of Agriculture

Lehigh University has a history of financial health and stability that supports its mission and strategic priorities. Favorable credit ratings and strong endowment performance have resulted in increased distributions supporting academic programs, with the endowment market value rising from $1.71 billion in FY21 to $1.95 billion in FY25. Implementation of the Lehigh Strategy, *Inspiring the Future Makers*, has been supported through internal reallocation of resources and new philanthropic contributions, within a centralized budget model that includes incentive-based opportunities for colleges to innovate academic programming. Recent capital investments, including the opening of the Business Innovation Building in 2023, provide state-of-the-art, flexible learning environments that foster collaboration and innovation among students and faculty.

In alignment with these investments, Lehigh has identified several strategic priorities that guide institutional planning and decision-making:

Enhancing Lehigh's local and global engagement and impact: The university prioritizes meaningful engagement with both the local and global community. Initiatives such as Enhance the Shared Bethlehem Experience seek to expand partnerships, strengthen regional impact and provide opportunities for students, faculty and staff to engage with the broader community. Globally, Lehigh pursues educational and research partnerships with organizations and institutions around the world, equipping students with the skills and perspective to act as global citizens. This priority aligns with MSCHE Standards I, II, and VI.

Holistic student success for all students: Lehigh defines student success as a shared responsibility across the university community, emphasizing the holistic development of intellectually curious, engaged learners. Student outcomes are assessed through multiple indicators, including academic achievement, retention, graduation rates, leadership and experiential learning opportunities, and post-graduate outcomes. By fostering an equitable and supportive educational environment, the university aims to inspire students to create pragmatic solutions for tomorrow's challenges. This priority aligns with MSCHE Standards III, IV, V, and VII.

Innovative and interdisciplinary education: Preparing students to solve complex, real-world problems requires opportunities to engage across disciplines and innovate within their fields. Lehigh advances interdisciplinarity through structured programs that allow students to explore multiple colleges, expand cross-college initiatives and strengthen existing interdisciplinary programs. Initiatives such as Universal Design for Inquiry support educational innovation and student learning across the university. This priority aligns with MSCHE Standards III, IV, V, and VII.

Through these research investments, financial strategies and strategic priorities, Lehigh demonstrates a clear vision for advancing its mission, fostering student success, and sustaining continuous institutional improvement.

Assessment, Planning and Continuous Improvement Culture
Lehigh University fosters a culture in which assessment, planning and continuous improvement are integral to decision-making at both the institutional and unit levels. The university systematically collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data to guide academic programs, student support services and administrative operations. Annual planning cycles and unit-level reviews ensure that initiatives align with the university's mission and strategic priorities.

This approach enables administrative and academic units to identify opportunities for innovation, optimize resources and implement targeted improvements, reinforcing a continuous cycle of assessment and refinement across the university. Through these practices, Lehigh demonstrates a commitment to using evidence thoughtfully to advance educational effectiveness, operational efficiency and the broader mission of preparing students for success in a complex, evolving world.

This culture of continuous improvement and data-informed decision-making underpins the Self-Study itself. The following section, *Use of Evidence and Organization of the Self-Study*, explains how evidence is selected, referenced and structured to support the analyses and findings presented in this report.

Use of Evidence and Organization of the Self-Study
This Self-Study is supported by a comprehensive collection of evidence that illustrates how Lehigh University meets Middle States standards and advances its mission. Evidence has been selected to provide clarity, transparency and context for the analyses presented in each chapter, drawing from institutional reports, dashboards, planning documents, assessment results and other relevant materials.

Throughout the report, evidence is cited using a standardized notation to support key claims and facilitate efficient review. References appear in parentheses as (EVIDENCE X.XXX: Title of Document) and correspond to materials listed in the Evidence Inventory. When multiple sources support a statement, they are grouped within a single parenthetical citation for clarity and ease of cross-referencing.

This organized approach ensures that reviewers can easily locate and verify supporting documentation while maintaining a clear narrative flow. It also highlights the University's commitment to using evidence thoughtfully to inform decision-making, assess effectiveness and drive continuous improvement across all levels of the institution.

Self-Study Process and Community Engagement

This Self-Study takes place during a period of active strategic implementation and institutional reflection. It was intentionally designed to be inclusive, evidence-based and aligned with existing planning and assessment practices. Quantitative indicators and qualitative perspectives from across the campus community inform the analyses that follow, providing essential context for understanding how Lehigh University meets Middle States standards. By drawing on broad engagement and multiple sources of evidence, the Self-Study reflects the university's commitment to using planning and assessment to advance its mission and promote continuous improvement.

The Self-Study was developed through an iterative, collaborative process. Working groups gathered evidence, conducted interviews and drafted preliminary analyses, which were shared with the campus through town halls, presentations and other engagement activities. Feedback from these sessions was incorporated into subsequent drafts, which were again shared for review, ensuring that the final Self-Study represents a broad range of perspectives from across the university community.

Through this process, the Self-Study not only documents institutional practices and outcomes but also demonstrates the university's commitment to shared governance and the thoughtful use of evidence to guide decision-making at all levels.

CHAPTER 1

STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Lehigh's Mission Statement
To advance learning through the integration of teaching, research and service to others. (Adopted 1992)

Lehigh's Vision Statement
Lehigh University prepares graduates to engage with the world and lead lives of meaning. We commit to:

- *National and international research prominence*
- *Learning experiences grounded in fundamental, transferable skills across all disciplines and in real-world challenges*
- *Strategic risk-taking in the presence of opportunity and adversity*
- *Social, environmental and economic sustainability*
- *Meaningful connection and partnership with alumni, supporters and citizens around the globe*
- *A robust return on the investment in a Lehigh education*
- *A diverse, inclusive and financially accessible environment*

(Adopted 2016)

Lehigh's Core Values
Essential and enduring tenets—a small set of timeless guiding principles that require no external justification; they have intrinsic value and importance.

- *Integrity and honesty*
- *Equitable community*
- *Academic freedom*
- *Intellectual curiosity*
- *Collaboration*
- *Commitment to excellence*
- *Leadership*

(Adopted 2007)

Lehigh University's mission, vision and values provide the philosophical, strategic and operational framework through which the institution makes decisions. Rooted in a nearly 160-year history, Lehigh's mission expresses a strong commitment to the integration of teaching, research and service. This mission statement has remained unchanged for more than three decades, and its influence has evolved in relation to new institutional priorities, an increasingly complex higher education environment and intensifying global challenges. The mission remains a source of institutional identity, community alignment and strategic direction, shaping not only high-level priorities but also decision-making at every level of the organization.

Lehigh's vision (stated above) reflects a multifaceted conception of educational purpose, one that emphasizes the creation of new knowledge, the development of intellectual capacity and professional skill and the cultivation of ethical responsibility and civic engagement. The mission aligns with Lehigh's identity as a private, highly selective and research intensive institution that advances learning by blending rigorous academic study with opportunities for practical application and service to others. This orientation informs how programs are designed, how faculty are supported and how students experience academic and cocurricular learning.

Institutional Priorities Reflect the Mission
As part of the self-study process, Lehigh's steering committee identified three institutional priorities. These priorities shape the university's approach to mission fulfillment and provide focal points for institutional inquiry:
- Enhancing Lehigh's Local and Global Engagement and Impact — this is achieved through education of students who will have practical skills and who are well prepared for careers and further education, and through research and scholarship that answers real-world questions (including questions of importance to regional and global partners) and defines new directions for academic disciplines.
- Holistic Student Success for All Students — this is achieved by advancing academic excellence, curricular relevance and rigor, while also considering well-being, leadership development and career readiness across a diverse student body.
- Innovative and Interdisciplinary Education — expanding cross-college academic pathways, exploratory learning experiences and curricular innovations such as Universal Design for Inquiry.[1]

These priorities reflect the mission's emphasis on teaching, research and service, and they provide structure for examining how Lehigh's strategic actions advance institutional purpose across MSCHE Standards I–VII.

Mission to Strategy: *Inspiring the Future Makers*
Lehigh's mission is translated into action through its institutional goals, which reflect the institution's evolving aspirations and strategic direction. Building on decades of strategic evolution, Lehigh initiated a campus-wide planning process in 2022 that engaged students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni and community partners (Evidence 1.001: 2022 Strategic Planning Process). Participants were asked to reflect on Lehigh's mission, assess emerging opportunities and challenges, identify institutional strengths and envision how Lehigh should prepare students for a rapidly changing world. The resulting university-wide strategic plan, *Inspiring the Future Makers* (see Evidence 1.002: 2023 Strategic Plan), affirms the enduring relevance of the mission while articulating a forward-looking vision for how Lehigh will educate leaders who are capable of imagining, creating and implementing solutions that meaningfully improve the world.

---

[1] Universal Design for Inquiry is an instructional approach that applies the principles of Universal Design for Learning to inquiry-based education by intentionally designing learning environments, inquiry processes and assessment pathways that are accessible, flexible and inclusive for all learners. It ensures that students can engage in inquiry through multiple means of participation, exploration and demonstration of learning, while reducing barriers and supporting diverse abilities, backgrounds and learning preferences from the outset.

Inspiring the Future Makers is organized around three overarching goals:

1. **Make it New** focuses on fostering innovation, advancing knowledge through interdisciplinary research and developing teaching practices that equip students to address contemporary challenges.
2. **Make a Difference** highlights Lehigh's commitment to civic engagement, global learning and the translation of new ideas into real-world problem solving.
3. **Make it Together** emphasizes collaboration, community partnership and shared responsibility for student learning and success.

Together, these goals define a comprehensive framework for institutional action, charting a path toward a future in which new ideas and knowledge create lasting and positive societal impact. These broad goals informed the development of a defined set of metrics that are updated regularly and reported publicly through a series of strategic dashboards (Evidence 1.003: Lehigh Strategy Progress Dashboards). The dashboards present key outcome measures aligned with each goal, including research activity and doctoral production (Make It New); student success, outcomes, and return on investment (Make a Difference); and community composition, retention, sense of belonging and satisfaction (Make It Together). Collectively, these indicators provide a transparent, data-informed view of institutional progress toward the university's strategic priorities. These metrics are reviewed every semester by university leadership and annually by our board of trustees. Since its formation and board endorsement, Lehigh's strategy has continued to evolve. One notable change has been the incorporation of goals related to thoughtful adoption of generative AI tools into our educational and operational practices and a focus on how appropriate use of generative AI can enhance student learning and therefore improve student outcomes.

I.1a–c: Lehigh University has clearly defined mission and goals that are developed through collaborative participation by those responsible for institutional development and improvement, address both internal and external contexts and constituencies and are approved and supported by the governing body.

Lehigh University's mission expresses the institution's enduring purpose and provides the intellectual and ethical framework that guides its academic, research and community engagement endeavors. The mission situates Lehigh as a premier, private and research intensive institution devoted to the integration of teaching, research and service. It affirms that Lehigh prepares graduates to engage thoughtfully with a changing world and to lead lives of meaning. This broad purpose underscores a commitment to cultivating inquiry, advancing knowledge and creating learning environments that support personal and intellectual growth.

Although concise, the mission conveys several core propositions. It asserts that academic excellence is central to Lehigh's identity and activities. The mission emphasizes the creation and dissemination of knowledge, not only within academic classrooms and laboratories but also through meaningful service to local and global communities. Further, it reinforces that education at Lehigh must prepare students to meet complex societal challenges, contribute to their professions and participate in civic life. By addressing both internal and external contexts and constituencies at the local, regional and global level, this clearly defined mission fulfills the expectations of **MSCHE Standard I, Criterion 1(b).**

The mission also reflects Lehigh's heritage. Established in 1865 to educate future leaders through rigorous academic engagement and hands-on learning, Lehigh has retained the

founder's emphasis on translating knowledge into practice. The mission continues to affirm that teaching and research must address not only disciplinary inquiry but also real-world problems. Over time, this integration has become a defining characteristic of Lehigh, shaping areas of institutional strength including interdisciplinary collaboration, creative inquiry, entrepreneurial thinking and applied research.

Stakeholder engagement supports the continued relevance of the mission. The faculty, administration and board of trustees periodically review the mission through structured institutional processes associated with strategic planning, accreditation and board oversight. During major strategic planning efforts, most recently *Inspiring the Future Makers*, the campus community, including faculty governance bodies, administrative units, students, alumni and trustees, evaluated whether the mission continued to reflect institutional aspirations and contemporary educational needs (Evidence 1.001: 2022 Strategic Planning Process), meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard I, Criterion 1(a).** The board of trustees is also charged by the university's Bylaws with ensuring the coherence of the mission and its alignment with institutional strategy (Evidence 1.004: University Bylaws, section 2.2). These recurring activities, rather than a fixed schedule, provide ongoing opportunities to affirm the mission's relevance and ensure that it represents shared institutional purpose and commitment, therefore meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard I, Criterion 1(c).**

I.1d: Lehigh University's mission and goals guide faculty, administration, staff and governing bodies in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development and the definition of institutional and educational outcomes.

The board of trustees formally endorsed *Inspiring the Future Makers* in 2023, affirming institutional commitment to the plan's goals, initiatives and priorities. This approval reflects Lehigh University's shared governance structure, in which strategic planning engages multiple stakeholders, incorporates broad consultation and results in decisions made at the highest level of institutional authority.

Following approval, colleges and administrative units across the university aligned their own planning processes with strategic goals. Each academic unit developed strategies to integrate interdisciplinary inquiry, advance teaching and research effectiveness, expand global and community engagement and support student learning. Administrative units similarly integrated strategic priorities by enhancing student support, investing in research infrastructure, promoting international partnerships and strengthening technological capacity.

This alignment allows Lehigh to monitor progress toward mission realization and institutional goals. Over time, Lehigh has established a culture of continuous improvement characterized by evidence-based decision-making, collaborative planning and intentional refinement.

Ten Institutional Initiatives
Inspiring the Future Makers builds on this culture and signals a deep commitment to integrating mission-driven action with institutional planning, resource allocation and assessment. The plan's ten initiatives create a structure through which Lehigh can make meaningful progress, maintain a focus on shared priorities and communicate direction clearly to internal and external stakeholders. These initiatives reinforce mission-aligned activities at all levels, including curricular innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration,

student support, research development, community engagement and the provision of an inclusive learning environment.

The ten institutional initiatives include four foundational initiatives that build essential institutional capacity and six key initiatives that advance Lehigh's academic, research and community-facing priorities. The four foundational initiatives include Decision Making Informed by Qualitative and Quantitative Data and Analysis, An Expanded and Strengthened Research Environment, An Organization of the Future and A Lehigh for Everyone. The six key initiatives include Lead in Educational Innovation, Invest in Strategic Interdisciplinary Research, Redefine a Deeply Interdisciplinary Education, Enhancing Graduate and Lifelong Learning, Enhance the Shared Bethlehem Experience and Transform Mountaintop Campus.

Through these initiatives, Lehigh advances core aspects of its mission, including knowledge creation, institutional agility, interdisciplinary learning, community engagement, student success and inclusive excellence. The initiatives facilitate coordinated action across academic and administrative units, ensuring that planning, assessment and investment reflect shared institutional priorities. They also support long-range institutional development, including faculty recruitment, program growth and campus infrastructure investments that align with evolving needs.

Each year, annual goals are developed for each of these ten initiatives, and the initiative leads meet monthly with the vice president for strategic planning and initiatives and the provost to review progress on these annual goals. Completion of these goals is reviewed with the board of trustees annually.

Financial alignment also supports implementation of the university's mission and goals. Each year, the university reallocates 2% of the operating budget to support initiatives and priorities consistent with the Lehigh Strategy, ensuring that planning is tied to resources and that new ideas and emerging needs can be supported without relying solely on incremental funding. This alignment is communicated to campus leaders through annual resource planning guidance issued by senior leadership, which references institutional priorities and expectations for mission-aligned proposals (Evidence 1.044: Sample Resource Planning Documents).

The institution also made significant progress on a comprehensive campus plan that aligns capital development with strategic priorities. The 2025 Campus Plan (*Making the Future: A Plan for the Lehigh Campus*) provides a 30-year framework to transform the university's spaces in ways that support student success, advance research and strengthen connections to the Bethlehem and Lehigh Valley communities (Evidence 1.028: 2025 Campus Plan). In addition, the Capital Projects Approval Process outlines procedures for initiating, planning and executing major construction and renovation projects, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives, financial feasibility and transparent management of capital investments (Evidence 1.029: Capital Projects Approval Process Policy). The campus plan now guides current and future investments in facilities, infrastructure and real estate, for example, as well as the development of new interdisciplinary research spaces, modernization of core academic buildings, enhancements to residential facilities and improvements to pedestrian and transportation systems that strengthen connectivity across campuses. These investments support a growing research portfolio, a dynamic residential student experience and expanded opportunities for collaboration.

Mission Integration Across the Institution

Colleges communicate their educational purposes in ways that reflect disciplinary identities while remaining aligned with the university's mission. These purposes, articulated through mission statements, college narratives, program materials and planning documents, guide decisions related to curriculum, student learning, research priorities, community engagement and faculty hiring. Although developed at different times and not uniformly referencing *Inspiring the Future Makers*, these materials demonstrate alignment with institutional mission and values and support coherence between unit-level priorities and university-wide goals (Evidence 1.007: College Mission Statements).

For example, the College of Arts and Sciences supports interdisciplinary studies in fields ranging from environmental policy to data science. The College of Business advances innovation in entrepreneurship, business analytics and leadership development. The P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science (the Rossin College) emphasizes research-driven education that prepares students to tackle technical, social and environmental challenges. The College of Education integrates research, teaching and community partnership to prepare educators and leaders to transform education systems. The College of Health promotes population health and health equity through interdisciplinary coursework, applied research and community partnerships.

Administrative and student service units also align their missions with institutional goals, ensuring that planning, resource decisions and support programs advance Lehigh University's core academic purpose. The examples below illustrate a sampling of how administrative units operationalize institutional priorities and reinforce coherence across campus. Together, these units demonstrate how the mission functions as a shared institutional touchstone.

Student Affairs supports student development by integrating residential life, leadership development, well-being, equity, inclusion and co-curricular programming. These programs encourage students to engage reflectively with academic and community experiences, reinforcing institutional priorities related to learning, service and collaboration (See Evidence 1.007: Sample Divisional Websites, p.#).

Library and Technology Services advances the mission by providing technological infrastructure, information resources, data management systems and faculty support for instructional innovation. The division enables faculty to pursue new knowledge, facilitates student discovery and provides access to scholarly resources that sustain an active research environment (See Evidence 1.037: LTS Strategic Plan; Evidence 1.024: LTS Annual Reports).

Athletics supports the mission by promoting leadership, character development, academic achievement and student wellness. The department offers broad participation opportunities, fosters equitable access to sports and fitness and engages alumni and community stakeholders (See Evidence 1.025: Athletics Annual Reports).

The Office of International Affairs aligns with institutional goals by facilitating international partnerships, increasing student mobility, supporting international students and scholars and advancing global engagement. Its programs expand Lehigh's global reach, complementing research activities, student learning and community collaboration (See Evidence 1.040: OIA Strategic Plan; Evidence 1.026: International Affairs Annual Reports).

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs under the Office of the Vice Provost for Research strengthens institutional alignment by supporting faculty scholarship, growing Lehigh's research enterprise and expanding interdisciplinary collaboration. Through proposal development support, research compliance oversight and investment in centers and institutes, the office advances mission-driven knowledge creation and promotes research with societal impact (Evidence: 1.041: Office of the VP for Research).

In a recent Lehigh survey with 15 employer partners, hiring managers emphasized that AI literacy is now a core expectation for new graduates. In response, Lehigh's Center for Career & Professional Development launched AI Ready Learning Pathways on LinkedIn Learning, offering scaffolded beginner, intermediate and advanced courses that complement classroom learning with practical, real-world applications across disciplines. The initiative aims to ensure Lehigh students are AI Ready and equipped to understand, apply and communicate about AI tools in meaningful and ethical ways (Evidence 1.045: AI Ready CCPD Website and Report).

The Office of Educational Innovation and Assessment (OEIA) contributes to mission fulfillment by supporting pedagogical innovation, advancing assessment practices and helping faculty develop evidence-based strategies that enhance student learning. OEIA partners with colleges and programs to align curricular design, learning outcomes and instructional practices with institutional goals related to teaching effectiveness and educational innovation (Evidence 1.042: OEIA Website).

The Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging (OIEB) plays a central role in advancing institutional commitments to equity, inclusion and student success. Through climate assessments, professional development, strategic initiatives and partnerships across colleges and administrative units, the office operationalizes mission components related to service, community engagement and holistic student development (Evidence 1.043: OIEB Website)

Additional administrative units, including Development and Alumni Relations, Finance and Administration, and University Communications and Public Affairs, contribute to mission alignment by shaping institutional resources, student recruitment strategies, organizational infrastructure and public messaging that support strategic goals and reinforce institutional identity.

Collectively, these unit-level missions ensure that institutional priorities guide the full range of academic, research, administrative and co-curricular activities. This coordinated approach across the university and administrative units ensures that the mission and strategic plan influence decisions across the institution. It reinforces the role of the mission as a guiding framework that informs planning and governance, rather than as a statement that stands apart from daily work, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 1(d).**

I.1e: Lehigh's mission and goals support scholarly inquiry and creative activity.

Lehigh's commitment to scholarly inquiry and creative activity is built into the strategic plan's three-part framework of Make it New, Make a Difference, and Make it Together. This structure is realized across academic programs, many of which integrate teaching, research and application. It is illustrated particularly clearly, however, in programs that are explicitly designed to connect interdisciplinary scholarship with experiential learning. Programs that

bridge engineering and business, for example, embed project-based inquiry, applied research and collaboration with industry partners in ways that intentionally link theory to practice. The data science program at the Rossin College demonstrates responsiveness to industry and academic demand while immersing students in research-driven analytics, modeling and problem-solving.

Collaboration and scholarship across disciplines are also at the heart of interdisciplinary centers such as the University Research Center for Catastrophe Modeling and Resilience. This center was established in 2024 to provide an interdisciplinary home for the scientific and educational activities of a large number of scholars who have been working on catastrophe modeling and resilience applied to natural disasters and health related events (Evidence 1.033: CMR Research Center). Additionally, the Center for Supply Chain Research bridges theory and practice to promote a collaborative exchange of ideas on critical issues affecting supply chain management (Evidence 1.034: CSC Research Center).

The Global Social Impact Fellowship engages students in collaborative research addressing global challenges, and Iacocca International Internship Program, Martindale Student Associates Honors Program and other global offerings further demonstrate how Lehigh structures learning environments that involve inquiry, application and service. Together, these programs exemplify the mission's call to integrate teaching, research and service to address complex societal challenges.

The creation and strengthening of Creative Inquiry under the Office of the Provost signals recognition that innovation and inquiry are central to mission fulfillment. This program supports a wide range of interdisciplinary initiatives that help students and faculty pursue new intellectual, creative and artistic pathways that lead to transformative new innovations, expressions and questions (Evidence 1.031: Creative Inquiry Program). The Baker Institute for Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovation further advances this work by fostering entrepreneurial mindsets, supporting venture development and providing interdisciplinary opportunities for students to imagine and test new ideas (Evidence 1.032: Baker Institute). Mountaintop programming invites students to engage in exploratory, open-ended investigation and supports cutting-edge research and experiential learning. This model encourages risk taking, cross-disciplinary vision and entrepreneurial thinking. These skills align with goals within Make it New and Make a Difference.

Further, Lehigh supports exceptional students through programs like the Eckardt Scholars program. This highly selective honors program emphasizes deep intellectual curiosity, interdisciplinary education, independent work and close mentoring relationships between the very highest achieving students and faculty at Lehigh (Evidence 1.030: Eckardt Scholars Program).

Mission Drives Research Growth
Faculty hiring and development supports mission fulfillment by advancing research that expands knowledge, addresses societal needs and enriches student learning. Cluster hiring in strategic areas advances interdisciplinary research and expands expertise in high-impact fields. The institution's commitment to research growth is further evidenced by the Lehigh Strategy's explicit goal of doubling research activity, supported by investments in laboratory space, proposal development support, doctoral student funding and research communication (Evidence 1.002: 2023 Strategic Plan). This commitment is also reflected in the establishment of three new University Research Centers (URCs), which serve as hubs for interdisciplinary collaboration and expand the institution's capacity for high-impact

scholarship that is aligned with the university's mission (Evidence 1.035: New Research Centers).

Faculty are supported in pursuing knowledge that elevates the institution and contributes to societal needs through mechanisms such as internal research grants, seed funding programs and interdisciplinary cluster hiring. Student programs, including leadership development initiatives, community-engaged learning courses, international internships and experiential learning in residential communities, integrate academic and co-curricular learning to support personal development, global engagement and leadership. All of these contribute to a student experience grounded in purposeful integration of learning, research and service.

These examples are evidence that the activities of the university demonstrate the scholarly and creative efforts expected by **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 1(e).**

I.1f: Lehigh's mission and goals are publicized and widely known by its internal constituencies.

Mission and Goals Communicated Clearly and Publicly
Lehigh University communicates its mission, vision and strategic goals through multiple, consistently used platforms to ensure both public accessibility and internal awareness. The institutional mission is prominently displayed on the university's public website, included in the course catalogs and incorporated into official university publications, ensuring broad visibility among students, faculty, staff and external stakeholders (Evidence 1.006: Mission and Vision Webpage; 1.005: 2025-2026 Catalog; 1.002: 2023 Strategic Plan). Colleges and administrative units reinforce institutional consistency by publishing unit-level mission statements on divisional websites and incorporating mission alignment into planning and assessment documents, reflecting institution-wide oversight and accountability for mission fulfillment supported by governance and administrative leadership (Evidence 1.007: Sample Divisional Websites; see also Standard VII).

Institutional storytelling — through news features, strategic plan communications, presidential messages and campus-wide announcements — regularly highlights mission-aligned achievements and priorities. Strategic communications associated with *Inspiring the Future Makers* have further elevated shared understanding of institutional direction and reinforced the connection between mission and ongoing initiatives (Evidence 1.020: Strategic Planning Process - news events; Evidence 1.027: Community Conversations; Evidence 1.023: Strategy Progress Reports). Together, these efforts demonstrate that Lehigh actively disseminates and reinforces its mission through a range of communication channels that are accessible to internal and external audiences, therefore fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 1(f).**

Institutional communication and engagement methods further reinforce implementation of the strategic plan. These include Presidential Dinners, Future Maker Forums, campus-wide town halls and Future Maker Grants, all of which help to share progress, strengthen transparency and support faculty, staff and student involvement in the plan's priorities. These recurring events create opportunities for broad participation and highlight how strategic goals are integrated into academic, administrative and co-curricular work.

Some opportunities exist to elevate mission visibility through expanded signage, integration into campus environments, presentation within student life programs and

incorporation into institutional storytelling. These improvements form part of the recommendations presented later in this report.

I.2: Lehigh's institutional goals are realistic, appropriate to higher education and consistent with its mission.

Lehigh's mission has remained stable for more than 30 years. Its clarity and conciseness continue to resonate with campus stakeholders, and the institution continues to uphold the integration of teaching, research and service as its central organizing principle. The decision to retain the mission through successive presidential transitions, campus planning cycles and structural changes underscores its broad relevance and adaptability to evolving higher education contexts.

As described earlier, the launch of *Inspiring the Future Makers* in 2023 (Evidence 1.002: 2023 Strategic Plan) reaffirmed Lehigh's core commitments while providing a contemporary articulation of institutional aspirations. The plan's three-part framework of Make it New, Make a Difference and Make it Together provides a strong interpretive lens through which units understand and operationalize the mission. The annual strategic goals — which are publically available — are tracked and evaluated each year, and in the first two years of the plan, approximately 80% of the annual goals were completed in the targeted time frame, indicating that these annual goals are achievable yet aspirational. Therefore, Lehigh's institutional goals are in clear alignment with *Inspiring the Future Makers* and the mission, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 2.**

I.3a–d: Lehigh's goals focus on student learning outcomes and achievement, including retention, graduation, transfer and placement rates; are informed by diversity, equity and inclusion principles; are supported by administrative, educational and student support services; and prioritize institutional improvement.

As previously mentioned, the strategic plan articulates three overarching goals and ten initiatives that together establish institutional priorities and prioritize student success. The three university-wide priorities identified in Lehigh's Self-Study Design are Enhancing Local and Global Engagement and Impact, Holistic Student Success for All Students and Innovative and Interdisciplinary Education. These priorities inform the student experience through experiential learning opportunities, global programs, belonging initiatives and enhanced student success efforts. Lehigh enrolls approximately 5,980 undergraduate and 1,920 graduate students annually, with demographic and program-level breakdowns monitored via IPEDS reports (Evidence 1.046: IPEDS Enrollment Data). Collectively, these priorities emphasize educational innovation, interdisciplinary research and scholarship, student learning and support, infrastructure development, data-informed decision-making, community engagement and organizational transformation. This enrollment monitoring informs planning, resource allocation and support services to ensure student success. The initiatives offer direction that is sufficiently broad to stimulate creativity and local adaptation, while also providing clarity to guide decision-making.

Enrollment, retention and graduation trends are monitored regularly throughout the year, to inform operational and strategic decision-making, and these metrics are formally reviewed and verified annually as part of the university's submission of the MSCHE Annual Institutional Update (AIU), which supports ongoing evaluation of institutional effectiveness and mission fulfillment (Evidence 1.011: Annual Institutional Updates). Retention, graduation and transfer rates are analyzed annually, both internally and through IPEDS reports, to ensure alignment

with student success goals (Evidence 1.047: IPEDS Outcome Data). Faculty and staff numbers , including instructional and student support staff, are tracked through IPEDS and internal HR reporting to ensure appropriate staffing levels for student learning and success initiatives (Evidence 1.048: IPEDS HR Reports).

While each college develops and maintains its own student learning outcomes, periodic review strengthens the clarity, relevance and transparency of these outcomes and their alignment with the university's mission and educational values (Evidence 1.013: College Learning Outcomes; Evidence 1.012: Framework for Graduate Program Review). These learning outcomes are articulated and enacted in programs, departments and courses so that the design and delivery of the student learning experience supports student success at all levels. Learning outcomes are assessed and revised as needed to ensure the success of students as they progress to the workplace of the future (see Standard V for detailed assessment processes and evidence). Post-graduation placement and career outcomes are monitored through surveys, employer feedback and IPEDS outcomes data to ensure programs effectively prepare students for the workforce and advanced study (Evidence 1.047: IPEDS Outcome Data; 1.049:First Destination Reports; 1.050: Next Destination Reports). These outcomes inform program refinement and curricular improvements to enhance student achievement and workforce readiness. By maintaining strategic goals focusing on student learning outcomes and student achievement that includes retention, graduation, transfer and placement rates, Lehigh meets the requirements of **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 3(a).**

Through these structured goals, measurable outcomes, and ongoing monitoring, Lehigh demonstrates a sustained commitment to assessing and improving student learning and achievement, ensuring that institutional priorities are consistently realized in student success across programs and levels, fulfilling the requirements of **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 3(c).**

Institutional improvement is a priority that was articulated in several areas of the strategic plan, meeting the requirements of **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 3(d).** An example of an institutional improvement that supports student success is the recent merging of the Center for Academic Success and the Center for Writing and Math into the newly expanded Academic Success and Writing Center. This change was made in response to students' concerns that they were unsure which option to select for their tutoring needs. Another example is the establishment of completion grants, which are relatively small grants intended to support students who are close to the completion of their degrees but need additional funding to complete coursework during the summer months. These grants reflect the university's commitment to equity, retention and timely graduation by addressing obstacles that disproportionately affect students with financial need.

Commitment to Access, Equity and Belonging
The mission's emphasis on service to others aligns naturally with commitments to inclusive excellence, fulfilling the requirements of **MSCHE Standard 1, Criterion 3(b).** The initiative titled A Lehigh for Everyone underscores institutional dedication to building an equitable and inclusive environment where all students, faculty and staff can thrive. This initiative informs planning around recruitment, student belonging, climate assessment and professional development.

In support of these priorities, the Lehigh Commitment advances access and affordability by providing a full tuition grant to undergraduate students from families with total incomes

below $75,000, expanding access to a Lehigh education for talented students who contribute to and strengthen the campus community (Evidence 1.016: The Lehigh Commitment). The institution has expanded student support services, enhanced advising structures and improved financial aid outreach and support. Colleges and departments have also improved faculty and staff recruitment practices with attention to diversity. These efforts are coordinated through the Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging, and they align with mission and strategic priorities (Evidence 1.014: Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Plan 2021-2026).

The mission continues to demonstrate relevance in a changing higher education landscape, and its broad framing allows Lehigh to adapt to new opportunities and challenges while maintaining a clear sense of identity.

I.4: Lehigh periodically assesses its mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable.

Lehigh regularly evaluates the continuing relevance of its mission and goals, fulfilling expectations of **MSCHE Standard I, Criterion 4 and Standard VII.** Mission evaluation occurs through defined processes that include strategic planning cycles, Middle States accreditation self-studies, academic program reviews conducted through a multi-faceted approach involving academic departments and institutional bodies, annual assessment reporting across units and institutional data analysis produced by the Office of Institutional Data. These recurring mechanisms provide structured opportunities to examine whether the mission remains appropriate and whether institutional goals continue to reflect emerging needs.

As previously noted, during the development of Inspiring the Future Makers, the campus engaged broadly to consider whether the mission continued to reflect the institution's purpose and aspirations (Evidence 1.018: Strategic Planning Process -summary; Evidence 1.019: Strategic Planning Process -updates; Evidence 1.020: Strategic Planning Process -news events). Through listening sessions, surveys, working groups, Future Maker Forums and targeted consultations, the stakeholders shared feedback which shaped the identification of the Lehigh's Strategy's goals and initiatives that now structure institutional action, annual goal setting and resource allocation. This process ensures that the plan's direction is reflected not only institutional priorities but also the aspirations and perspectives of the broader Lehigh community.

Based on feedback collected during the 2025 self-study process, students and other stakeholders report that Lehigh's mission shapes institutional priorities, from academic programs to campus culture. Students indicated that the mission aligns with their personal and professional aspirations by providing both a challenging environment and strong support structures, and emphasized their active role in fostering a community of mutual success. Stakeholders affirm the mission's integration of teaching, research and service and its focus on preparing students for meaningful work, while noting opportunities to clarify how these priorities are operationalized across faculty roles and daily practices. They also highlight tensions between career-focused student outcomes, support for core scholarship, and the need for mission-driven transparency in resource allocation (Evidence 1.017: Summary of Mission and Values Feedback).

Assessment is embedded across the institution to ensure mission fulfillment. Colleges and administrative units document progress toward strategic goals, mission alignment, learning

objectives, research priorities, workforce needs and operational effectiveness. This documentation occurs through several established methods, including college-level strategic plan updates and unit-level annual reports. These materials are maintained by the Office of the Provost and individual colleges.

Each academic unit evaluates teaching effectiveness, research productivity, program quality and student learning. These assessments inform decisions regarding curriculum development, faculty hiring, resource allocation and student support. Program review reports, annual faculty activity reports, curriculum committee documentation and accreditation self-studies (where applicable) contain these evaluations and can be found in evidence items related to program review, assessment reporting and accreditation materials.

Administrative units similarly assess performance through defined metrics, annual unit reports and strategic initiative dashboards, along with customer satisfaction data, technology performance indicators, equity and inclusion measures and financial analyses (Evidence 1.022: Lehigh Strategy Progress Report 2023-2024; Evidence 1.023: Lehigh Strategy Progress Report 2024-2025; Evidence 1.024: LTS Annual Reports; Evidence 1.026: International Affairs Annual Reports). These assessment activities provide evidence of progress toward strategic goals and are regularly reviewed by university leadership. For example, Lehigh periodically assesses campus climate and sense of belonging to evaluate progress and inform institutional improvement, and shares these findings transparently with students, faculty and staff through campus town hall sessions and a publicly available campus climate dashboard (Evidence 1.015: Campus Climate Survey Dashboard). This review process supports transparency, data-informed decision-making, shared responsibility and continuous improvement. Assessment findings inform decision-making and guide continuous improvement.

Recommendations
The analysis of Standard I reveals a strong alignment between Lehigh's mission, goals and institutional practices, as well as several opportunities to deepen integration, strengthen communication and enhance institutional coherence. The recommendations below arise directly from areas of opportunity identified throughout the chapter, particularly in relation to mission visibility, alignment of unit-level planning, interdisciplinary and global engagement, student-facing mission integration and governance structures that support effective implementation of *Inspiring the Future Makers*.

Recommendation 1 – Strengthen Communication, Visibility and Environmental Integration of Mission
Enhance visibility and accessibility of Lehigh's mission, core purpose and core values across internal and external platforms, including digital communications, the website, strategic communications and student-facing materials, to reinforce institutional identity, shared understanding and community-wide engagement with mission-aligned work. Expand efforts to integrate mission and strategic plan messaging into physical campus environments, public events and community engagement activities. Enhancing mission visibility through environmental design and institutional narrative will promote shared identity and strengthen campus culture.

Recommendation 2 – Deepen Alignment Between Unit-Level Planning and Institutional Mission
Encourage colleges and administrative units to more explicitly map their goals, strategies

and assessment practices to the mission, the three institutional priorities and the strategic plan's goals and initiatives. Clearer articulation of these connections will improve coherence, transparency and institutional effectiveness.

Recommendation 3 – Expand Infrastructure Supporting Interdisciplinary, Global and Mission–Aligned Scholarship
Sustain and deepen investments that advance interdisciplinary collaboration, mission–oriented research, creative inquiry and global engagement. Continued expansion of resources, administrative structures and partnerships will strengthen Lehigh's capacity to address complex societal challenges.

Recommendation 4 – Integrate Mission and the Future Makers Concept More Fully into the Student Experience
Further embed the mission, the vision of *Inspiring the Future Makers* and the institution's core values into student–facing experiences, including orientation, advising, academic pathways, experiential learning, cocurricular programs and leadership development. This integration will help students understand how their educational journey connects to institutional purpose.

Recommendation 5 – Strengthen Governance–Supported Implementation of Mission and Strategic Goals
Continue embedding the mission, core purpose, core values and strategic goals into governance structures and decision-making processes, particularly in areas of resource allocation, academic investments, capital planning and organizational design, to ensure aligned execution of *Inspiring the Future Makers* across all levels of the institution.

CHAPTER 2

STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies and represent itself truthfully.

Standard II evaluates whether the institution's mission is enacted with honesty, fairness and respect for individuals and ideas. For Lehigh, this encompasses academic freedom and freedom of expression; a climate of respect; clear, accessible grievance pathways; avoidance and management of conflicts of interest; fair and impartial employment practices; truthful public and internal communications; programs that promote diversity, affordability and informed financial decisions; compliance with laws and Commission requirements; and regular assessment of ethics and integrity in policy and practice.

As described in Standard I, Lehigh University's policies, practices and assessment mechanisms are guided by its mission to advance learning through the integration of teaching, research and service to others. As part of the self-study process, the university identified three institutional priorities — Enhancing Local and Global Engagement and Impact, Holistic Student Success for All Students and Innovative and Interdisciplinary Education — that shape the design, implementation and evaluation of institutional processes. These priorities ensure that policies governing integrity, compliance, ethics, inclusiveness and transparency are not only legally and procedurally sound but also strategically aligned with the university's mission and goals. Together, they provide a framework for evidence-based decision-making, continuous improvement and the fulfillment of MSCHE Standard II across all aspects of institutional operations.

II.1: Lehigh University has made institutional commitments to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression and respect for intellectual property rights.

Lehigh maintains institution-wide commitments to academic and intellectual freedom, freedom of expression and respect for intellectual property, consistent with **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 1**, as reflected in its governance documents, policies and institutional practices. For faculty, the Rules and Procedures of the Faculty of Lehigh University (R&P) (EVIDENCE 2.009 - Rules and Procedures of the Faculty) protect inquiry, expression, research, publication and peaceful assembly, limiting only the use of university affiliation when speaking as private citizens. The Faculty Code of Ethics (EVIDENCE 2.005: Faculty Code of Ethics) reaffirms these protections. The Provost's Office provides coordinated guidance and institutional support to faculty whose scholarship or public expression results in external harassment or controversy.

Students' rights to freedom of thought, inquiry and expression are articulated in the Student Handbook (EVIDENCE 2.003, p.46) and implemented through the Student Code of Conduct (EVIDENCE 2.004), which balances expressive rights with institutional obligations to safety, non-disruption and respect for others. These policies provide clear standards for demonstrations, open discourse and dissent. The Posting Policy (EVIDENCE 2.010) further

ensures that expressive activities occur in ways that respect institutional property and community norms.

Lehigh's commitment to freedom of expression extends to digital environments. The Social Media Guidelines and Policy (EVIDENCE 2.012) affirms that members of the university community may engage in public discourse while emphasizing transparency, accountability and adherence to applicable law. The policy promotes constructive dialogue and explicitly cautions against harassment, discrimination and the misuse of confidential information, reinforcing that free expression and responsible conduct coexist within an academic community.

Respect for intellectual property is embedded in institutional policy and practice. The Intellectual Property Policy (EVIDENCE 2.011: Intellectual Property Policy) promotes learning and innovation, requires prompt disclosure of potentially university-owned intellectual property and cooperation in securing protections and preserves publication rights subject to existing agreements. The university makes timely protection and commercialization decisions, manages trademarks and service marks through a global licensing program and generally allows students to retain ownership of their scholarly and creative works. Recent work to develop an express licensing process for faculty IP seeks to make these processes more clear. The university also affirms copyright ownership and authorship rights for faculty and students, generally allowing creators to retain ownership of their scholarly, instructional and creative works (Evidence 2.053: Copyright Compliance Guide).

In October 2025, Lehigh joined more than 100 other colleges and universities that have adopted the University of Chicago Statement on Freedom of Expression, known as the Chicago Principles. These principles articulate a broad and intrinsic belief in the freedom of expression. At Lehigh, the principles were adopted including a Lehigh Preamble that states, in part, that the Chicago Principles, "coupled with existing University policies which govern freedom of expression for our campus community, our Principles of Our Equitable Community, and our robust culture of inquiry, is adopted to promote open and respectful dialogue on campus, exploration of a plurality of thought, inquiry and expression as part of the Lehigh experience. The Chicago Principles will be used as a guidepost for future decisions regarding freedom of expression within the University" (EVIDENCE 2.013: Lehigh Preamble to Chicago Principles).

II.2: Lehigh University has created a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Lehigh sustains a climate of respect across students, faculty, staff and administrators, anchored in the Principles of Our Equitable Community (EVIDENCE 2.014: Principles of Our Equitable Community), embedded in onboarding, orientations, campus postings and syllabi since 2012. Recognition includes the 2021 *Soaring Together* commemoration of 50 years of coeducation, six consecutive HEED Awards, the 2024 Diversity Champion designation and a five-of-five Campus Pride Index rating.

Institutional strategy and governance operationalize these commitments. The Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging, led by the vice president for equity and community, advances *A Lehigh for Everyone* (a 2023 strategic-plan foundational initiative described in Chapter 1; EVIDENCE 2.015: A Lehigh for Everyone) with support from the Council for Equity and Community. Five Inclusion and Equity Centers — the Pride Center @LU; Gender, Leadership and Empowerment; Cultural Engagement; Student Access and Success and the

University Chaplain — deliver extensive programming and ensure inclusive access (gender-inclusive restrooms, lactation and meditation spaces and AccessLU shuttle). Policy updates include a Chosen Name Policy (EVIDENCE 2.016: Chosen Name Policy), and design standards requiring at least one family/single-occupancy restroom per floor in new construction or, when feasible, during major renovations (EVIDENCE 2.017: Design Standards and Guidelines).

Lehigh regularly assesses climate and outcomes through the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS), Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE), student engagement measures and retention analyses. In 2024, satisfaction with the campus climate for diversity and equity increased to 3.7, up from 3.5 in 2022 on the five-point HEDS scale, accompanied by declines in reported experiences of insensitive or disparaging remarks and incidents of discrimination or harassment. Results from the past three survey administrations, conducted biennially since 2020, are publicly available through the campus climate dashboard (EVIDENCE 2.018 - Campus Climate Survey Dashboards). Consistent with Antiracism Task Force recommendations, the university reviewed the Lehigh University Police Department in 2021–22 (EVIDENCE 2.019: LUPD Review Committee Report).

Capacity-building efforts span both faculty and students. Within the Office of the Provost, the ADVANCE initiative supports inclusive faculty recruitment and retention through workshops and structured programming. Initially focused on engaging STEM (science, engineering, technology and math) faculty, ADVANCE builds and sustains social, intellectual and cultural capital networks across campus and has expanded its reach across disciplines, administrative roles and all genders to promote ongoing professional development, leadership growth and institutional policy change.

Student programs such as LUally, Intercultural Dialogue Fellows and the Mosaic Speaker Series promote dialogue and peer education. The proportion of female students continues to increase; the incoming fall 2023 and fall 2025 cohorts included more women than men for the first time in the university's history (see Table 2). To strengthen retention and belonging, including first-generation students and students of color, Lehigh is expanding communal spaces and faculty engagement, enhancing communication and training about resources and advising, and in 2025 launched a student support app, EAB's Navigate360, which is branded as Compass at Lehigh, to connect students with care teams and services. The percentage of faculty and staff from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups (UREG) has steadily increased over time, while the proportion of UREG students has remained relatively stable, reflecting sustained progress in workforce diversity alongside consistent student representation (see Table 2).

TABLE 2 ENROLLMENT, FACULTY AND STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS (FALL 2021–2025)

Population	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Observations
Undergraduate Students Total Enrollment	5451	5624	5811	5911	5986	Steady upward trend
% Female	46%	46%	48%	48%	49%	Steady upward trend
% UREG	15%	16%	16%	16%	16%	
First Year Class Total Enrollment	1519	1511	1531	1501	1535	
% Female	48%	47%	50%	47%	51%	≥50% female for the first time in fall 2023 and fall 2025
% UREG	17%	16%	18%	16%	16%	

Graduate Students Total Enrollment	1812	1770	1779	1781	1923	Steady upward trend
% Female	47%	46%	49%	49%	51%	≥50% female for the first time in fall 2025
% UREG	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	Constant
Faculty Total	662	663	681	708	705	
% Female	39%	38%	39%	41%	42%	
% UREG	6%	7%	7%	8%	9%	Steady upward trend
Staff Total	1210	1246	1316	1364	1335	
% Female	56%	57%	57%	58%	57%	
% UREG	9%	9%	10%	11%	12%	Steady upward trend

Underrepresented racial/ethnic groups (UREG) is an umbrella term that identifies racial/ethnic groups whose representation in a given population is less than their representation in the country. Underrepresented racial/ethnic groups at Lehigh include American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

In 2024, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights opened a Title VI investigation regarding protections based on shared ancestry, including Jewish ancestry. Lehigh denied the allegations and provided evidence of compliance. In January 2025, the university entered a Voluntary Resolution Agreement (without admission of liability) committing to policy and procedure review, annual investigator training, staff and student training, climate assessment and file reviews (EVIDENCE 2.021: Voluntary Resolution Agreement, Jan 2025).

These policies, processes, resources and varied activities demonstrate Lehigh's consistent and ongoing institutional efforts to promote and protect a campus climate that promotes respect among all Lehigh community members from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives. This commitment fulfills the expectations of **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 2.**

II.3: Lehigh has a documented and disseminated grievance policy to address complaints or grievances raised by students, faculty or staff. Lehigh's policies and procedures are fair and impartial and assure that grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately and equitably.

Lehigh maintains documented, widely disseminated grievance and conflict-resolution policies to ensure timely, appropriate and impartial responses. Every university-level web page links to the Reporting Concerns website (EVIDENCE 2.022: Reporting Concerns website) for emergencies or crimes; sexual assault and gender-based violence; bias, discrimination and harassment; hazing; academic integrity violations; ethical or financial misconduct; Student Code of Conduct violations; concerns about student well-being; abuse of a minor and athletics noncompliance. A confidential Ethics and Compliance Hotline provides an additional channel. Lehigh University's Equal Opportunity Compliance Coordinator's "Reporting Options" web page clearly delineates multiple reporting pathways for discrimination, harassment, retaliation and sexual misconduct, ensuring that students, faculty and staff understand available options and access appropriate support and resolution processes (EVIDENCE: 2.054: Lehigh EEOC Reporting Options). All complaints and concerns submitted through these reporting channels are documented and maintained by the appropriate administrative offices in accordance with federal requirements, with

records retained and made available to the U.S. Department of Education upon request, consistent with 34 CFR § 668.43.

The policy on Harassment and Non-Discrimination (EVIDENCE 2.023: Policy on Harassment and Non-Discrimination) establishes a fair process with defined timelines, objective evaluation of all relevant and permissible evidence, equal opportunities to present information, a written investigation report and a Statement of Parties' Rights (EVIDENCE 2.023: Policy on Harassment and Non-Discrimination - Appendix F). Designated personnel must promptly report incidents involving students to the Equal Opportunity Compliance/Title IX Coordinator. These processes include defined timelines and tracking mechanisms to ensure complaints are addressed promptly, appropriately and equitably. While the university generally honors a complainant's wish not to file, it may act when patterns, seriousness or safety risks warrant intervention.

For staff, Human Resources can facilitate mediation of a resolution or direct staff to other appropriate resources. The Employee Relations Advisory Council (ERAC) is a representative council elected by staff to raise and champion staff concerns (EVIDENCE 2.024: ERAC Bylaws). For faculty, the Faculty Personnel Committee hears appeals alleging arbitrary or capricious actions affecting rights, privileges, continued employment or academic freedom (matters under the harassment policy excluded); the Committee's recommendations go to the president, with possible appeal to the board of trustees (EVIDENCE 2.009: Rules and Procedures of the Faculty). Student misconduct is adjudicated under the Student Code of Conduct (EVIDENCE 2.004: Student Code of Conduct); academic grievances follow the Catalog's escalation path (instructor → chair/division head → dean) (Evidence 2.055: 2025–2026 Catalog, p.31). Students may also appeal through Standing of Students and Standing of Graduate Students committees. The university Ombuds Office offers confidential, voluntary conflict resolution and recently expanded from two to three Ombudspersons, adding a staff representative enhancing access and responsiveness for all campus populations. Lehigh strictly prohibits retaliation for good-faith reporting or participation in any process.

Lehigh maintains a publicly available website (EVIDENCE 2.052, Lehigh University Middle States accreditation website) that details its Middle States accreditation status and clearly identifies how to file complaints with Lehigh's accreditor, in compliance with 34 CFR § 602.16(a)(1)(ix).

Through these policies, processes and reporting mechanisms, Lehigh demonstrates a comprehensive, integrated approach to ensuring that grievances raised by students, faculty or staff are addressed fairly, impartially and in alignment with institutional values of accountability and equity, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 3**.

II.4: Lehigh has policies designed to avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict in all activities and among all constituents.

Lehigh's enterprise-wide Conflict of Interest Policy (EVIDENCE 2.025 - Conflict of Interest Policy) requires trustees, officers, faculty and key staff to disclose significant relationships with external entities, including ownership interests, consulting roles, employment or gifts over $100 involving the individual or an immediate family member. Significant relationships include ownership or control of an entity, investments over $10,000 or equity of 10% or more. Covered individuals affirm compliance on hire and annually, and update disclosures as interests arise; the Corporate Secretary or Director of Internal Audit reviews submissions

and escalates unresolved matters. As the term "key staff" is not defined in the policy or elsewhere at the university, as the policy administrator, Internal Audit in practice considers "key staff" to include all adjunct instructors, Centennial School faculty, exempt and nonexempt full- and part-time employees, faculty with 9, 10, 11, or 12 month appointments, university administration and visiting full-time or part-time employees.

For sponsored research, the Policy on Financial Conflicts of Interest Related to Research (EVIDENCE 2.026 - Policy on Financial Conflicts of Interest Related to Research) aligns with federal regulations and requires investigators to disclose significant financial interests annually, at award setup and within 30 days of changes. The Office of Research Integrity, with the vice provost for research and the COI Review Committee, determines whether a conflict exists and implements a written management plan before work proceeds.

The Employment and Placement of Relatives Policy (EVIDENCE 2.027 - Employment and Placement of Relatives Policy) preserves merit-based hiring and advancement by prohibiting close relatives — immediate family members, cohabiting partners and spouses — from supervising or influencing one another. Employees declare such relationships at hire and via the annual COI survey; Internal Audit monitors compliance through reviews of new-hire data, survey responses and shared-address analyses.

Lehigh's policies and oversight mechanisms establish a framework that proactively identifies, manages and mitigates potential conflicts of interest, demonstrating alignment with the expectations of **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 4.**

II.5: Lehigh has established and implemented fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline and separation of employees.

Lehigh maintains documented, consistently applied processes to ensure fairness and due process for faculty and staff. Faculty hiring follows procedures on the Provost's Faculty Hiring site (EVIDENCE 2.028 - Provost's Faculty Hiring Site) and ADVANCE Recruitment Toolkit (EVIDENCE 2.029 - ADVANCE Recruitment Toolkit), requiring standardized documentation, position-specific job descriptions and evaluation rubrics aligned to posted criteria. Searches conduct broad outreach to build robust applicant pools; committee members complete ADVANCE training at least every two years. The Lehigh University Faculty Ambassadors Program was formally initiated by Lehigh ADVANCE in 2016. The program trains faculty who are uninvolved in a search to meet with prospective colleagues during their campus interviews. These ambassadors discuss campus life, inclusive excellence and faculty resources to help candidates experience Lehigh and answer their questions in a non-evaluative setting.

Faculty evaluation and advancement are governed by the Rules and Procedures of the Faculty (EVIDENCE 2.009 - Rules and Procedures of the Faculty) and college/department guidelines. Tenure-track and term faculty complete annual merit, reappointment and promotion reviews with multi-level faculty committee evaluation (department and college). Where recommendations diverge, structured meetings are required; faculty may appeal to the Personnel Committee for procedural violations. In response to 2023 COACHE findings on a lack of clarity regarding promotion processes — especially for women faculty — the Provost's Office launched a portal consolidating R&P and college/department guidance; departments are developing field-specific expectations for teaching, scholarship and service for university-wide implementation by 2026. ADVANCE mentoring supports pre-tenure and mid-career faculty.

Faculty standards are articulated in the Faculty Code of Ethics (EVIDENCE 2.005 - Faculty Code of Ethics); the Faculty Senate is clarifying codified disciplinary procedures. Separation for cause is addressed in Rules and Procedures of the Faculty §2.2.11, providing notice, committee review, opportunity to respond and appeal (EVIDENCE 2.009 - Rules and Procedures of the Faculty).

Staff hiring follows HR-led Staff Employment policies, inclusive recruitment with HR oversight and mandatory manager training on fair hiring and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliance (EVIDENCE 2.030 - Training for Hiring Managers; EVIDENCE 2.031 - Recruitment User Guides). New staff serve a six-month provisional period with formal reviews at three and six months. Staff evaluation uses a university-wide Performance Management Program with ongoing feedback, quarterly check-ins and a year-end review; performance concerns are addressed with documented improvement processes and Performance Improvement Plans (EVIDENCE 2.032 - Performance Management). Staff separation follows the Staff Guides (resignation, involuntary discharge and separation without notice), with exit documentation and progressive discipline calibrated to severity and coordinated with HR (EVIDENCE 2.001 & 2.002 - Nonexempt and Exempt Staff Guides).

Lehigh's policies and procedures ensure that the university's practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline and separation of employees are demonstrably fair and impartial, as expected under **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 5.**

II.6: Lehigh demonstrates honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admission materials and practices, as well as in internal communications.

Lehigh ensures honesty, accuracy and integrity in all communications, including admissions materials, advertising, media relations, institutional data and internal messaging under University Communications and Public Affairs (UCPA), the Office of Institutional Data (OID), the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) and Admissions, supporting institutional credibility, trust, and informed decision-making. Over the past four fiscal years, the university has allocated an average of 1% of its overall budget to marketing and recruitment activities, reflecting a sustained institutional commitment to transparent, mission-aligned outreach and public engagement (EVIDENCE 2.020 - Calculation spreadsheet). UCPA provides strategic guidance, reviews public-facing materials for accuracy and tone, maintains social-media guidelines and articulates principles for ethical use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) (EVIDENCE 2.012: Social Media Guidelines and Policy; EVIDENCE 2.033 - AI Guidelines for Campus Communicators). Library and Technology Services (LTS) integrates AI, data integrity and governance through university-wide Principles, Policies, and Expectations for AI use on the central "AI at Lehigh" site (EVIDENCE 2.034: Principles, Policies, and Expectations for AI Use), which explicitly aligns with the Classification of Data policy that defines four classes of data from critical (Class I) to public (Class IV) (EVIDENCE. 2.035: Classification of Data). Will update. University guidance prohibits AI use with sensitive data (Class I–III) and permits it only with public (Class IV) data, while oversight and monitoring ensure compliance and staff guidance/training reinforces responsible implementation.

The Bursar's office publishes tuition, fees and program-specific costs (EVIDENCE 2.036 - Tuition and Fees). The Office of Undergraduate Admissions publishes a net price calculator and cost of attendance data (EVIDENCE 2.037 - Net Price Calculator). The Office of Institutional Data publishes program and degree enrollments, graduation and retention rates

(disaggregated where appropriate), graduate time-to-degree and career outcomes via First Destination (undergraduates; EVIDENCE 2.038 - First Destination Survey) and Next Destination (graduate students; EVIDENCE 2.039 - Next Destination Survey) surveys. Established protocols govern external submissions; processes are reviewed annually, data are vetted before release, and staff receive guidance on accurate reporting. A robust data governance program, overseen by the Data Governance Executive Committee and Data Governance and Standards Committee, assigns roles to data stewards and uses policies, classification standards and a centralized data dictionary for accurate, secure and ethical data management (EVIDENCE 2.040 - Data Governance).

Admissions and recruitment communications are coordinated with UCPA, reviewed by academic units for alignment with current offerings and guided by five principles: humanistic engagement, brand consistency, outreach to influencers, increased visibility and celebration of diversity. Staff are trained to frame recruitment around informed choice and accuracy, ensuring transparency and ethical communication with prospective students and the public.

Through these integrated policies, processes, staff guidance and governance mechanisms, Lehigh demonstrates a strategic and institution-wide commitment to integrity, transparency and public trust, aligning communication practices with institutional mission and supporting informed decision-making, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 6.**

II.7: As appropriate to its mission, Lehigh runs effective programs that promote inclusiveness and belonging; promote affordability and accessibility; and enable students to understand funding sources and options, value received for cost and methods to make informed financial decisions about incurring debt.

Lehigh demonstrates a mission-driven commitment to equitable access and financial transparency through integrated policies, programs and practices that advance inclusiveness, affordability and informed decision-making. Consistent with its mission and law, Lehigh operates race-neutral admissions and financial aid processes in full compliance with Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard and UNC (2023). Policies were reviewed and updated following the Supreme Court decision to ensure ongoing compliance while maintaining institutional values of equity and access. The Principles of Our Equitable Community (EVIDENCE 2.014 - Principles of Our Equitable Community) continue to guide a campus culture that promotes belonging and inclusion.

Outreach efforts are strategically targeted to broaden access across geographic, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, including first-generation students and students from historically underrepresented regions. Affordability is advanced through the Lehigh Commitment (launched 2023 and noted in Standard 1), which guarantees full financial support for students from families with incomes of $75,000 or less, and by meeting 100% of demonstrated financial need for all admitted students. Aid decisions are race-neutral and comply with Title IV and applicable Internal Revenue Services and U.S. Department of Education guidance. Ongoing evaluation of financial aid distribution, program participation and student outcomes informs refinements to policy and outreach practices, ensuring effectiveness and alignment with institutional goals. Lehigh's Graduate Next Destination survey collects information about graduate students' plans after earning their master's or doctoral degree (EVIDENCE 2.039 - Next Destination Survey), and its First Destination survey gathers data on undergraduates' post-graduation plans, such as

employment, continuing education or military service (EVIDENCE 2.038 - First Destination Survey).

The Bursar's office publishes tuition, fees and program-specific costs (EVIDENCE 2.036 - Tuition and Fees), including tuition and fees for full-time and part-time students, as well as typical charges for parking fees and room and board. These publicly available disclosures satisfy the requirements of federal regulation 34 CFR § 668.43(a)(1–4) by providing students with clear information on tuition and fees, refund and withdrawal policies, program-related costs and financial aid resources. Additional program-specific fees for certain majors are indicated. A Find Course Materials website enables students to view required and recommended textbooks and materials for specific courses (EVIDENCE 2.041 - Find Course Materials Site). Requirements and procedures for officially withdrawing from the university are specified in the University Catalog (EVIDENCE 2.042 - University Catalog Withdrawal Information). The catalog likewise outlines the policies for refunds of charges, including tuition and academic fees, as well as refunds due to Title IV programs (EVIDENCE - 2.043 - University Catalog Refunds of Charges Information). Financial literacy counseling and cost tools, including the Net Price Calculator (EVIDENCE 2.037:Net Price Calculator), empower students to make informed financial decisions, advancing the institutional priority of Holistic Student Success for All Students by promoting equitable access, retention and long-term well-being.

By aligning admissions, financial aid, tuition transparency and student financial literacy programs, Lehigh strategically fosters an environment where students from all backgrounds can access, afford and make informed choices about higher education. These coordinated efforts demonstrate a sustained institutional commitment to inclusiveness, affordability and mission-driven transparency, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 7.**

II.8: Lehigh maintains compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and Commission policies and procedures, including but not limited to required information for students and the public; representation of accreditation status; full disclosure of information on institution-wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification and licensure or licensing board pass rates; institution's compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation; verification of student identity in distance and correspondence education; and substantive changes affecting institutional mission, goals, programs, operations, sites and other material issues which must be disclosed in a timely and accurate fashion.

Transparent reporting and coordinated governance align with Enhancing Lehigh's Local and Global Engagement and Impact, ensuring the university maintains trust with external stakeholders, regulatory bodies and global partners. Lehigh strategically integrates governance, policies and institutional practices to ensure full compliance with federal regulations and MSCHE expectations, reinforcing institutional integrity, transparency and public trust. The Offices of the President and Provost maintain regular communication with MSCHE and coordinate institutional responses to Commission requests and reporting obligations. Institutional data for disclosures, including IPEDS retention and graduation rates, program-level outcomes and other federally required reports, are produced collaboratively by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) and the Office of Institutional Data (OID). OIR manages external reporting, compliance and benchmarking, while OID provides institutional analysis and advanced analytics to inform planning and decision-making. Together, these offices support a coordinated, evidence-based approach to regulatory and accreditation compliance.

The Office of the Provost maintains a centralized Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) Disclosures web page, which serves as the primary portal for required institutional and consumer information (EVIDENCE 2.044 – Higher Education Opportunity Act Disclosures). This page includes tuition and fees, refund and withdrawal policies, financial aid resources, Net Price Calculator access, student loan information, campus safety statistics, health and wellness resources, retention and graduation data (including disaggregated outcomes), faculty listings, disability services, and information on student diversity, international affairs and voter registration. By providing a single, easily navigable webpage, Lehigh ensures transparency, supports informed decision-making and demonstrates consistent compliance with federal disclosure requirements while aligning with MSCHE expectations for public reporting and institutional integrity.

Accreditation and program-level compliance are explicitly communicated through multiple channels. Lehigh accurately describes its accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and the scope of that accreditation, in the University Catalog (EVIDENCE 2.045: University Catalog Accreditation Information), on the Provost's Middle States Accreditation web page (EVIDENCE 2.046 – Provost Middle States Accreditation Page), and via the "Accreditation, Approval and Licensure of Institution and Programs" link within the HEOA Disclosures site (EVIDENCE 2.044 – Higher Education Opportunity Act Disclosures). These public statements identify MSCHE by name and direct constituents to the Commission for further information. Additionally, Lehigh University complies with 34 CFR § 668.43 by publicly disclosing its standing with all recognized institutional and specialized accrediting agencies. Programs with programmatic accreditation, including those in business, engineering, theatre and education are identified in the University Catalog (EVIDENCE 2.045 – University Catalog Accreditation Information) and on relevant academic unit websites, with detailed descriptions of accrediting bodies and review processes provided in **Standard V**. Where required, programs make student admissions, retention, completion and outcomes data publicly available, supporting institutional transparency and continuous improvement (EVIDENCE 2.056: Counseling Psychology Outcomes Report; EVIDENCE 2.057: School Psychology Outcomes Report; EVIDENCE 2.058: Mental Health Counseling Outcomes Report).

Distance education is governed by policies that verify student identity and protect privacy. The Student Conduct and Identity Policy, maintained by the Office of Distance Education (EVIDENCE 2.047: Student Conduct and Identity Policy), requires secure logins, passcode access, proctored examinations and other effective measures to confirm that the registered student is the participant completing the course. Associated fees for identity verification are communicated clearly at registration and enrollment, ensuring students make informed choices. This process ensures transparency and enables students to make informed decisions regarding enrollment in courses and programs that require identity verification, consistent with federal regulations and MSCHE expectations.

Together, these publicly accessible disclosures, policies and procedures ensure that Lehigh meets all applicable federal regulatory requirements including those in 34 CFR § 668.43, § 668.45, and § 602.17 regarding required institutional and consumer information, accurate representation of accreditation status, verification of student identity in distance and correspondence education and notification of any associated additional charges, while also fulfilling MSCHE's Public Disclosure, Communication in the Accreditation Process, and related policy expectations.

Substantive changes affecting institutional mission, goals, programs, operations, sites and other material issues are disclosed accurately and in a timely fashion. No unreported substantive changes have occurred in recent years. Should substantive changes be planned, the institution would submit a substantive change request form to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) prior to implementation in accordance with the MSCHE Substantive Change Policy and federal regulation 34 CFR § 602.22(a)(1)(ii)(A–K).

Through coordinated policies, centralized reporting, robust governance and continuous monitoring, Lehigh demonstrates that institutional decision-making, disclosure practices and compliance activities operate strategically to uphold transparency, accuracy and integrity. These practices ensure adherence to federal regulations, MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation, and Commission expectations, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 8**.

II.9: Lehigh completes periodic assessments of ethics and integrity as evidenced in institutional policies, processes, practices and the manner in which these are implemented.

Periodic assessments of ethics and integrity reinforce institutional priorities by fostering a culture of accountability, trust and responsible decision-making across academic and operational units, supporting Holistic Student Success and Innovative, Interdisciplinary Education. Lehigh conducts systematic, multi-tiered assessments of ethics and integrity across policies, processes and practice, ensuring oversight informs decision-making and risk mitigation. The Internal Audit Office, reporting to the president and Trustee Audit Committee, performs risk-based audits of financial, operational and compliance integrity, investigates ethics/fraud concerns and is currently updating its charter. An Ethics Hotline, established by the Trustee Audit Committee, enables anonymous reporting by internal and external stakeholders; substantiated reports receive documented follow-up and Internal Audit review (EVIDENCE 2.048 - Internal Audit and Ethics Hotline). Continuous monitoring focuses on high-risk areas such as expense reporting, COI compliance and contract adherence, generating actionable insights to strengthen institutional integrity.

The University Policy Structure assigns an owner and review cycle (typically five years) to each policy and defines stakeholder consultation pathways. Ongoing policy review ensures that ethical standards are maintained and that all university-level policies are accessible and actionable in the Policy Repository (EVIDENCE 2.049 - Policy Repository).

Compliance reporting and feedback reinforce oversight. For example, the Equal Opportunity Compliance Coordinator (EOCC) issues an annual report on harassment and discrimination trends, which informs targeted training and policy adjustments (EVIDENCE 2.050 - EOCC Reports). Since 2022, the institution has prioritized streamlining EEOC practices and after some restructuring, intends to restart publication in 2026-27. Likewise, Campus Safety publishes Annual Security and Fire Safety Reports (EVIDENCE 2.051 - Security and Safety Reports). Campus-wide instruments, including HEDS (climate), COACHE (faculty) and First/Next Destination (student outcomes), generate data that guide continuous improvement at both college and central levels. Staff and faculty complete the Energage survey biennially, providing insight into trust, inclusion, respect and opportunity across the workforce. External accreditors (e.g., MSCHE, Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business and Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) routinely evaluate ethical governance, and recommendations feed into enterprise compliance and risk-management plans, ensuring that lessons learned are incorporated into institutional strategy.

Collectively, these policies, processes and assessment mechanisms demonstrate that Lehigh not only evaluates ethics and integrity but integrates findings into decision-making and institutional planning. These conditions fulfill the expectations of **MSCHE Standard II, Criterion 9.**

Conclusions and Recommendations
Lehigh University demonstrates strong alignment with Middle States Standard II, with institutional commitments to ethics, integrity, academic freedom and transparency deeply embedded in policy and practice. Faculty, staff and students operate under clearly articulated codes of conduct, equitable employment and evaluation systems and robust conflict of interest safeguards. Public communications, institutional data and recruitment practices are accurate, mission-aligned and compliant with applicable laws and Commission expectations.

These commitments form the ethical foundation for the university's priorities of holistic student success and innovative, interdisciplinary education. A respectful and inclusive climate — supported by targeted programming, legal compliance and measurable improvements in climate survey indicators — ensures that students from all backgrounds can fully access academic, co-curricular and interdisciplinary opportunities. Fair, accessible grievance procedures with multiple reporting channels and anti-retaliation protections reinforce trust and support student well-being. Financial accessibility initiatives, such as the Lehigh Commitment and comprehensive aid counseling, advance equitable pathways to student success. Continuous assessment through internal audits, policy governance, climate surveys and accreditation reviews promotes accountability and ensures that innovative educational practices are developed responsibly and delivered equitably.

To build on these strengths and address identified opportunities, Lehigh should:

- **Enhance Policy Awareness and Compliance**
  Expand training on the University Policy Structure and data governance framework to ensure consistent application across units, with clear communication of updates and responsibilities. The self-study revealed uneven awareness and application, signaling the need for broader education, systematic updates and expanded participation in policy review.
- **Sustain and Evaluate Belonging Initiatives**
  Systematically assess the impact of new belonging initiatives — such as community-building spaces, faculty-student dining programs and the student support app — focusing on measurable gains in inclusion and retention.
- **Increase Clarity of Promotion and Tenure Processes**
  Continue efforts to develop and communicate clear, field-specific expectations for faculty evaluation. Monitor and address disparate perceptions of promotion and tenure clarity across demographic groups.
- **Define the Role of the Faculty Personnel Committee**
  Clarify the scope, authority and procedures of the Faculty Personnel Committee, particularly in relation to matters beyond promotion and tenure, to ensure consistent and fair application.

CHAPTER 3

STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level and setting, are consistent with higher education expectations.

III.1a: Lehigh's certificate, undergraduate, graduate and/or professional programs leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential are designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning.

Academic programs at Lehigh University are intentionally designed to foster coherent student learning experiences and to promote the synthesis of knowledge across disciplines and levels of study. The Lehigh University Catalog serves as the official and comprehensive source of degree requirements, graduation rules, and academic policies applicable to all students. Updated annually, the catalog ensures that curricular structures, program requirements, and academic standards are clearly articulated, consistently applied, and transparently communicated (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog).

Lehigh is home to five colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), the College of Business (Lehigh Business), the P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science (Rossin College), and the College of Health (COH), all of which serve undergraduate and graduate students, as well as the College of Education (COE), which primarily serves graduate students. Across these colleges, the university offers more than 2,300 courses and 113 undergraduate and 87 master's and doctoral-level degree programs. Faculty in each college are responsible for the development and continuous maintenance of the curriculum. Proposed course and program changes are reviewed by college-level policy committees, voted on by the faculty of the respective college, and subsequently reviewed by the University Educational Policy Committee (EdPol) for undergraduate programs or the Graduate and Research Committee (GRC) for graduate programs. Final approval is granted by the Faculty Senate prior to implementation and inclusion in the catalog, as outlined in the university's rules and procedures governing curricular review and approval (Evidence 3.08: Rules and Procedures of the Faculty, section 3.2.1). These multi-level review processes ensure that programs are academically rigorous, appropriately sequenced, and aligned with institutional expectations for coherent degree progression.

Program structures across colleges are designed to provide intentional progression from foundational coursework to advanced disciplinary study and culminating integrative experiences. General education requirements in CAS and Lehigh Business integrate writing, quantitative reasoning, and global perspectives, ensuring that students build essential competencies while engaging in interdisciplinary learning (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog, pp. 61–64; pp. 298–299).

At the program level, students complete structured culminating experiences that require the integration and application of prior learning (Evidence 3.038: Culminating Experience Requirements). In the Rossin College, nearly all undergraduate programs include a required senior capstone or design sequence. For example, the Bioengineering B.S. requires

completion of BIOE 211 and BIOE 212 (Capstone Design Project I & II), a two-course sequence in which students apply foundational and advanced disciplinary knowledge to real-world engineering challenges in collaboration with industry or faculty partners (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog, pp. 408, 412). Lehigh also offers intercollegiate programs at both the undergraduate (pp. 407, 507, 511, 512) and graduate levels (p. 429), providing opportunities for students to engage in coursework, research, and experiential learning across multiple colleges, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and synthesis of knowledge. Similarly, COH requires culminating experiences such as the Population Health Capstone (POPH 301 and 302), a two-semester sequence in which students propose, execute, and evaluate applied projects under the supervision of site preceptors (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog, p. 402). In COE, structured practicum sequences, including Advanced Doctoral Practicums (CPSY 487, 488, 489, 491), provide progressive clinical training that integrates theory, research, and professional practice while meeting licensure and professional standards (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog, pp. 352, 357).

Evidence of effectiveness further affirms that Lehigh's curricular design promotes synthesis of learning. For example, in its 2022 peer review report, AACSB reaffirmed the College of Business's robust Assurance of Learning processes across undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs, citing clearly articulated curricular goals, embedded assessments, faculty engagement and documented continuous improvement (Evidence 3.037: 2022 AACSB Peer Review Team Report, p.5). Similarly, a recent College of Arts and Sciences Assessment Summary synthesizing departmental reports identified shared student learning outcomes such as critical thinking, communication and disciplinary mastery, with most programs reporting student proficiency rates of 80–90% or higher. The report also documents pedagogical and curricular refinements in response to identified gaps, demonstrating that assessment findings are used to strengthen program coherence and integrative learning (Evidence 3.036: 2025 CAS Assessment Summary Report).

Prioritizing the use of data allows for targeted interventions and programmatic innovations across the university and in the classroom. Lehigh is actively monitoring and implementing strategies to support students in courses with high DFW (D-grades, F-grades, Withdrawal) rates. Knowing that connection is critical to student success, interventions with a focus on sense of belonging have been used in math courses and will be extended to other courses that show a pattern of high DFW rates. The fall 2025 implementation of supplemental instruction (SI) through the Academic Success and Writing Center speaks to the university's support of in-class learning and ongoing assessment to ensure it is meeting students' needs; three SI instructors have been hired to support a chemistry course for this year's pilot implementation program. These efforts demonstrate Lehigh's commitment to continuous improvement, evidence-based practices and student-centered innovation across academic and co-curricular domains (Evidence 3.004, Academic Success and Writing Center, Tutoring).

Collectively, these governance structures, curricular frameworks, and integrative learning experiences demonstrate that Lehigh's certificate, undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs are intentionally designed to ensure coherent progression and to promote synthesis of learning across credential levels, consistent with the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 1(a).**

III.1b: Lehigh's certificate, undergraduate, graduate and/or professional programs leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential are assigned a reasonably approximate number of credit hours (or other value) for the amount of work completed by a

student; and include sufficient course content and program length appropriate to the objectives of the degree or other credential.

At Lehigh University, a credit hour is defined as three to four hours of student effort per week for a standard 15-week semester. This includes both in-class and out-of-class learning activities, as well as all delivery formats. All colleges adhere to this definition, and courses are expected to meet the established clock-hour expectations, as specified in the Rules and Procedures of the Faculty Section 3.1.3 Course Credit (EVIDENCE 3.008: Rules and Procedures of the Faculty). This policy is applied consistently across all course types, disciplines, programs, credential levels and delivery formats and modalities, including in-person, hybrid, online and accelerated courses, in accordance with 34 CFR § 602.16(a)(1)(ii)(F) and § 668.8(k). Lehigh's credit hour policies and methodology are publicly available via the HEOA website and are reviewed and updated annually to ensure compliance with federal regulations (34 CFR § 602.16(b)(2); § 668.8(l)).

Credit and Program Length
Lehigh's academic programs are structured to ensure that degree and credential requirements include sufficient course content, depth, and program length to achieve the objectives of the credential. The following table provides a high-level overview of typical credit hour requirements by college and program type:

TABLE 3 CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENTS BY COLLEGE AND PROGRAM TYPE

College	Program Type	Typical Credit Hours	Notes / Accreditation
College of Arts & Sciences (CAS)	Undergraduate (B.A./B.S.)	120	Standard liberal arts degree
College of Business	Undergraduate (B.B.A.)	124	AACSB-accredited; includes core and major requirements
P.C. Rossin College of Engineering & Applied Science	Undergraduate (B.S., inter-college)	128–136	ABET-accredited; includes capstone and technical electives
College of Health (COH)	Undergraduate (B.S.)	120	Includes core and major requirements; launched 2020
College of Education (COE)	Graduate (M.Ed., Ed.S., Ed.D., Ph.D.)	Varies: 30–60+ depending on degree	Meets PDE and professional accreditation standards
All Colleges	Graduate Certificates	12 (minimum)	Designed for focused post-baccalaureate study
All Colleges	Master's Degrees	Typically 30–60	Meets disciplinary and program objectives

All Colleges	Doctoral Degrees	Typically 60+	Includes coursework, research, and dissertation requirements

These totals are representative and provide context; the official University Catalog remains the authoritative source for degree and course requirements. Lists of program credits and degrees by college over the past four academic years are available in the *Degree and Credit Requirements report* (Evidence 3.071) as well as detailed information in the annual catalog (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog; 3.072: 2024–25 Catalog; 3.073: 2023–24 Catalog; 3.074: 2022–23 Catalog).

Governance and Oversight
Lehigh's faculty maintain primary responsibility for the design, review, and approval of courses and curricula, ensuring academic rigor, compliance with credit hour definitions, and alignment with disciplinary standards. Proposed courses and curricular changes are reviewed at the departmental and college levels, followed by submission to the Educational Policy Committee (EdPol) for undergraduate programs or the Graduate and Research Committee (GRC) for graduate programs. Substantive curricular changes, such as new programs, revisions to program requirements, or modifications to credit hours, receive final approval by the full faculty. Non-substantive changes, which do not affect program structure or credit, are approved at the department level and forwarded to the Registrar for catalog inclusion (EVIDENCE 3.008: Rules and Procedures of the Faculty).

Proposals for new programs or significant program revisions include statements assessing the impact on library and technology resources, classroom and laboratory space, and faculty workload. Graduate programs, which are developed collaboratively across departments, follow the same approval process. The course and curriculum management system (CIM) tracks all proposals, ensuring proper routing through departmental, college, and university-level review pathways (Evidence 3.075: CIM Sample Submissions). These governance processes ensure that credit hour assignments, program length, and course content are consistently applied and monitored across all programs and delivery formats.

Accreditation and Professional Standards
Where appropriate, Lehigh's programs comply with external accrediting bodies or professional licensure requirements, providing additional assurance that program length and content are sufficient. Examples include:
- Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) for engineering programs
- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation for business programs
- Pennsylvania Department of Education standards for teacher preparation and certification programs
- Relevant professional organizations for counseling, psychology, and health programs, such as the National Association of School Psychologists, American Psychological Association, and Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council

These structures and oversight mechanisms ensure that all programs are assigned a reasonably approximate number of credit hours and include sufficient course content and program length to meet credential objectives, in accordance with **MSCHE Standard III,**

Criterion 1(b) and federal regulations.

III.2a: Lehigh's student learning experiences are designed, delivered and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are: rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry and service, as appropriate to the institution's mission, goals and policies.

Lehigh's student learning experiences are designed and delivered by faculty who hold primary responsibility for the academic integrity, rigor and coherence of the curriculum. Faculty develop courses and degree structures through established departmental and college processes, supported by university governance mechanisms that ensure appropriate review and alignment with disciplinary and institutional expectations. Through the EdPol, the GRC and the Faculty Senate, faculty exercise shared responsibility for curriculum design, program review and the policies that guide students' academic pathways. This governance model ensures that instructional experiences reflect high standards of rigor, relevance and coherence across programs and degree levels.

In their teaching and assessment practices, faculty employ methods that reflect the expectations of their disciplines and the university's commitment to high-quality learning. Faculty scholarship contributes to the incorporation of current knowledge, emerging methods and professional standards into coursework and program design, strengthening the relevance and depth of students' academic experiences. Faculty also contribute to service through participation in departmental, college and university governance, supporting continuous improvement of academic programs and ensuring that student learning experiences remain aligned with institutional priorities.

Faculty-led assessment of student learning is embedded within program governance and aligns with the institution's broader assessment framework described in Standard V. Academic departments articulate program-level learning outcomes, conduct regular assessment of student achievement using direct and indirect measures, and review results through departmental and college governance structures. Findings are used to inform curricular revisions, pedagogical adjustments and resource planning, ensuring that instructional rigor is continuously evaluated and strengthened. These processes reinforce faculty responsibility not only for curriculum design and delivery, but also for the systematic assessment and improvement of student learning.

Lehigh University employs both quantitative and qualitative data to inform decision-making and enhance the student experience, and gathers this data at different points in students' university careers. Students are asked to complete the First-Year Survey before matriculation, gathering insights on their academic preparation and plans for involvement, as well as aspects of college that concern them. Data from the First Destination Survey shows how students are progressing after they graduate to include whether they are employed or seeking advanced degrees, as well as salary information. Assessment efforts to gauge the campus climate are prioritized through the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) Campus Climate Survey, Community and Wellness Survey and Title IX and Gender Violence Climate Survey, as examples. Most of the resulting data are shared publicly, which underscores the university's commitment to transparency (EVIDENCE 3.003 – Institutional Survey Dashboards).

Together, these practices ensure rigorous academic oversight and continuous stewardship of the curriculum, consistent with the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 2(a).**

III.2b: Lehigh's student learning experiences are designed, delivered and assessed by faculty (full–time or part–time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do.

Lehigh employs faculty across six established categories defined in the R&P section 2.2: tenured and tenure–track faculty, research faculty, teaching faculty, professors of practice, visiting faculty and adjunct faculty (Evidence 3.008, Rules and Procedures of the Faculty). Tenured and tenure–track faculty engage in teaching, service and research or scholarship, and are evaluated across all three areas for promotion, tenure and compensation. Research faculty are full–time faculty whose primary responsibilities are research and service, with occasional instructional assignments as appropriate. Teaching faculty are full–time faculty whose primary responsibilities are teaching and service, with occasional engagement in research or scholarly activity. Professors of practice are appointed based on significant non–academic professional experience that enhances instructional quality. Visiting faculty hold full–time appointments of up to one year, renewable for a second year, and adjunct faculty hold part–time appointments of up to one year. Collectively, full–time faculty who are neither tenured nor tenure–track, including research faculty, teaching faculty and professors of practice, are designated as Term Faculty, whose appointments are governed by the policies and limits specified in R&P section 2.14 (Evidence 3.008, Rules and Procedures of the Faculty).

Faculty qualifications across the university reflect strong academic preparation aligned with disciplinary norms. As of fall 2025, there are 766 instructional faculty, of which 620 hold a doctorate or other terminal degree, and an additional 78 hold a master's degree as their highest credential. Over the past four years, the percentage of instructional faculty holding a doctorate or other terminal degree has remained above 80%, demonstrating sustained academic rigor and alignment with disciplinary expectations (Evidence 3.015: Common Data Sets 2022 to 2025, section I-1). These data demonstrate that the vast majority of instructional faculty meet or exceed the academic credentialing expectations associated with their teaching responsibilities.

Faculty hiring follows established university procedures that require verification of academic credentials, disciplinary expertise and professional experience appropriate to the position. Search committees review candidate qualifications, conduct interviews and recommend finalists whose academic preparation aligns with departmental and college expectations. Dean and provost–level review ensures compliance with institutional policies and specialized accreditation standards, including those of AACSB, ABET and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, where applicable. These practices ensure that faculty appointed across all ranks and categories are qualified for their instructional, research or professional responsibilities, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 2(b).**

III.2c: Lehigh's student learning experiences are designed, delivered and assessed by faculty (full–time or part–time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are sufficient in number with a core of faculty (full– or part–time) and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution's educational programs.

As of 2025, Lehigh employs 595 full–time faculty across its five colleges (Table 4), complemented by 110 part–time faculty, and 61 teaching staff for a total instructional workforce of 766 employees. Approximately 78% of full–time faculty are tenured or

tenure-track, providing a stable foundation for curriculum development, assessment and long-term academic planning (Evidence 3.016 University Profile, Office of Institutional Data). The remaining full-time faculty include members of the Teaching and Research faculty ranks, established in 2021, along with a small number of professors of practice and visiting faculty who contribute specialized expertise. These staffing levels support an overall student-to-faculty ratio of approximately 11:1, allowing for meaningful faculty engagement in teaching, advising and mentorship and ensuring adequate staff support for students and academic programs (Evidence 3.031: Student Faculty Staff Ratios). Financial resource allocation further demonstrates the sufficiency and stability of Lehigh's instructional workforce. Analysis of IPEDS core expense data shows that instruction has consistently accounted for the largest share of institutional expenditures, representing approximately 41–43% of total core expenses over the past four fiscal years. During this period, instructional core expenditures per full-time equivalent (FTE) student increased from $22,329 in FY21 to $23,596 in FY22, $23,889 in FY23 and $24,840 in FY24, reflecting sustained and growing institutional investment in instructional capacity and faculty-supported learning environments (Evidence 3.033 IPEDS Finance Data, FY21–FY24).

TABLE 4 FACULTY HEADCOUNT BY COLLEGE (FALL 2021–2025)

Full-time Faculty	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
CAS	265	268	280	285	281
COB	95	96	95	97	92
COE	31	33	30	34	33
COH	11	18	25	28	35
CEAS	153	151	154	156	154
Total	555	566	584	600	595

The university's core faculty, defined in the R&P as tenured, tenure-track and full-time instructional faculty with voting rights (R&P 1.1.2), hold primary responsibility for the continuity and coherence of Lehigh's educational programs. Core faculty retain formal responsibility for curriculum, academic policy and learning assessment as defined in R&P 1.1.c. Their sustained engagement reinforces curricular continuity and institutional oversight.

Adjunct and visiting faculty serve in supplemental instructional roles and are not voting members of the Lehigh faculty. Their appointments are limited to one-year terms and may be renewed without implication of long-term commitment, ensuring that short-term instructional needs or specialized expertise do not replace the central role of full-time faculty in maintaining program coherence, curricular oversight and long-term stewardship of academic offerings.

Faculty staffing at Lehigh is sufficient to support all programs across the university's five colleges. Instructional coverage is regularly monitored to ensure that every course, degree program and specialized learning experience is taught by qualified faculty, and that student-to-faculty ratios remain within ranges that allow meaningful engagement. Credit

hours taught by full–time, part–time and adjunct faculty are tracked each semester to verify instructional coverage across all programs (Evidence 3.0XX: Faculty FTE and Credit Hours by College and Program).

These structures demonstrate that faculty staffing is sufficient to sustain program continuity and coherence, consistent with **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 2(c).**

III.2d: Lehigh's student learning experiences are designed, delivered and assessed by faculty (full–time or part–time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities, resources and support for professional growth and innovation.

Faculty professional growth is supported throughout the institution, with resources and development opportunities offered at the department, college and university levels. Chairs, deans and the Office of the Provost play central roles in mentoring, evaluation and professional development, ensuring that faculty in all ranks and categories have access to the support needed to advance their teaching, scholarship and service.

The Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) and the Office of Educational Innovation and Assessment (OEIA), established in 2024, provide coordinated institutional support for excellence in teaching, assessment and instructional innovation. CITL offers workshops, course design consultations, classroom observations and support for digital scholarship, online teaching, writing across the curriculum and instructional technologies, enabling faculty to incorporate evidence–based practices and adapt to evolving instructional modalities (EVIDENCE 3.055: CITL Website). CITL also delivers specialized programming focused on artificial intelligence (AI), including workshops on emerging tools, faculty fellowships, structured opportunities to explore generative AI, communities of practice and campus–wide events such as the Teaching and Learning Symposium and the AI@Lehigh Summit. Complementing these efforts, OEIA partners with faculty and academic leaders across all five colleges to strengthen learning outcomes assessment and course design through consultations, LUDI training, pilot project support and ongoing mentoring, fostering data–informed and student–centered educational improvement (Evidence 3.056:OEIA Website).

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) supports faculty in pursuing and administering research funding through grants, contracts and other external opportunities. ORSP provides proposal development support, compliance guidance and award management services that strengthen faculty scholarship and expand research capacity across the university.

Advancing the institutional priority of *Enhancing Lehigh's Local and Global Engagement and Impact*, the Office of International Affairs (OIA) offers a variety of professional development opportunities for faculty, including the Global Teaching and Learning Fellows (GTLF) program in Mexico (Evidence 3.057: Global Teaching and Learning Fellows Seminar). GTLF brings together a small, interdisciplinary cohort of faculty fellows from across the colleges who are interested in integrating global learning into their courses. During a week–long immersive experience in a small city in Mexico, faculty engage with local communities and cultural contexts, deepening their understanding of global perspectives and identifying ways to incorporate experiential, globally informed learning opportunities for students.Faculty retention and long–term engagement are supported through robust mentoring and onboarding structures at every level. One of the university's primary mentoring programs is

the Interdisciplinary Networking Committee (INC), a structured initiative coordinated by the ADVANCE Office. INC is open to new faculty across all colleges and ranks — including tenure-track, teaching, research and professors of practice — and provides both peer networking and guided mentorship across disciplines. The program emphasizes institutional navigation, professional identity development and building relationships across campus, and is designed to complement, rather than replace, departmental and college-level mentoring. INC mentors offer guidance on career development, connecting across disciplines and developing effective strategies for obtaining the mentoring support faculty need throughout their careers (Evidence 3.017, Lehigh ADVANCE).

The Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging provides faculty with training, consultation and programming that support inclusive teaching practices and foster equitable learning environments. Lehigh also maintains external partnerships that expand access to professional development, including the Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges (LVAIC) and the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD), both of which offer workshops, writing programs, mentoring resources and cross-institutional collaboration opportunities (Evidence 3.058: NCFDD Mentor Map).

Together, these resources support ongoing professional growth, instructional innovation and scholarly development, ensuring that student learning experiences are continuously enhanced and aligned with evolving disciplinary standards and educational best practices, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 2(d).**

III.2e: Lehigh's student learning experiences are designed, delivered and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are reviewed regularly and equitably based on written, disseminated, clear and fair criteria, expectations, policies and procedures.

Full-time faculty at Lehigh submit a Professional Activity Report (PAR) annually, which is the foundation for regular review. Pre-tenure faculty are evaluated each year by the voting members of their department, and department faculty at the appropriate rank serve on college tenure and promotion committees that forward recommendations to the dean and the provost. Associate professors undergo a triennial review, conducted through a similar process. Term faculty are also reviewed on a regular schedule by voting members of their department, using written criteria aligned with their primary responsibilities (Evidence 3.018, Professional Activity Report (PAR) and Annual Salary Increases). Part-time and adjunct faculty are also reviewed regularly according to policies aligned with their instructional roles, ensuring consistent application of standards across all faculty categories.

Throughout all review processes, committees apply clear, written criteria and procedures that are disseminated widely and accessible through the Office of the Provost's Review, Promotion and Tenure website (Evidence 3.019, Provost's Review, Promotion, and Tenure Policies and Procedures). Faculty are assessed for reappointment, tenure and promotion on the basis of excellence in teaching, research or scholarship, and service. These evaluations occur through annual merit reviews, as well as periodic reviews aligned with appointment type and rank, and involve department faculty, department chairs, college committees, deans, the provost, the president and the board of trustees. These review processes are applied consistently across all instructional faculty categories. Further information is detailed in Section 2 of the Rules and Procedures of the Faculty, which governs all promotion and review processes (Evidence 3.008, Rules and Procedures of the Faculty).

The Faculty Senate has established a working group whose charge is to modify general R&P language to support translational (and non–traditional) research and scholarship activities, addressing all R&P sections that might be relevant, and how this might apply to term research faculty (Evidence 3.014, Faculty Senate Working Groups).

Lehigh administers end-of-semester course evaluations that include a standardized set of core questions used across courses to collect systematic student feedback on teaching, course design and delivery; evidence includes the course evaluation form with core questions and a four-year summary of aggregated results (Evidence 3.029: Course Evaluation Core Questions; Evidence 3.030: 4–YR Aggregated Core Question Results). These evaluations are administered across all courses, ensuring that feedback informs equitable assessment of all instructional faculty.

These policies and procedures demonstrate that Lehigh faculty are reviewed regularly and equitably, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 2(e).**

III.3: Lehigh's academic programs are clearly and accurately described in official publications of the institution in a way that students are able to understand and follow degree and program requirements and expected time to completion.

The Lehigh University Catalog (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog), freely accessible online, provides clear and comprehensive descriptions of all undergraduate and graduate academic programs. Each program entry outlines the purpose of the program, required and elective courses, course sequencing, prerequisites and expected credit and degree requirements. Program descriptions also indicate typical course loads and sequencing that allow students to anticipate expected time to degree completion. All programs and delivery formats, including undergraduate, graduate and any hybrid or specialized offerings, are described within the catalog to ensure consistent and transparent communication of academic requirements.

In addition to the catalog, Lehigh provides publicly accessible, student–facing program data through its Institutional Data website, including enrollment by major and minor, degree completions and completions by major, allowing students and the public to view program size, trends and outcomes across academic offerings (Evidence 3.0XX, Institutional Data Website – Majors and Completions).

The catalog explains Lehigh's course numbering system, credit hour expectations, transfer credit policies and the academic calendar, and is reviewed and updated annually to ensure accuracy and consistency. Degree audit and advising tools available through the university's student information system further enable students to monitor their academic progress and confirm alignment with degree requirements and expected timelines for completion. These publications and tools ensure that students are able to understand and follow degree pathways and timelines for completion, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 3**.

III.4: Lehigh provides sufficient learning experiences and resources to support both the institution's programs of study and the academic progress of all student populations.

Lehigh University offers a comprehensive array of degree and nondegree programs that support the academic, personal and social development of all students, and fosters an environment where students are encouraged to thrive holistically. Lehigh's commitment to

students' personal and professional development is exemplified by the [bLUeprint Student Life Curriculum.](#) Focusing on five foundations for student success, bLUeprint encourages students to discover and ultimately apply their learning in the areas of creative curiosity, self-concept, healthy connections, critical consciousness and strategic adaptability. Development in these areas equips students with the skills and understanding that are critical to their success throughout their lives (Evidence 3.002, bLUeprint Foundations).

Lehigh's commitment to students' academic progress and degree completion is represented in its competitive first-year retention and graduation rates. Lehigh's first-year retention rate for the 2024 cohort is 94.3%, four-year graduation rate for the 2021 cohort is 77.2% and six-year graduation rate for the 2019 cohort is 85.2% (Evidence 3.020, Retention Rates, Institutional Data Center; Evidence 3.021, Graduation Rates, Institutional Data Center). Freedom to change colleges and related majors, supportive professional and faculty academic advising and focus on involvement and connection throughout the university experience speak to the critical network of resources that is available for students to thrive in the academic environment.

The establishment of the Offices of Student Retention and Coordinated Advising reflect the university focus on a holistic and coordinated network of support for students. The Office of Student Retention supports and oversees the retention, progression and graduation of all students, with a commitment to supporting undergraduate students on their path toward graduation (Evidence 3.039: Office of Student Retention Website). The Office of Coordinated Advising supports advisors in their mission to assist and empower students to take ownership of their educational, professional and personal development through a supportive and inclusive environment that promotes student persistence and success (Evidence 3.040: Office of Coordinated Advising Website).

Lehigh provides sufficient academic resources and learning experiences to support all programs of study and ensure students' progress toward degree completion. The university utilizes several academic alert systems, managed through Compass, the student success management system, to identify and support undergraduates experiencing academic difficulties. Academic support is offered through coordinated advising structures within each college, faculty office hours and program-level mentoring. Faculty play a central role in these support structures by proactively monitoring student performance, responding to academic alerts, offering guidance during office hours, and coordinating with advising staff to ensure students receive timely interventions. Through these engagements, faculty help students navigate challenges, make informed academic decisions, and maintain steady progress toward degree completion.

Faculty are provided with a syllabus template through the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) to guide course preparation and promote best practices in instruction (Evidence 3.059: LU SyllabusTemplate). Faculty are encouraged to prepare their syllabi with care so that course organization, student learning outcomes, expectations, assignments, and assessments are clear to both themselves and their students. Departments may provide additional requirements or learning outcomes, and faculty are guided to align instructional approaches and assessments with course learning outcomes, ensuring that students understand expectations, can engage effectively with the material, and have the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the intended learning outcomes. A selection of sample syllabi from multiple programs and colleges is also provided for MSCHE reviewers to illustrate these practices in action (Evidence 3.060: Sample Syllabi).

The newly established Academic Success and Writing Center (merging of the former Center for Academic Success and Writing and Math Center) provides a range of academic support resources to include tutoring, study skills development, writing support and academic coaching, as well as a fall 2025 piloted supplemental instruction program (Evidence 3.041: Academic Success and Writing Center Website). Additionally, the TRAC Writing Fellows Program enlists undergraduates students from across the colleges to serve as peer writing coaches for students in courses that span disciplines (Evidence 3.042: TRAC Writing Fellows Program Website).

The university admits a number of transfer students annually, and over the past four years, 53, 47, 50, and 60 students enrolled in Fall 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, representing less than or equal to 1% of the undergraduate population each year. The university provides key resources to support their success, including a required orientation program sponsored by the Office of the First–Year Experience (OFYE) to aid in students' transition, as well as dedicated advising and referrals through the Office of Coordinated Advising.

The university has support in place to ensure that students maintain progress in their academic programs. Proactive academic planning with advisors is greatly facilitated by DegreeWorks, an online auditing tool that allows both students and advisors to track academic progress toward degree completion. This tool highlights completed, in–progress and remaining requirements in order to simplify the academic planning process. Relatedly, the university is currently rolling out electronic four–year degree plans one college at a time. The COH is currently using this system, Lehigh Business should begin by the April registration cycle, the Rossin College by summer and CAS in the next academic year. With these plans, students will be able to visualize their entire academic program and help ensure their ongoing progress towards their degree (EVIDENCE 3.035: COH Sample Academic Plan).

Students' financial challenges may threaten their enrollment; thus, the university offers emergency loans for education–related expenses through the Financial Aid Office and Graduate Education and Student Life for undergraduate and graduate students, respectively. The university offers several completion grants to help senior–standing students finish their degrees through the Office of Student Retention. Student Success Grants are awarded to lower–income undergraduates who have exhausted their financial aid and need funding for their final one or two semesters. For students who are eligible to graduate during the summer, a one–time Summer Completion Grant may be used to cover up to 50% of tuition ($5,000 maximum). Additionally, Student Success Grants are available as a one–time gift of up to $5,000 for seniors who are within one academic year of graduation, with the expectation that they complete their degree after receiving the award.

Lehigh University provides a comprehensive and integrated suite of library and learning resources designed to support instruction, research, and scholarly activity across all instructional locations and formats. These resources are accessible both on-site at main campus facilities and electronically to students, faculty, and staff, ensuring that all members of the University community can engage with library materials regardless of physical location.

At the core of Lehigh's learning infrastructure are the Lehigh Libraries, which include two major physical facilities—Linderman Library and Fairchild-Martindale Library—as well as the Library Materials Center on Mountaintop Campus (Evidence 3.043: About Lehigh Library Website). Linderman Library houses extensive humanities and arts collections, rare books, and special collections, and provides spaces for individual study, group collaboration,

seminar instruction, and digital project engagement. Fairchild-Martindale Library holds broad collections spanning science, engineering, mathematics, social sciences, business, and education. It also offers collaborative learning spaces, technology–equipped classrooms, media studios, and exhibition areas. Additionally, Fairchild-Martindale features the LTS CIRCLE (Community & Inclusion Resource Center), a space dedicated to inclusivity and community–oriented learning.

Library staffing levels, as reported in IPEDS Academic Libraries Survey data for the most recent four years (Evidence 3.044–3.047: IPEDS LibraryInfo 2020–2023), document the personnel resources dedicated to supporting instruction, research, and student learning. Library holdings data from the same sources demonstrate substantial physical and electronic collections, including sustained growth in digital resources to ensure access across all instructional locations and modalities.

Support extends beyond collections to include a broad array of learning services and technology resources managed by LTS (Evidence 3.043: About Lehigh Library Website). These resources include public computers across campus locations, laptop and device loan programs, technical support, research consultations, instructional workshops, and virtual help options such as live chat. LTS also oversees computing facilities and instructional media centers that integrate library resources with classroom technologies, ensuring that students and faculty can effectively leverage library materials to support teaching, learning, and research.

Lehigh University's distance education offerings include fully online and hybrid graduate degree and certificate programs designed to provide the same academic quality and learning outcomes as on-campus programs. These programs employ flexible formats to meet the needs of working professionals and geographically dispersed learners, including asynchronous coursework and real-time virtual instruction. Distance programs utilize two primary delivery approaches: Classroom LIVE, which streams synchronous sessions from campus classrooms to remote students, and Classroom Online, which provides asynchronous access to streamed course content for on–demand viewing (Evidence 3.007: 2025-26 Catalog, p.26).

All distance courses are supported through Course Site, Lehigh's learning management system (LMS), a Lehigh–branded instance of Moodle. Course Site provides a centralized environment for syllabus materials, assignments, assessments, discussion boards, recorded lectures, and supplemental learning tools. LMS features integrate instructional technologies such as Zoom for web conferencing, Panopto for lecture capture, Turnitin for academic integrity, collaborative annotation tools, and other resources that enhance engagement and interaction in online and hybrid courses (Evidence 3.048: Course Site Info Website).

Students enrolled in distance programs receive a range of academic and technical support services. LTS offers research assistance, LMS technical guidance, device and software loan programs, and virtual help, including live chat. The Office of Distance Education provides program–specific technical support and guidance on instructional technologies for fully online and hybrid graduate programs. In addition, students can access essential academic resources, including library collections, digital learning tools, and software applications such as LinkedIn Learning, regardless of location (Evidence 3.049: Office of Distance Education).

Distance education enrollment data, as reported in IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey data for the most recent four years (Evidence 3.050–3.054: IPEDS Fall Enrollment 2021-2024), demonstrate sustained participation in online and hybrid courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Lehigh regularly evaluates student learning outcomes to ensure that the academic resources and support structures contribute to measurable student success. Data from course–level assessments, program–level learning outcomes, and institutional assessments (Standard V) are used to monitor and enhance student performance, retention, and degree completion across all programs.

Collectively, these services and resources provide the infrastructure needed for students across diverse programs to engage fully with their coursework and make consistent academic progress, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard 3, Criterion 4.**

III.5a: Lehigh offers an undergraduate education, a general education program, free standing or integrated into academic disciplines, that offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity and preparing them to make well–reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field.

Lehigh's undergraduate general education requirements, administered by each college and outlined in the university course catalog, ensure that all students engage with a broad spectrum of intellectual disciplines. All undergraduate colleges require coursework in humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and quantitative reasoning, along with foundational writing and communication courses (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog).

In addition to college–specific general education requirements, Lehigh introduced and reimagined signature experiences, underscoring its commitment to furthering students growth and development in the academic arena. This is addressed in detail in Standard V.

Explore Lehigh is a first–semester academic experience designed to broaden intellectual engagement and support purposeful exploration before students declare a college affiliation. Launched in fall 2025 as a two–year pilot program, Explore Lehigh combines a standard first–semester course load with an integrative course introducing students to diverse disciplinary approaches across the four undergraduate colleges. High–touch advising and intentional curricular design help students understand how different fields intersect to address real–world challenges (Evidence 3.023, Explore Lehigh).

The College of Business has instituted a Student to Professional Co-Curriculum to prepare students for the competitive job landscape and is required of all students pursuing a business degree at Lehigh University. The program purpose is to support students' career exploration and professional development through programming which equips students with the career skills they need to acquire internships and full-time jobs; foster a vibrant, supportive and professional community through student engagement programs; and provide students with the opportunity to receive mentorship from peers, faculty and alumni (Evidence 3.024: Student to Professional Co-Curriculum).

The First–Year Rossin Experience (FYRE) is a newly developing interdisciplinary pilot program for first–year engineering students that is responding and adapting to the new educational landscape of incoming students, evolving societal needs and expectations for engineers and

transcending new technologies at their disposal. Students will acquire proficiency in the core competencies of their respective fields through hands-on experiences centered around the big engineering challenges of the present day, while developing critical thinking skills that will empower them to become confident and creative global leaders (Evidence 3.025: First-Year Rossin Experience).

These programs exemplify Lehigh's commitment to drawing students into new intellectual experiences and cultivating informed, flexible academic decision-making, consistent with **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 5(a).**

III.5b: Lehigh offers an undergraduate education program, a general education program, free standing or integrated into academic disciplines that offers a curriculum designed so that students acquire and demonstrate essential skills including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency and information literacy. Consistent with mission, the general education program also includes the study of values, ethics and diverse perspectives.

Lehigh's general education model ensures that all undergraduate students demonstrate essential skills central to intellectual and professional development. College-based general education requirements incorporate coursework that develops written and oral communication, critical analysis, scientific and quantitative reasoning, technological competency and information literacy. Consistent with Lehigh's mission, students also engage with values, ethics and diverse perspectives across the curriculum (Evidence 3.007: 2025-26 Catalog).

Lehigh's revision of the College of Arts and Sciences Liberal Arts Curriculum was initiated by a formal committee convened by CAS Dean, Robert Flowers in February 2020. Over an 18-month development period, the committee conducted systematic research, consulted faculty across the College, benchmarked peer institutions, and gathered campus feedback, including a draft proposal shared in October 2021. Following iterative revisions informed by faculty input, the revised curriculum was presented to the full CAS faculty in November 2021 and subsequently approved through college and university governance bodies by May 2023. The revised Liberal Arts Curriculum was implemented in Fall 2024, with the 2024–25 Catalog updated to reflect the new curricular requirements (Evidence 3.072: 2024-25 Catalog. p. 60). As a result, CAS has introduced a suite of new courses designed to reinforce the essential skills central to general education (Evidence 3.063: CAS New Liberal Arts Courses). These courses include writing-intensive seminars, interdisciplinary inquiry classes, data and quantitative reasoning modules, ethics and social responsibility courses, and global perspectives offerings. Together, these additions ensure that students have multiple opportunities across the curriculum to acquire, practice, and demonstrate core competencies aligned with MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 5(b).

These skills are embedded throughout students' academic programs and reinforced through writing-intensive courses, quantitative reasoning requirements, laboratory and research experiences and courses addressing cultural understanding and global citizenship. These essential skills are also reinforced through signature programs, such as Explore Lehigh and the First-Year Rossin Experience, which provide structured, integrative experiences where students actively apply communication, reasoning, technological, and research competencies in interdisciplinary and real-world contexts, as described above in Criterion 5(a).

Collectively, these curricular structures ensure that students acquire and demonstrate the competencies outlined in **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 5(b).**

III.5c: As Lehigh University is a U.S. institution, MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 5(c) is not applicable.

III.6: As an institution that offers graduate professional education, Lehigh provides opportunities for the development of research, scholarship and independent thinking, provided by faculty and/or other professionals with credentials appropriate to graduate-level curricula.

Lehigh is committed to providing graduate and professional education opportunities to promote research, scholarship and independent thinking. Graduate education programs are a part of their respective academic disciplines; thus, all faculty members are qualified and expected to teach in both undergraduate and graduate programs in the departments that offer them. Full-time faculty maintain active programs of research and scholarship, and 94% hold terminal degrees in their disciplines, ensuring that graduate instruction and mentorship are grounded in current disciplinary knowledge and professional practice. The curriculum prioritizes high-impact research, interdisciplinary learning and opportunities for professional growth, which aligns with the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 6.**

All five colleges offer graduate programs, reinforcing the breadth and depth of advanced study across the institution. In 2012, the Graduate Review Committee (GRC) identified five core competencies, knowledge, application, context, communication, and leadership, to be defined and assessed by graduate programs in discipline-appropriate ways. These competencies were reaffirmed by the GRC in 2024 (see Table 6 in Standard V), underscoring the institution's sustained commitment to clearly articulated graduate learning outcomes. Graduate programs go through an extensive review process to ensure the Graduate Education Core Competencies are being attained. The process of program assessment is collaborative in nature and involves the graduate program, its respective college, graduate associate deans and the Graduate Review Committee.

The GRC, in particular, is charged with developing general policies and procedures for graduate education and research. Its primary functions include reviewing graduate programs and research activities, approving major curriculum and course changes, as well as awarding graduate financial aid in the form of fellowships and scholarships.

The 2025–26 Catalog includes clear policies and procedures regarding graduate assistantships and graduate research expectations (Evidence 3.007: 2025–26 Catalog, pp. 44–46). Full-time graduate students may serve as teaching, research, or other graduate assistants, with formal appointments, stipend levels, workload expectations, and tuition remission provisions defined through departmental processes. The Catalog also outlines requirements for graduate research, including thesis or research reports, comprehensive examinations, and doctoral dissertation procedures, including Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for human subjects research and final submission requirements. These documented policies provide a transparent framework for graduate assistantship support and independent scholarly work, consistent with MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 6.

Graduate education is student-centered, with cross-disciplinary research, mentorship and professional growth facilitated by the Office of Graduate Education and Life (Evidence 3.064: Graduate Education and Life Website). Graduate students have opportunities to engage in

original research and, in many cases, co-author scholarly publications with their faculty advisors, demonstrating active participation in the creation and dissemination of new knowledge (Evidence 3.067: Sample Co-authored Publications). Lehigh University offers training to faculty mentoring graduate students through the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER) and a post-doc to faculty program, Advancing Future Faculty Development Postdoctoral Scholars Program (AFFDP) (Evidence 3.065: CIMER Website; 3.066: AFFDP Website). AFFDP provides a structured professional development pathway for emerging scholars, including those from historically underrepresented backgrounds, who are preparing for tenure-track academic careers and who demonstrate a commitment to inclusive excellence.

III.7: Lehigh offers adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval on any student learning opportunities designed, delivered or assessed by third-party providers.

Lehigh provides multiple pathways for students to make academic progress while also diversifying their educational experiences. All such opportunities are subject to formal institutional review and approval processes to ensure that academic standards, learning outcomes, and credit integrity are maintained.

Lehigh University's transfer credit policy is clearly outlined for students, faculty and staff (Evidence 3.026:Transfer Credit Policy; XXX: 2025-26 Catalog). Transfer credit from external institutions is evaluated by the Office of the Registrar in consultation with the appropriate academic department. Departments review course descriptions and syllabi, when necessary, to assess content, level, rigor, and equivalency before recommending approval. Credit is awarded only for coursework completed at accredited institutions and meeting established grade and academic standards. This structured review process ensures that externally delivered coursework aligns with Lehigh's curricular expectations prior to acceptance.

Lehigh offers more than 250 study abroad programs, including Lehigh faculty-led programs, international internships, short-term programs and semester or year-long programs. Students may participate in Lehigh-sanctioned programs or petition to enroll in a study abroad program that is not pre-approved by the university. In all cases, students must obtain advance academic approval for courses taken abroad, with faculty and advisors reviewing course materials to confirm academic comparability and appropriateness for degree requirements. Final credit is awarded following verification of successful completion and institutional review. These procedures ensure that learning experiences delivered by international third-party providers meet Lehigh's academic standards.

The Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges (LVAIC) Cross Registration provides undergraduate students with an opportunity to enrich their academic experience by taking courses at other institutions that are members of the association. Participating institutions include Cedar Crest College, DeSales University, Lafayette College, Moravian College and Muhlenberg College. Both the credits and the grades earned in courses taken through LVAIC Cross Registration will appear on a student's Lehigh transcript. Participation requires adviser approval and coordination between registrars at the home and host institutions prior to enrollment. Both credits and grades earned through LVAIC cross-registration are recorded on the Lehigh transcript in accordance with established academic policies, demonstrating institutional oversight and formal approval mechanisms.

Lehigh also maintains formal agreements and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) regarding academic cooperation, and transfer pathways (Evidence 3.068: MOU Lehigh and

NCC ; 3.069: MOU Lehigh and MHS; 3.070: MOU Lehigh and DelawareNation). These examples demonstrate that Lehigh has processes and procedures in place that provide adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval for any student learning opportunities designed, delivered or assessed by third party providers, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard III, Criterion 7.**

III.8: Lehigh completes periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student learning experiences for all student populations.

Assessment of undergraduate and graduate programs at Lehigh is conducted primarily within departments and colleges, using structures aligned with disciplinary standards and institutional expectations, and carried out within established departmental, college and university review practices. Program-level assessment includes evaluation of student learning outcomes, analysis of student performance indicators and periodic review processes that inform curricular refinement and pedagogical improvement. At the course level, student course evaluations, administered by the Office of Institutional Data, provide systematic feedback to faculty, department chairs and deans and are incorporated into annual, triennial and tenure reviews. Faculty and departments are also encouraged to use formative assessments and peer review of teaching to strengthen instructional effectiveness.

Several colleges and individual programs participate in specialized accreditation, which provides an additional layer of structured, cyclical assessment. The College of Business (AACSB), the P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science (ABET) and programs within the College of Education follow comprehensive external standards that require documented evidence of student learning and continuous improvement (Evidence 3.027, Other Accreditation Bodies with a Presence at Lehigh).

Lehigh has recently expanded institution-wide assessment capacity through the OEIA, which collaborates with faculty, chairs and deans to design and evaluate interventions intended to enhance student learning and equitable outcomes. During academic year 2024–25, six instructional pilots were implemented and evaluated, with ten additional pilots planned for academic year 2025–26. Recent pilots have included integrating makerspace experiences into calculus courses to reinforce key concepts through hands-on application and offering assignment-choice pathways in introductory engineering courses to support student agency. A makerspace is a hands-on learning environment where students engage in creative problem-solving and experiential application of concepts using a variety of tools and materials. By integrating these activities into coursework, makerspaces support skill development, critical thinking, and active learning, reinforcing program and course-level learning outcomes. Early findings suggest these interventions are particularly beneficial for less-prepared students, contributing to a broader institutional effort to iteratively test, refine and scale evidence-based teaching practices (Evidence 3.028, Office of Educational Innovation and Assessment).

Through these coordinated assessment activities — at the program, course and institutional levels — Lehigh demonstrates a sustained commitment to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of programs that support student learning and academic success, as required by **MSCHE Standard 3, Criterion 8.**

Conclusions and Recommendations
Lehigh University demonstrates strong alignment with MSCHE Standard III through coherent

academic program design, clearly articulated degree requirements and the effective use of student learning outcomes across all colleges. Faculty are highly qualified, regularly reviewed and supported through extensive professional development opportunities at the department, college and university levels. The university provides a wide range of academic resources that enable students to progress successfully toward degree completion, including robust advising structures, tutoring and writing support, library and technology resources, as well as coordinated academic interventions. Program- and course-level assessments are conducted regularly within departments and colleges and are strengthened by emerging institution-wide assessment structures. Collectively, these elements support a rigorous, student-centered academic environment that is responsive to evolving educational needs.

To build on these existing strengths and further support an exceptional student experience, Lehigh should:

1. **Continue strengthening assessment capacity and consistency across colleges,** ensuring that program-level learning outcomes and assessment practices are documented, communicated and aligned with institutional expectations.
2. **Enhance coordination of academic support services** to improve visibility and equitable access for all student populations, including first-year, transfer and graduate students.
   Expand evidence-based pedagogical innovations and interventions, building on the early success of instructional pilots and increasing opportunities for faculty to collaborate with OEIA on data-informed curriculum development.
3. **Review opportunities for improving clarity and coherence in academic pathways,** particularly in interdisciplinary and cross-college programs, to support flexible student navigation without compromising academic rigor.

CHAPTER 4

STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to educational experience, and fosters student success.

Introduction

Lehigh University is deeply committed to fostering a supportive and enriching environment that empowers students to thrive academically and personally as they prepare for their lives beyond Lehigh. This commitment is reflected in the university's comprehensive and ethically sound policies and processes, designed to ensure student success from their initial admission through their academic journey and on to their post-graduation endeavors.

This report details Lehigh's proactive and responsive approach to student support, demonstrating the university's dedication to aligning student interests and abilities with its institutional mission and educational offerings. The university continuously refines its strategies through data-informed decision-making and in response to evolving student needs and external landscapes.

Key areas highlighted within this report include:

1. Holistic Admissions and Retention Strategies: Lehigh's focus on attracting and retaining students whose profiles align with the institution's values, supported by initiatives like a test-optional policy, holistic application review and dedicated retention efforts.
2. Comprehensive Financial Support: Ensuring accessibility and promoting student persistence through programs such as the Lehigh Commitment, Completion Grants and transparent financial aid communication.
3. Robust Student Support Services: Our multi-faceted approach to identifying and supporting less academically prepared students, providing essential orientation, advising and counseling programs, and enhancing the successful achievement of educational goals through various academic and career services.
4. Lehigh University remains dedicated to providing a transformative educational experience, continually seeking innovative ways to enhance student access, support and success for all members of our community.

IV.1a: Lehigh maintains clearly stated, ethical policies, practices and processes to recruit, admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with institutional mission, including accurate and comprehensive information regarding expenses, financial aid, scholarship, grants, loans, repayment and refunds.

Lehigh University maintains clearly stated, ethical policies and processes designed to admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals align with the institutional mission and educational offerings, as required by **MSCHE**

Standard IV, Criterion 1. These processes ensure a reasonable expectation for student success, as found both on the public website and in internal policies and procedures, such as the *Application Reader Rating Manual*, which is supported with extensive training for the admissions staff (EVIDENCE 4.001, Application Reader Rating Manual).

The Admissions office has worked to develop a comprehensive approach to information sharing, beginning with prospective students' first interactions with Lehigh, and has extended efforts to increase access for applicants. Recent changes and new initiatives include:

- Test-Optional Policy: Continued implementation of an optional policy for the submission of standardized tests for admissions (EVIDENCE 4.002: Test Optional Admissions Policy).
- Virtual Engagement: Expanded virtual information sessions and tours for prospective students, supplemented by a virtual library of information. Live virtual sessions continue alongside in–person options (EVIDENCE 4.003: Virtual Events and Tours).
- Holistic Review: Commitment to holistic review practices as outlined in the Application Reader Rating Manual, with staff trained to consider all aspects of a student's lived experience and education, including essays, recommendations, leadership experiences and environmental influences (EVIDENCE 4.004, Applying to Lehigh Information).

Lehigh's admissions policies and requirements are transparent and readily accessible on the university website. Graduate admissions decisions are made at the program or college level, with a similar commitment to holistic review and transparent communication to prospective students and families (EVIDENCE 4.052: Admission to Graduate Study; 4.053: Ethical Admission Information). Graduate admissions data, including applications, admits, yield, and deposit–payers, are tracked annually to ensure mission alignment and reasonable expectation of student success (Evidence 4.057: Graduate Admissions Profile).

Undergraduate admissions applications have increased in recent years, and first–year enrollment has remained on a steady upward trajectory. The university has consistently met its first–year enrollment targets over the past four years. Throughout this period, Lehigh has maintained a diverse entering class, including sustained representation of underrepresented students, low–income students and gender diversity (Evidence 4.056: Undergraduate Admissions Profile).

Lehigh provides prospective undergraduate and graduate students with clear, accessible and comprehensive information to support informed decision–making throughout the admissions process. Publicly available admissions and program materials describe academic offerings, student support resources, costs and financial aid, learning outcomes and post-graduation pathways, ensuring transparency and alignment between institutional mission and student expectations (Evidence 4.058: Sample Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions and Marketing Materials; 4.061: 2025–26 Catalog; 4.062: Graduate Student Handbooks). Admissions marketing materials and communications adhere to ethical marketing policies, ensuring accurate representation of programs, costs, and student support services.

Furthermore, Lehigh maintains clearly stated and ethical admissions and enrollment practices that support student access, success and alignment with the institutional mission. As described in Standard II, the university provides accurate, comprehensive and publicly available information regarding tuition and fees, financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans,

repayment obligations and refund policies, ensuring that prospective and enrolled students are able to make informed financial decisions consistent with MSCHE expectations (Evidence 2.036:Tuition and Fees; 2.03: Net Price Calculator; 2.044: Higher Education Opportunity Act Disclosures; 4.059: Financial Aid Information).

Areas identified for growth include enhanced support for transfer students, expanded analysis of DFW (D,F, Withdrawal) rates with responsive planning and further development of early intervention efforts. This includes tracking retention rates into the second year by identity groups, as well as monitoring graduation rates and time-to-degree (EVIDENCE 4.063: Retention Rates; 4.064 Graduation Rates). Enrollment projections are developed annually based on historical trends, application volume, yield, and retention data, and are reviewed by admissions leadership to ensure mission alignment. At the graduate level, time-to-degree information had also been added by program.

Lehigh monitors key indicators related to student financial aid and debt to ensure transparency and responsible financial practices. The university's three-year student loan cohort default rate has remained low over the past several years (Evidence 4.065: Three-Year Cohort Default Rate). Access to need-based financial aid has also increased, with Pell Grant recipients comprising 21% of students in academic year 2024–25, up from a consistent 18% in the prior three years, while the average Pell Grant award increased from $5,244 to $6,334, as reported in the IPEDS Student Financial Aid Survey (Evidence 4.066–4.069: IPEDS Financial Aid Surveys 2021–2025). In addition, average undergraduate student indebtedness is reported annually in Section H5 of the Common Data Set and shared publicly, and has remained consistently below $40,000 for recent graduating classes (Evidence 4.070: Common Data Sets 2022–2025). These indicators demonstrate the university's commitment to transparency and responsible stewardship of student financial aid and borrowing.

Collectively, these policies, processes, and practices ensure that Lehigh admits, retains, and facilitates the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with the institutional mission, fully meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 1(a).**

IV.1b: Lehigh maintains clearly stated, ethical policies, practices and processes to recruit, admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with institutional mission, and a process by which students who are not adequately prepared for study at the level for which they have been admitted are identified, placed and supported in attaining appropriate educational outcomes.

Lehigh University maintains structured policies, practices and processes to identify and support students who may not be adequately prepared for study at the level for which they have been admitted. Through diagnostic assessment, guided placement and coordinated academic support services, the university ensures that students receive targeted resources that strengthen their academic foundation and promote long-term success.

Assessment: Incoming students' academic records are reviewed, and the ALEKS Placement, Preparation and Learning (ALEKS PPL) Assessment is required to evaluate readiness in mathematics. ALEKS also provides personalized review modules for skill development (EVIDENCE 4.014: ALEKS Placement Information).

Identification: Students are identified for additional support based on ALEKS scores and placement guidance that establishes readiness thresholds (EVIDENCE 4.050: Course Placement Guidelines; EVIDENCE 4.014: ALEKS Placement Information).

Placement: Identified students are directed into foundational courses such as Math 000 (Preparation for Calculus) or preparatory writing workshops, depending on diagnostic outcomes (EVIDENCE 4.050: Course Placement Guidelines; EVIDENCE 4.014: ALEKS Placement Information).

Support: Lehigh offers a coordinated network of academic support services including peer tutoring for first and second-year courses, writing assistance, workshops and structured academic coaching through the Academic Success and Writing Center, and academic progress initiatives, like the Summer Success and Aid Program, through the Office of Academic Transitions (EVIDENCE 4.015: Academic Success and Writing Center; EVIDENCE 4.016: Peer Tutoring; EVIDENCE 4.017: Peer Academic Coaching; EVIDENCE 4.018: Summer Success and Aid Program).

Monitoring: Peer academic coaches work with students on goal setting, time management and structured accountability, providing ongoing monitoring and support through regular appointments that help students track progress and adjust strategies as needed (EVIDENCE 4.017: Peer Academic Coaching).

The Peer Academic Coaching program, launched in Fall 2021 by the Academic Success and Writing Center, was developed to expand academic support as students returned to in-person learning following the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program supports students seeking to strengthen learning strategies, study skills and time management, while also fostering community and a sense of belonging through peer engagement. In addition, the program develops student leaders who assist their peers academically. Most students meet with a Peer Academic Coach once or twice per semester, with utilization typically higher in the fall term. Program usage has increased over time, consistent with growth in undergraduate enrollment (Evidence 4.071: Peer Academic Coaching Usage Data).

In sum, Lehigh's structured processes for assessing readiness, identifying students in need of additional preparation, placing them in appropriate courses and connecting them with coordinated academic support services enable the university to admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with the institutional mission, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 1(b).**

IV.1c: Lehigh maintains clearly stated, ethical policies, practices and processes to recruit, admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with institutional mission, including orientation, advisement and counseling programs to enhance retention and guide students throughout their educational experience.

Lehigh University offers comprehensive orientation, advisement and counseling programs designed to enhance student retention and guide students throughout the undergraduate and graduate educational experience.

Orientation: Undergraduate students are required to attend fall orientation (first-year and transfers) or spring orientation (transfers), which introduces academic expectations,

campus resources, policies, and student life. Graduate and international students participate in separate, program-appropriate orientation sessions (EVIDENCE 4.019: Fall Orientation; EVIDENCE 4.020: International Students; EVIDENCE 4.054: Graduate Student Orientation). Undergraduate orientation is coordinated by the Office of First-Year Experience (OFYE), lasts four full days, and emphasizes academic foundations, campus resources, health and wellbeing, and inclusive community engagement. OFYE conducts its own assessment, creates 1-2 page assessment insights for all programming, and uses these for improvements (EVIDENCE 4.073-4.075: Fall Orientation 2023 to 2025). Graduate orientation supports transition by introducing students to academic expectations, campus resources, administrative requirements, and community connections.

Academic Advising: Structured academic advising is provided by faculty or professional advisors in each college, with centralized coordination via the Office of Coordinated Advising. Undergraduate students receive guidance on course selection, major exploration, academic planning and career pathways. Academic advising is supported by tools such as DegreeWorks and EAB's Navigate360 platform, which is branded at Lehigh as Compass (EVIDENCE 4.021: Academic Advising; EVIDENCE 4.022: Who Is My Academic Advisor).

Individual and Group Counseling: Students have access to confidential mental health services through University Counseling and Psychological Services (UCPS) and early intervention support via Student Support and Case Management (EVIDENCE 4.023: Counseling and Psychological Services; EVIDENCE 4.024: Student Support and Case Management Services).

In sum, Lehigh's orientation, advisement and counseling programs enhance retention and guide students throughout their educational experience, which allows the university to admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with the institutional mission, which meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 1(c).**

IV.1d: Lehigh maintains clearly stated, ethical policies, practices and processes to recruit, admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with institutional mission, including processes to enhance student achievement including certificate and degree completion, transfer to other institutions and post-completion placement.

Lehigh University implements diverse processes to support students in achieving their educational goals, including degree completion, transfer opportunities, and post-graduation success.

Academic Support Services: Students benefit from comprehensive academic support, including subject tutoring, writing assistance, academic coaching, study-skills workshops and disability support coordinated through the Academic Success and Writing Center (EVIDENCE 4.015, Academic Success and Writing Center) and Disability Support Services.

Early Alert Systems: Systems are in place to identify students experiencing academic and/or personal difficulty early in their academic career. Faculty, advisors, and support staff collaborate to provide timely intervention and resources. The Academic Performance Concern process allows faculty to alert the student, their academic advisor, and academic support staff, so a plan of action can be created and support offered. This is done through Compass, a newly implemented platform that prioritizes transparency, communication, and

ease of use. The Care Team is an interdisciplinary group that monitors and provides early intervention to students whose behavior or circumstances are concerning (EVIDENCE 4.025, Academic Performance Concern) (EVIDENCE 4.024, Student Support and Case Management Services).

Degree Planning and Audits: The university provides degree audit tools and individualized academic planning through registration and academic services and college advising offices, enabling students to track progress toward degree completion (EVIDENCE 4.026, Registration and Academic Services). Transfer credit evaluation, when applicable, is coordinated by the Office of the Registrar (Evidence 4.032: Transfer Credit Policy).

Career and Professional Development: The Center for Career and Professional Development offers career counseling, resume and interview preparation, job search strategy support, and networking opportunities. Alumni engagement and employer partnerships are harnessed to facilitate successful career outcomes for both undergraduate and graduate students (EVIDENCE 4.027: Center for Career and Professional Development).

Experiential and High-Impact Learning: Initiatives such as Explore Lehigh (a new program introducing first-year students to fields of study across the four colleges) and programs catalogued in Lehigh360 (a hub for high-impact learning opportunities across campus), particularly those supporting undergraduate student research, encourage experiential learning and integrative academic experiences that strengthen student engagement, achievement, and research experience. The Office of International Affairs also offers a range of high-impact opportunities (EVIDENCE 4.029, Lehigh360).

Regional Outreach and Support: The Western Regional Office serves as the university's strategic hub for student recruitment, academic engagement, and industry partnerships across 13 western U.S. states. With a permanent home in San Francisco, Lehigh offers direct proximity to Silicon Valley, placing Lehigh students, faculty, alumni and programs in the heart of the world's most innovative ecosystem (EVIDENCE 4.030, Western Regional Office).

Institutional Data Transparency: Lehigh publishes degree completion rates, graduation timelines, retention metrics (including demographic breakdowns), and post-graduation outcomes such as First and Next Destination surveys through the Office of Institutional Data website (EVIDENCE 4.077: Graduation Rates Data Summary; EVIDENCE 4.078: Retention Rates Data Summary; EVIDENCE 4.079: First Destination Survey; EVIDENCE 4.080: Next Destination Survey; EVIDENCE 4.081: Completions By Degree). The data inform continuous improvement and guide adjustments to academic and student support programs.

Retention Focus: Expansion of staff dedicated to student retention, including establishment of the Office of Student Retention to collaborate with campus departments in supporting students facing challenges and advising on retention policies. In 2023, the Lehigh Retention Council was formed to coordinate undergraduate enrollment and retention efforts campus-wide (EVIDENCE 4.007: Lehigh Retention Council).

Financial Support: Introduction of Summer Completion Grants and Student Success Grants to assist students who have exhausted traditional aid, and establishment of Emergency Aid funds to help students persist toward graduation; see Standard III (EVIDENCE 4.008: Emergency Financial Aid; 4.076: Summer Completion Grant Program).

Lehigh's programs supporting certificate and degree completion, transfer, and placement enhance students' achievement of their educational goals, which allows the university to admit, retain, and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences,

and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with the institutional mission. For these reasons, Lehigh's processes meet the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 1(d).**

IV.1e: Lehigh maintains clearly stated, ethical policies, practices and processes to recruit, admit, retain and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with institutional mission, including processes to disaggregate and analyze student achievement data to inform and implement strategies that improve outcomes for all populations.

Lehigh University systematically disaggregates and analyzes student achievement data through its Office of Institutional Data (OID) and the Institutional Data Center, which publish a range of dashboards and reports on key student success indicators, including retention, graduation, degree completions, and demographic breakdowns by gender, race/ethnicity, and financial aid status (EVIDENCE 4.077: Graduation Rates Data Summary; EVIDENCE 4.078: Retention Rates Data Summary; EVIDENCE 4.081: Completions By Degree; EVIDENCE 4.082: Enrollment Trend Data). Post-completion placement rates of undergraduate and graduate students are also published each year (EVIDENCE 4.079: First Destination Survey; EVIDENCE 4.080: Next Destination Survey). These data resources are publicly accessible and support transparent tracking of student outcomes.

The university uses these disaggregated data to identify disparities, inform campus discussions and planning, and implement evidence-based strategies aimed at improving retention, progression, and degree completion across all student populations. Lehigh also integrates survey data (e.g., first-year, senior, and graduate experience surveys) and institutional reporting to guide decision-making and continuous improvement initiatives, ensuring that policies, practices, and interventions are aligned with the mission and effectively enhance outcomes for all students. For these reasons, Lehigh's processes meet the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 1(e).**

IV.2. Lehigh adheres to fair and transparent policies and procedures regarding evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits, credits awarded through experiential learning, prior non-academic learning, competency-based assessment and other alternative learning approaches.

As described in Standard III, Lehigh University adheres to clearly defined policies and procedures for evaluating and accepting transfer credits from regionally accredited institutions, consistent with federal regulations 34 CFR § 602.24(e) and 668.43(a)(11). The HEOA website lists institutions with which Lehigh has articulation agreements and memorandums of understanding (EVIDENCE 4.083: HEOA website) and Lehigh's transfer credit policies and methodology are publicly available, reviewed annually, and disclosed on the registrar's website and in the catalog to ensure transparency and compliance (EVIDENCE 4.032: Transfer Credit Policy; 4.061: 2025-26 Catalog, p. 11). Semester abroad transfer credit policies are addressed in R&P 3.1.4.1 (EVIDENCE 4.084: Rules and Procedures of the Faculty), and Lehigh does not award academic credit for prior non-academic learning or competency-based assessments (EVIDENCE 4.032: Transfer Credit Policy).

Lehigh offers training and professional development opportunities for faculty and professional staff advisors who advise undergraduate students. The AdviseLU Professional Development Course Site houses advising resources, including the AdviseLU Workshop Series schedule, which includes topics related to advising transfer students. Furthermore,

Lehigh's advising website features a section devoted to transfer students (EVIDENCE 4.086: Academic Advising Transfer Students), as well as an Advisor Toolkit with resources to support both faculty and staff in their advising roles (EVIDENCE 4.085: Academic Advising). The Lehigh Undergraduate Advising Committee meets regularly, where the topic of transfer students is included, and the Director of Coordinated Advising convenes the undergraduate college advising offices, the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of the First-Year Experience to collaborate on the transfer student onboarding experience. Lastly, the Office of Student Retention and the Dean of Students' Office of Academic Transitions partner with advisors on guiding students who are looking to transfer out of Lehigh.

Lehigh monitors transfer student success metrics, including retention and graduation outcomes, to continuously evaluate and improve transfer policies and practices.

Lehigh has instituted policies and procedures regarding evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits, and credits awarded through experiential learning, prior non-academic learning, competency-based assessment and other alternative learning approaches, which meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 2.**

IV.3. Lehigh maintains policy and procedures for the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information and records.

Lehigh University maintains rigorous policies and procedures for the secure maintenance, retention and appropriate release of student records in compliance with federal and institutional requirements. These policies address privacy, security and access in accordance with the FERPA and related regulations.

Student Records Maintenance and Retention
Lehigh's records management and retention policy clearly defines the standards for how student records are maintained, retained and disposed of, ensuring compliance with institutional, state and federal requirements. The policy outlines retention schedules for academic and administrative records to protect student information over time (EVIDENCE 4.034: Record Management and Retention Policy).

Protection of Student Privacy and Data Security
Lehigh's FERPA policy, clearly stated on the registrar's website, governs the management and release of student educational records by detailing student rights to privacy, procedures for requesting records, and limits on disclosure without consent. The policy ensures compliance with federal FERPA regulations and guides employees in safeguarding confidential student information. Compliance is reinforced through mandatory FERPA training for all employees, which promotes proper handling and appropriate use of student records (EVIDENCE 4.034, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Policy).

Regulatory Compliance and Student Identity Verification
Lehigh's policies also address student identity verification consistent with federal regulations for distance and correspondence education, ensuring the integrity of student records and secure access to student information systems (EVIDENCE 4.055, Student Identity Verification).

Staff Training and Ongoing Compliance
In addition to FERPA training, Lehigh provides regular training to faculty and staff on record management, privacy protection and responsible data use. Training is periodically updated to reflect changes in regulations and institutional best practices.

The university also employs a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) and maintains an Information Security Policy, which is publicly available and was last updated in 2021 (EVIDENCE 4.051, Information Security Policy). The CISO oversees the development and implementation of policies, standards and procedures that protect institutional data, ensuring the safe and secure maintenance of student and other institutional information. These policies support institutional safeguards for managing and protecting sensitive information across university systems.

Together, these policies, procedures and training programs ensure the secure maintenance, protection and appropriate release of student information and records. Accordingly, Lehigh meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 3.**

IV.4. Lehigh offers athletic, student life and other extracurricular activities that are regulated by the same academic, fiscal and administrative principles and procedures that govern all other programs.

Lehigh University fosters a holistic extracurricular environment, ensuring that athletic, student life and other extracurricular activities are governed by the same academic, fiscal and administrative principles that oversee all institutional programs. These activities operate under university policies related to budgeting, student conduct, risk management, and organizational oversight, ensuring that co-curricular programs are administered with the same institutional accountability applied to academic and administrative units.

Within the Division of Student Affairs, a recent organizational restructuring established the Office of Student Involvement. This office comprehensively supports student clubs and organizations, fraternities and sororities and student leadership development. Student organizations operate under university policies and procedures related to registration, financial management, and conduct, ensuring that these activities adhere to institutional governance and accountability standards. Lehigh continues to expand its offerings, with new student clubs reflecting evolving student interests and identities. For example, Asian and Pacific Islander student organizations have notably increased and received recognition at Student Life Leadership awards, which honor students who have significantly enhanced the quality of student life through their involvement and leadership while at Lehigh (EVIDENCE 4.035, Office of Student Involvement). Recently, Lehigh added Women's Wrestling as a varsity sport, expanding athletic opportunities for female-identified students.

Lehigh provides a rich co-curricular framework called bLUeprint, described in Standard III, which assists students in planning and reflecting on their learning across all facets of their university experience (EVIDENCE 4.026, Blueprint). Lehigh University Athletics promotes holistic development of student-athletes through its Flight 45 program, a comprehensive and integrated effort to inspire and develop leadership within the Lehigh Athletics community (EVIDENCE 4.037, Flight 45).

Accountability for fraternity and sorority life is maintained through an annual accreditation process that aligns these organizations with university standards (EVIDENCE 4.038, Fraternity and Sorority Accreditation).

Lehigh University maintains institutional integrity by ensuring the intercollegiate athletics program is fully aligned with its mission of academic rigor. As a founding member of the Patriot League in NCAA Division 1, Lehigh adheres to the 'scholar-athlete' model, requiring that student-athletes remain academically representative of the broader undergraduate body. Governance is formalized through the endowed dean of athletics, a position that sits

within the university's core administrative hierarchy with a direct reporting line to the president and the board of trustees. This reporting structure ensures executive-level oversight and transparency. Athletics operations follow the same institutional policies related to budgeting, compliance, student conduct and academic eligibility that govern other university programs, while also adhering to NCAA and Patriot League requirements. Furthermore, collaborative administrative partnerships between athletics and campus departments ensures that Lehigh Athletics operates in accordance with university-wide policies, fostering a culture of compliance and shared institutional goals. This integration of athletics into the university ensures that student-athletes are holistically supported as members of the campus community enhancing the student success and experience.

The student athlete handbook is updated annually, providing the students with the athletics mission, vision, values and guiding principles, the expectations that are associated with being an athlete at Lehigh, and the Patriot League code of conduct, along with other useful information (EVIDENCE 4.087: SA Handbook).

In accordance with the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA), Lehigh University annually reports information on intercollegiate athletics participation, staffing and financial support for men's and women's programs. The report provides transparent data on athletics participation rates, operating expenses and revenues across varsity sports, supporting institutional accountability and public disclosure related to gender equity in athletics (EVIDENCE 4.088: 2024-25 EADA Report).

Athletics scholarships are available for students with exceptional athletic ability. The estimated amount of non-need-based athletics awards in scholarships was $14,122,480 in academic year 2022-2023, $14,999,806 in 2023-2024, and $15,818,448 in 2024-2025 (EVIDENCE 4.070: Common Data Sets 2022 to 2025, section H1).

At the graduate level, Lehigh employs a decentralized model for extracurricular activities, complemented by the Graduate Life Office. This office's mission is to foster community, thriving and retention through events, programming, student clubs and consultation services. It also provides graduate-level writing support. Recognizing mental health challenges among graduate students, the university actively pursues early intervention and support initiatives to mitigate stressors common in graduate education (EVIDENCE 4.040, Graduate Life Office).

In conclusion, Lehigh's athletic, student life and other extracurricular activities operate under institutional academic, fiscal and administrative policies, including oversight through Student Affairs, Athletics leadership, and university governance structures. These processes ensure that extracurricular programs are administered with the same standards of accountability and integrity that govern all other university programs, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 4.**

IV.5. If applicable, adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of student support services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers.

Lehigh University prioritizes delivering comprehensive in-house student support services while strategically integrating select third-party providers to enhance these efforts. The institution ensures thorough institutional review and approval of all third-party services to maintain quality, alignment with university values and regulatory compliance (EVIDENCE 4.090: Contract Approval Flow). The Office of Purchasing Services, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and the Office of General Counsel have created LUCA (Lehigh

University Contracts Administration) to streamline the contract review process for University faculty and staff. Through this contract review process, third-party services are evaluated for alignment with institutional policies, student support objectives, data privacy standards and regulatory compliance, and are subject to ongoing institutional oversight by the responsible administrative units.

Examples of third-party integrations include:

- University Counseling and Psychological Services (UCPS): Lehigh partners with Telus Health to provide 24/7/365 mental health support access for students. The university proactively addressed mental health and sense of belonging challenges during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, also offering free access to Headspace for students, faculty, and staff as supplemental mental health support through an app (EVIDENCE 4.023, Counseling and Psychological Services). Headspace remains available to students at no cost (EVIDENCE 4.041, Headspace).
- Mentor Collective: Employed as a third-party service to foster student success and inclusive belonging through mentorship programs, supporting diverse student populations (EVIDENCE 4.043, Mentor Collective).
- InternationalSOS (ISOS): Lehigh's service provider for medical and security support is a large component of Lehigh's steps to prepare students, faculty and staff for travel and for supporting any needs for travelers while abroad (see Standard V).

In 2024, the College of Education (COE) partnered with AllCampus, an online program management (OPM) provider, to support the delivery of several fully online programs. As of 2025, these include the M.Ed. in Mental Health Counseling, M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and M.Ed. in Behavior Analysis, as well as a Certificate in Behavior Analysis. AllCampus works exclusively with these four COE online programs and supports them through coordinated marketing, admissions and student services, helping prospective and current students navigate their educational pathways and ensuring a seamless experience from inquiry to graduation (EVIDENCE 4.091: AllCampus OPM Contract). This collaboration expands the reach of COE's online offerings and strengthens student engagement throughout each stage of the online learner journey.

In 2023, the College of Education (COE) partnered with AllCampus, an online program management (OPM) provider, to support the delivery of several fully online programs. As of 2025, these include the M.Ed. in Mental Health Counseling, M.Ed. in Educational Leadership, M.Ed. in Behavior Analysis, and a Certificate in Behavior Analysis. AllCampus works exclusively with these four COE online programs, representing approximately 10.5% of COE's 38 programs and 4.6% of the university's total programs. They provide coordinated marketing, admissions, and student services to help prospective and current students navigate their educational pathways and ensure a seamless experience from inquiry through graduation (EVIDENCE 4.091: AllCampus OPM Contract; EVIDENCE 4.092: AllCampus OPM SOW).

Given that this partnership has been in place for only two years, Lehigh has not yet conducted a formal assessment of AllCampus's impact on student outcomes. A structured assessment plan will be implemented after four years of engagement, including review of:

1. Student enrollment and persistence in AllCampus-supported programs
2. Student completion rates, time-to-degree, and post-completion outcomes

3. Student feedback regarding services provided and their onboarding experience

This planned evaluation will allow COE and the university to measure the effectiveness of the partnership, inform continuous improvement, and ensure alignment with institutional goals for student success.

Lehigh also uses third-party providers for study abroad programs, which encompass more than 250 opportunities in over sixty countries. These program providers are rigorously vetted and regularly reviewed by the Study Abroad Office within the Office of International Affairs. Students proposing to study abroad complete either a course approval form or a short-term course approval form available on the university's International Affairs/Study Abroad website (EVIDENCE 4.093: Study Abroad Forms).

These examples demonstrate that Lehigh maintains institutional processes for the review, approval and oversight of student support services designed, delivered or assessed by third-party providers, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 5.**

IV.6. Lehigh makes periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student support services for all student populations with appropriate metrics and evaluation.

Lehigh's Division of Student Affairs includes a dedicated Research and Assessment office committed to evaluating the student experience (EVIDENCE 4.044, Student Affairs Research and Assessment). The institution conducts periodic assessments of all programs supporting students to promote continuous improvement and ensure alignment with student needs and institutional goals.

Key assessments include:

- Life at Lehigh Survey: An annual survey focused on student belonging and well-being. This dynamic instrument evolves to address emerging concerns; recent additions include questions about sexual health and food insecurity (EVIDENCE 4.045, Life at Lehigh Survey).
- Qualitative Methodologies: Lehigh has recently incorporated innovative methods such as photo voice, a photography-based project capturing nuanced experiences of first-generation and neurodivergent students, providing rich qualitative insight (EVIDENCE 4.047, Photography-Based Projects).
- Office of Institutional Data (OID) Surveys: OID administers diverse surveys that illuminate various aspects of the student experience, including the Graduate Experience Survey, and post-graduation surveys such as the undergraduate First Destination and graduate Next Destination surveys which gather vital information on professional development outcomes and career preparation efficacy (EVIDENCE 4.048, Survey Data). See Standard III for more information.

Lehigh regularly assesses the effectiveness of student support programs across all student populations using quantitative and qualitative metrics, and applies these insights to continuously improve services, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard IV, Criterion 6.**

Conclusions and Recommendations
A number of recommendations about ways to build on programs and services emerged through this review. Among them is the need for enhanced efforts to support transfer students, including consideration of articulation agreements and coordination of somewhat decentralized processes for credit approval and advising. The timeliness of the transfer

credit approval process is important to help transfer students understand their academic standing and remaining requirements as they enter Lehigh. This is an area that has, and will continue to, receive dedicated attention. Additionally, the university has begun establishing formal articulation agreements with local community colleges, with an agreement with Northampton Community College already published. The hiring of Lehigh's first Articulation Officer has allowed for improved communication and coordination across campus to help expedite transfer credit review and improve the overall process. The credit transfer process also affects students studying abroad, with approximately 1,500-2,000 course approvals needed annually to support 280+ study abroad participants; the Office of the Registrar has been reviewing the transfer process and improving the credit transfer-related requirements for students, faculty and staff. To improve the transfer process, Lehigh intends to increase the pace of the transfer credit approvals to keep students well-informed as they prepare to enroll and select courses.

Lehigh plans to build upon current financial transparency efforts by enhancing awareness about the opportunities and availability of funds to help students reach degree completion. There are also plans to increase education for students about debt and loan repayment. To date, the Office of Financial Aid has offered sessions to first-generation college students, students with high financial need and Pell-eligible students, as well as students participating in programs such as Lehigh University Student Scholars Institute (LUSSI). Campus-wide financial education has also been offered through a Financial Reality Fair (EVIDENCE 4.060: Financial Literacy Flyer). There is a recognized need for more proactive emergency financial aid, rather than solely reactive approaches.

Finally, the addition of Compass, a student support and advising tool that is new to Lehigh's campus, will be key in developing and coordinating student support efforts.

With a wide variety of campus engagement offerings, a thoughtful and ethical approach to financial aid and admissions, consistent prioritization of the student experience and a focus on continual improvement, Lehigh's commitment to supporting the student experience remains a key priority in all efforts across campus.

CHAPTER 5

STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

V.1: Lehigh maintains clearly stated student learning outcomes at the institution and degree/program levels, which are interrelated with one another, with relevant educational experiences and with the institution's mission.

Lehigh University maintains clearly articulated student learning outcomes at the institutional, college and program levels that guide the design and delivery of its academic programs and support the university's educational mission. As described in Standard I, Lehigh's academic structure is college-based, and each of the university's colleges is responsible for developing and maintaining student learning outcomes for its academic programs (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, pp. 1–3). These outcomes define the knowledge, skills and competencies that students are expected to achieve through their academic programs and ensure that curricula reflect the university's mission and educational priorities.

Within each college, academic departments and programs establish program–level learning outcomes that align with the broader educational goals of the university and with disciplinary expectations (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, pp. 1–3). These outcomes are communicated through program materials, course syllabi and other academic documentation. Programs periodically review their learning outcomes to ensure clarity, relevance and alignment with the evolving needs of students, the disciplines and the university's mission.

Lehigh's educational priorities further shape the student learning experience. The university's strategic priorities of Holistic Student Success for All Students, and Innovative and Interdisciplinary Education emphasize experiential learning, global engagement and interdisciplinary opportunities across colleges and programs. Students engage with these priorities through a wide range of educational experiences, including research opportunities, experiential learning programs, interdisciplinary majors and minors and global learning initiatives.

Because Lehigh's curriculum is organized within its colleges, general education requirements and program requirements are established and assessed within those academic units. For example, writing proficiency is supported through foundational composition courses (Writing 001 and Writing 002), which are required by multiple undergraduate colleges and provide students with core communication competencies essential for academic and professional success. (Note that AP exam scores may exempt students from one or both composition course requirements; furthermore, non–native English speakers may take an alternate set of composition courses). These shared curricular elements support common learning goals across programs while allowing colleges to tailor curricula to their disciplinary contexts.

Through clearly articulated program-level learning outcomes, alignment with institutional priorities and the integration of educational experiences across the curriculum, Lehigh

ensures that student learning outcomes are clearly stated, aligned with relevant educational experiences and consistent with the institution's mission, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard V, Criterion 1.**

V.2a: Lehigh conducts organized and systematic assessments, conducted by faculty and/or appropriate professionals, evaluating the extent of student achievement of institutional and program goals. Lehigh defines student learning outcomes that are appropriate to higher education with defensible standards for assessing whether students are achieving those outcomes.

Lehigh University conducts organized and systematic assessment of student learning outcomes to evaluate the extent to which students achieve the goals established by their academic programs. Assessment activities are led primarily by faculty within departments and academic programs, with institutional support provided through campus units responsible for academic innovation, technology and assessment support.

At the program level, faculty define measurable student learning outcomes that reflect disciplinary expectations and the educational goals of the program. Programs identify appropriate methods for assessing these outcomes, which may include direct measures such as course-embedded assignments, projects, portfolios, examinations and capstone experiences, as well as indirect measures such as surveys or reflective assessments. Faculty analyze the results of these assessments to determine the extent to which students are meeting program learning goals and to identify opportunities for curricular improvement.

Many of Lehigh's programs also participate in external accreditation processes that require rigorous assessment of student learning outcomes. These include accreditation by organizations such as the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). These accreditation processes provide additional structures and standards for defining and assessing learning outcomes and reinforce the institution's commitment to systematic evaluation of student learning.

Lehigh supports faculty in their assessment efforts by allocating institutional resources and infrastructure for assessment activities. The university provides learning management systems and technology platforms through Library and Technology Services (LTS), including Course Site (Lehigh's branded Moodle platform), which supports course-level assessment and the collection of student learning data. In addition, the university established the Office of Educational Innovation and Assessment (OEIA) to collaborate with academic units on assessment initiatives, including the evaluation of new academic programs, innovative teaching approaches and broader educational initiatives.

To support the reaffirmation process and strengthen assessment practices across campus, the Standard V working group hosted an assessment workshop for department chairs and program directors during the 2024–25 academic year (EVIDENCE 5.002: Assessment Workshop 2024). The workshop provided guidance on assessment strategies, examples of effective assessment practices and resources to support departments in evaluating student learning outcomes. Participation from academic units across the university helped reinforce a shared understanding of assessment expectations and encouraged programs to review and strengthen their assessment practices following disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Evidence collected from the university's five colleges demonstrates that nearly all undergraduate programs maintain clearly defined learning outcomes and that the vast majority have conducted recent assessments of those outcomes. Table 4 summarizes the extent to which undergraduate programs have established learning outcomes and conducted recent assessments, including programs accredited by disciplinary accrediting bodies. Similar review processes are in place for graduate programs, many of which have undergone program review within the past decade, with updated timelines and processes currently being implemented (Table 6).

TABLE 4 LEARNING OUTCOME ANALYSIS BY UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR/PROGRAM, BY COLLEGE, AS OF AUGUST 2025

Undergraduate College	Disciplinary or Professional Accrediting Agency	Number of Majors or Degree Programs	Small Programs that Aggregate Data across Cohorts[1]	% Majors with Learning Outcomes	% Majors with Recent Assessments
CAS – Accredited Majors/Programs[2]	ACS; ABET-CAC; NAST	3	0	100%	100%
CAS – Non-Accredited	(None)	58	24[3]	100%	94.8%
Lehigh Business	AACSB	2	0	100%	100%
Engineering – Accredited Degree Programs	ABET	10	0	100%	100%
Engineering – Non-Accredited Degree Programs	(None)	5	5[4]	100%	N/A (all too small to assess)
Health	None	4	3	100%	0
Inter-College[5]					
CAS & Rossin College (IDEAS)[6]	(None)	1	0	100%	0%
Lehigh Business & Rossin College (IBE Program)[7]	AACSB	1	0	100%	100%
Lehigh Business & Rossin College (CSB Program)[8]	AACSB & ABET	1	0	100%	100%
Lehigh Business & Health (IBH Program)[9]	(None, at the moment)	1	NA	100%	NA

1 Programs with an average of fewer than five graduates per year.
2 In CAS, the B.S. in chemistry is certified by the American Chemical Society (ACS); the B.S. in computer science is accredited by ABET-CAC (Computing Accreditation Commission). The theatre program, whose major leads to the B.A. degree, is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).
3 The too small to assess majors/degree programs in CAS are: Africana studies; art; art history; Asian and Asian American studies; astronomy; astrophysics; chemistry; Chinese; French and Francophone studies; German studies; Japanese; joint global studies/modern language and literature; joint international relations/modern languages and literature; journalism science/environmental writing; Latin American & Latino studies; music; pharmaceutical chemistry; pre-dental science; pre-optometry; religion, culture & society; sociology & anthropology; Spanish & Hispanic studies; theatre; and women, gender, and sexuality.

4 The small B.S. programs offered to students in the Rossin College are: biocomputational engineering (undergoing accreditation 2025); chemistry; applied science; engineering mechanics; and engineering physics. The B.S. chemistry and B.S. engineering physics degrees are managed through the chemistry and physics departments in CAS, respectively. The B.S. engineering mechanics degree is administered by the mechanical engineering department within the Rossin College, and the B.S. applied science degree is managed directly by the Rossin College.
5 Intercollege programs directly align with Lehigh's institutional priority of interdisciplinary education.
6 Integrated Degree in Engineering, Arts and Sciences
7 Integrated Business and Engineering
8 Computer Science and Business
9 Integrated Business and Health (new program)

Taken together, these processes demonstrate that Lehigh maintains organized and systematic assessment practices led by faculty and supported by institutional resources. These efforts ensure that student learning outcomes are clearly defined, assessed through appropriate methods and regularly reviewed to evaluate the extent of student achievement of institutional and program goals, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard V, Criterion 2(a)**.

V.2b: Lehigh conducts organized and systematic assessments, conducted by faculty and/or appropriate professionals, evaluating the extent of student achievement of institutional and program goals. Lehigh articulates how they prepare students in a manner consistent with their mission for successful careers, meaningful lives, and, where appropriate, further education. Lehigh collects and provides data on the extent to which they are meeting their goals.

Lehigh University conducts organized and systematic assessments, led by faculty and appropriate professionals, to evaluate the extent to which students achieve institutional and program goals and to articulate how its programs prepare students for successful careers, meaningful lives, and, where appropriate, further education.

Lehigh's strategic plan, *Inspiring the Future Makers*, lays out a vision for educating leaders who are capable of imagining, creating, and implementing solutions that meaningfully improve the world (see Standard I) (EVIDENCE 5.003: 2023 Strategic Plan). Consistent with this mission, the university emphasizes experiential learning, interdisciplinary education, and opportunities that prepare students for professional success and lifelong engagement.

Lehigh collects and analyzes data to evaluate the extent to which students achieve these goals. These data include career outcomes, graduate school placement, and other post-graduation indicators of student success, which are gathered through institutional surveys and reporting processes (EVIDENCE 5.004: First Destination Reports; EVIDENCE 5.005: Next Destination Reports). These results are used to inform curricular and co-curricular program enhancements, ensuring that students achieve the desired outcomes.

Additional program- and college-level assessment data and analyses are presented in the next section to provide a comprehensive view of how Lehigh evaluates student achievement across the institution. Through these efforts, Lehigh demonstrates that it articulates and evaluates how its educational programs prepare students for successful careers and further education, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard V, Criterion 2(b).**

V.2c: Lehigh conducts organized and systematic assessments, conducted by faculty and/or appropriate professionals, evaluating the extent of student achievement of institutional and program goals. Lehigh supports and sustains assessment of student learning outcomes and communicates the results of this assessment to stakeholders.

Lehigh University conducts organized and systematic assessments, carried out by faculty and/or appropriate professionals, evaluating the extent of student achievement of institutional and program goals. Lehigh supports and sustains assessment of student learning outcomes and communicates the results of these assessments to stakeholders fulfilling the requirements of **MSCHE Standard V, Criterion 2(c).**

The following overview by college, for both undergraduate and graduate programs, demonstrates Lehigh's commitment to assessing student learning outcomes and using results for continuous improvement.

Undergraduate Program Assessment by College

College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)
The CAS, with approximately 2,100 undergraduate students, more than 350 graduate students and 285 full-time faculty members, is the most complex and diverse of Lehigh's four undergraduate colleges. The college is distinguished by the disciplinary breadth, comprehensive programmatic offerings and wide-ranging faculty research interests. Faculty teach in the arts, humanities and social and natural sciences, and many contribute to interdisciplinary programs. Most departments offer undergraduate (B.A., B.S.) and graduate degrees (MA, MS, Ph.D.). In contrast to the other colleges, only a small number of CAS programs are formally reviewed and accredited or otherwise certified by a body other than MSCHE. For instance, the B.S. in chemistry offered by the department of chemistry is approved by the American Chemical Society (ACS) (EVIDENCE 5.006: Chemistry Accreditation); the B.A. in theatre offered by the department of theatre is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) (EVIDENCE 5.007: NAST Accreditation).

Undergraduate General Education Assessment
The CAS college-wide learning outcomes (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, p.1) encompass the Middle States general education requirements while also extending to additional competencies valued by the college. Middle States general education emphasizes the development of essential skills, including communication, critical thinking, technology and information literacy, and scientific and quantitative reasoning, as well as engagement with diverse perspectives, values and ethical considerations. CAS learning outcomes reflect these priorities by promoting intellectual and practical skills (e.g., critical thinking, clear communication, and the ability to interpret and analyze data), personal, social and professional growth (e.g., engagement with communities and global issues, understanding diverse cultures, and applying ethical reasoning in real-world contexts), and advanced and independent learning (e.g., thinking across disciplines and applying knowledge to new settings and complex problems).

The CAS provides students with many opportunities to engage in academic experiences designed to broaden their intellectual horizons, to pursue interdisciplinary learning and to concentrate in a major field of inquiry. Through a combination of college-wide distribution requirements and major field essential courses (EVIDENCE 5.008: 2025-26 Catalog, pp.61-62), CAS students attain a broad educational experience by taking courses across the arts and languages, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences and social sciences. In addition, the Integrated Degree in Engineering, Arts and Sciences (IDEAS) aligns with many of these foundational distribution requirements (EVIDENCE 5.008: 2025-26 Catalog, p.511), in addition to core learning outcomes in the P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science (the Rossin College).

The faculty in the CAS recently updated the college-wide curriculum requirements, implemented in fall 2024, to strengthen interdisciplinary learning and emphasize writing, quantitative reasoning and engagement with complex contemporary questions. The revised curriculum includes interdisciplinary Big Questions Seminars, enhanced First-Year Writing courses and additional curricular touchpoints called Encounters. These curricular elements are aligned with CAS college-wide learning outcomes and are subject to ongoing assessment.

CAS curriculum requirements, combined with major requirements, ensure that all students' curricula address the college-wide learning outcomes. Faculty conduct organized and systematic assessments of these outcomes across courses and programs. For example, skills related to communication, critical thinking and ethical reasoning are assessed through evaluation of student work in English composition/First-Year Writing courses and the interdisciplinary Big Questions Seminars. Additional learning outcomes are assessed by departments through course- and program-level assessment processes.

In high-enrollment gateway courses, faculty committees regularly review student achievement data. For example, the Calculus Committee, composed of mathematics faculty and faculty from programs requiring the calculus sequence, meets at least annually to review student performance in gateway mathematics courses. The committee evaluates examination results as well as broader indicators of student success, including placement and performance in subsequent mathematics courses. These reviews generate documentation and inform advising guidance and instructional improvements.

Assessment in the Undergraduate Programs
The CAS, given its complexity and breadth, leverages many different forms of student assessment. All undergraduate majors have up-to-date, clear learning outcomes. Program leaders participated in a campus-wide assessment workshop, the goal of which was to engage new and existing department chairs in training related to developing robust assessment tools and strategies. Given the complexity and breadth of CAS programs, assessment occurs through a combination of ongoing course-level and program-level reviews designed to evaluate the extent to which students achieve program learning outcomes. Holistic program review occurs on a rotating basis, typically at least every five years, though there has been a recent lag for some programs due to constraints during the COVID pandemic, with some programs' prior holistic assessment occurring last circa 2017-2018.

With the program-level reviews, all data are reviewed by the full department faculty or a faculty department committee, as well as the CAS dean's office. With the program-level reviews, all data are reviewed by the full department faculty or a faculty department committee, as well as the CAS dean's office. Any necessary action items are discussed and moved forward, based on the data.

The CAS programs generally assess SLOs and program goals using direct measures (e.g., evaluation of student work, use of standardized exams — specifically chemistry in ACS accreditation — capstone projects, portfolios, and at times, senior theses are used as holistic measures of cumulative learning over the course of a program). However, there are cases where indirect assessment is performed, especially among the programs that are very small or wish to combine direct and indirect efforts (such as exit surveys and interviews, alumni surveys or benchmarking programs against peer institutions and accreditation standards, e.g., astronomy/astrophysics, chemistry and theatre). The CAS dean's office is identifying

opportunities for improvement in these measures, as part of the continuous improvement process within the college.

In sum, clear statements of learning outcomes have been developed on the college, program and course level and have appropriate interrelationships to the relevant majors (EVIDENCE 5.009: 2025 CAS Assessment Summary). CAS efforts to assess student learning outcomes look different across the disciplinary departments and interdisciplinary programs. In programs where assessment practices are being further refined or updated (e.g., philosophy and cognitive science), faculty are actively working to strengthen and formalize assessment processes to ensure consistent evaluation of student learning outcomes. In addition, the CAS and the Rossin College will ensure that measurable learning outcomes are established for the intercollege program in IDEAS. The following statement applies to CAS undergraduate programs as a whole: CAS leaders at the college and program level demonstrate sustained support for faculty in promoting an ongoing culture of assessment and for efforts to improve teaching.

The College of Business
The College of Business (Lehigh Business) is home to over 1,200 undergraduate students, over 300 graduate students and 97 full-time faculty members. In addition, due to Lehigh's interdisciplinary programs, the College of Business also is home to over 600 intercollege students between the undergraduate and graduate levels. At the undergraduate level, Lehigh Business offers eight majors as part of the B.S. in business and economics degree, two intercollege B.S. degrees in collaboration with the P.C. Rossin College and one intercollege B.S. degree in collaboration with the College of Health (COH).

The College of Business is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), which has reviewed both undergraduate and graduate programs on a five-year cycle, but has recently moved to a six-year review timeline (EVIDENCE 5.010: Lehigh Business AACSB Status). The most recent accreditation took place during the 2021-22 academic year, and covered program years from 2016-17 through 2020-2021. All programs within the College of Business, including the intercollege programs of Integrated and Business (IBE) and Computer Science and Business (CSB), undergo AACSB accreditation under that organization's regular timetable (note that CSB is also ABET accredited) (EVIDENCE 5.011: IBE Website; EVIDENCE 5.012: CSB Website). Additionally, all programs in Lehigh Business, including the IBE and CSB programs have their own learning outcomes defined (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, pp.1 & 3). The B.S. Integrated Business and Health degree (IBH) enrolled its first cohort for the fall of 2025 and will first be reviewed in the upcoming accreditation cycle.

AACSB Assurance of Learning (AoL) processes are documented in an AACSB Continuous Improvement Review (CIR) Report every five years and are evaluated by an external review team. Through the AoL process, faculty and program leaders systematically assess student achievement of program learning goals using direct and indirect measures, review the results and identify areas for program improvement. Assessment findings are shared with program leadership and college administration and are used to inform curricular refinement and continuous improvement. The 2022 review, and the preceding 2017 review, found Lehigh Business to be fully meeting accreditation standards (EVIDENCE 5.013: 2022 AACSB Peer Review Team Report).

Because AACSB accreditation standards include extensive expectations related to the assessment of student learning outcomes, the College of Business maintains organized and

systematic assessment practices aligned with these standards. Lehigh's college-based assessment structure allows for this flexibility.

Undergraduate General Education Assessment
The AACSB provides a set of Guiding Principles and Standards, recently updated for 2025 reviews and beyond (EVIDENCE 5.015: AACSB Guiding Principles; EVIDENCE 5.016: 2025 Updated AACSB Guiding Principles). The College of Business integrated core curriculum emphasizes essential business concepts and skills throughout the college experience. Courses in the core curriculum are required of all business degree students and are logically sequenced in a building-block approach (EVIDENCE 5.014: Lehigh Business Core Curriculum). The core curriculum is designed to support the College of Business learning goals and provides multiple points across the curriculum where student learning outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and formally assessed through course-embedded assignments and the senior capstone experience. These courses and sequences are regularly reviewed for effectiveness and alignment with AACSB guidance. The core introduces foundational basics, advances to more complex concepts and real-world issues, and culminates in a senior capstone on strategic decision-making, aligned with the institutional priority of Innovative and Interdisciplinary Education. Upon graduation, students are able to add value in a real-time context to solve intricate, often unstructured, business problems, which aligns the College of Business programs with the institutional priority of Holistic Student Success.

The core distribution requirements, as well as a requirement to take a minimum of 48 credits outside of Lehigh Business, ensure that all students take a mix of liberal arts and business experiences that include global and diversity courses. In addition, at least two courses each in the humanities, arts or languages, social sciences, and natural sciences are required to ensure breadth. The focus is to provide students with an essential understanding of critical skills, including communications and applied critical thinking through a variety of disciplines including English composition, mathematics, science, humanities, business, and economics courses.

Assessment in the Undergraduate Programs
Business faculty follow best practices in assessment aligned with AACSB Assurance of Learning standards. All learning outcomes are assessed using direct measures, and the process systematically links course, program, and college outcomes. At the course level, faculty assess both individual and group learning, and at the program level, faculty demonstrate a sustained commitment to evaluating student learning through annual, evidence-driven assessment reports that map program goals to the college's mission.

Learning objectives for undergraduate programs are published and regularly reviewed by faculty. The current learning outcomes (LOs) are organized into six goals (EVIDENCE 5.017: Lehigh Business Learning Outcomes; EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.1.b), and criteria for assessing each objective are documented in annual assessment reports archived within Lehigh Business, in alignment with AACSB review cycles. Data collected annually inform program-level assessments, and faculty identify opportunities for continuous improvement. All proposed improvements are vetted by college and university faculty for implementation.

Assessment reports from 2016–2021, as well as reports for 2021–2026 (in progress), are systematically archived to support future AACSB review. Faculty maintain robust core curriculum guidelines for undergraduate students, which serve as the foundation for all undergraduate degree programs (EVIDENCE 5.018: Lehigh Business Curriculum Guidelines).

Major requirements are regularly reviewed within the context of these learning goals, and program-level assessment reports are prepared on a consistent basis and stored in the archive. Examples of continuous improvement initiatives, drawn from these assessments, can be found in the evidence (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.2.b).

P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science
The P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science serves over 1,500 undergraduate and 650 graduate students, supported by 156 faculty. The college offers 11 disciplinary programs leading to the B.S. degree and three interdisciplinary undergraduate programs, CSB, IBE, and IDEAS, all honors programs with a minimum GPA requirement of 3.25 for continuation. Most disciplinary undergraduate programs are accredited by ABET, with integrated programs accredited by ABET and/or AACSB. Undergraduate students in the Rossin College may pursue as their primary program a chemistry major that is offered by CAS; this leads to the B.S. degree and is not accredited by ABET. CAS students may pursue a B.S. in computer science as their primary degree. All but three undergraduate disciplinary programs, each of which is very small (fewer than five students enrolled), are accredited by ABET, with nine accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET (EAC-ABET), and two accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET (CAC-ABET). The B.A. with a major in computer science, offered by CAS, is not ABET-accredited.

Aligned with the institutional priority of interdisciplinary education, three integrated degrees are affiliated with the Rossin College. The Computer Science and Business (CSB) honors program leading to the B.S. degree is accredited both by CAC-ABET and by AACSB. The Integrated Business and Engineering honors program leading to the B.S. degree is accredited solely by AACSB. The applied science, engineering mechanics and engineering physics majors that lead to the B.S. degree are not accredited by a disciplinary accrediting agency. Finally, as with most institutions that have undergraduate programs accredited by ABET, Lehigh does not seek accreditation for its engineering graduate programs.

Faculty in the Rossin College engage in systematic assessment of student learning outcomes at both the course and program levels. Direct and indirect measures, guided by ABET and AACSB standards, are used to evaluate student achievement, map program goals to college and institutional learning outcomes, and support continuous improvement initiatives. Program-level assessment reports are reviewed by faculty committees, and results inform refinements to course content, curriculum sequencing, and instructional practices, ensuring students achieve the expected disciplinary and interdisciplinary competencies.

General Education Assessment and Undergraduate Program Assessment
Assessment in the Rossin College is structured around ABET requirements and review processes; as such, assessment of general education is enmeshed in program assessment, and this section addresses both general education and program assessment. SLO assessment in the college is largely program-driven mainly because the professional standards established by ABET accredits programs (and specifically not colleges) on a six-year cycle. The ABET criteria specify that programs identify, develop and measure student learning outcomes (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.1.c), and use results derived from these processes to improve how the college meets student needs in the classroom and in preparing students for highly technical careers. Faculty participate in the comprehensive process of integrating student learning objectives in each syllabus, mapping course goals to program outcomes and aligning these outcomes to college-wide learning

expectations. Students are assessed based on their level of achievement in specific outcomes, levels which are reviewed annually in most programs for assurance of high levels of student achievement across programs.

Each program has a committee that has periodically reviewed student outcome results, typically on an annual or biennial cycle. The Rossin College has a comprehensive process of assessing the learning objectives of each of the accredited programs. The associate chair for each undergraduate program has primary responsibility for coordinating assurance of student outcomes, with coordination at the college level by the associate dean of undergraduate studies.

ABET self-study program reviews were conducted in 2019 (for all programs except Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) and Biocomputational Engineering), in 2022 (for CSE programs), and in 2025 (for all programs except CSE programs) (EVIDENCE 5.018: ABET_CSE_Letter_to_Dean; EVIDENCE 5.019: ABET_CS_Statement; EVIDENCE 5.020: ABET_2019-2020_Cycle).

The Rossin College assessment process commences with faculty in each undergraduate program setting student learning outcomes and mapping specific courses to the SLO. Faculty whose course has been mapped to a student outcome will determine how that SLO will be measured. Direct assessment is used wherever possible, and can include exam questions, projects, presentations, homework assignments, labs and essays. Innovative approaches, aligned with institutional priorities, to student learning can be found in core courses across the college, such as those employed by Engineering 10, which enables student learning regardless of level of programming experience. Faculty determine what level of performance constitutes a proficiency in the SLO, using department-developed rubrics. These are reviewed in committees in each program. In a continuous improvement process, faculty are required periodically to assess their SLOs and report back to the program committee. The program committee writes a report with the results and recommendations for improvement in the assessment process. Closing the loop is exceptionally important in ABET accreditation, as is direct assessment - both of which are robustly followed by the programs in the college.

In the draft statements of the 2025 ABET process, programs within the Rossin College are generally conforming to these expectations (EVIDENCE 5.022: EAC Program Audit Draft; EVIDENCE 5.023: CAC Program Audit Draft). Programs with any identified areas for enhancement are provided time to address these issues before a final accreditation decision is issued.

The College of Health
The College of Health, established in 2020 as Lehigh's newest college, currently enrolls 220 undergraduate students and 42 graduate students. It offers programs at the undergraduate and graduate level in a variety of health-related areas, including B.S. degrees in biostatistics and population health, a B.S. degree in community and global health, a Master of Public Health degree and a Ph.D. in population health. The program portfolio continues to expand with the faculty body.

In addition to these degrees, the COH offers several minors at the undergraduate level, as well as certificates and non-degree options at the graduate level. Faculty associated with COH have expertise in a wide array of fields, including community health, epidemiology, global health, and health policy. Their research addresses health comprehensively,

considering the unique factors that influence health, including race, gender, food security, policy, and the physical environment. Faculty actively partner with affected communities to develop technology-forward, data-driven approaches that improve health equity.

From its founding through the end of 2024, COH consisted of a single department, Community and Population Health. In spring 2025, the college reorganized into three departments (Community and Global Health, Population Health, and Biostatistics and Health Data Science) aligned with the first three undergraduate majors in the college. The fourth major, Health, Medicine, and Society, is a joint program administered with the College of Arts and Sciences; students in this program take courses across all three COH departments as well as coursework in CAS. The B.S. in Integrated Business and Health is co-directed by faculty in Lehigh Business and COH, with students taking courses across all three COH departments and in Lehigh Business.

As a relatively new college within the Lehigh portfolio, COH is actively engaging in both formal and informal assessment practices to shape programs in response to student needs and employer demand. Enrollment in degree programs is now reaching levels that allow for anonymous and meaningful assessment. The college's assessment strategy is evolving and is expected to align closely with the practices of other colleges, in terms of timelines, consistency, and depth of program-level evaluation in the years ahead.

General Education Assessment and Undergraduate Program Assessment
The undergraduate programs in the COH prepare students for a myriad of careers in health and healthcare (EVIDENCE 5.024: COH UG Programs). Students receive an applied education through a multi-disciplinary approach, emphasizing community partnership and the use of technology and data. Regardless of the degree program, real-world experience is central to a College of Health degree — 25% of major course requirements are experiential. All students have the opportunity to engage in health-related research projects, field experiences, internships, study abroad programs and more, aligning with Lehigh's institutional priorities of Innovative Education and Holistic Student Success. Program learning outcomes are found in the catalog (EVIDENCE 5.008: 2025-26 Catalog, p.391; EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_ASSESSMENT_Info, section AV.1.d.).

To meet the learning objectives, all COH students must complete 10 classes of distribution requirements totaling 32-37 credits. Assessment in the College of Health is structured in a collaborative manner. Faculty participate in the comprehensive process of integrating student learning objectives in each syllabus, mapping course goals to program outcomes and aligning these outcomes to college-wide learning expectations.

Each year, the COH surveys recent graduates in their academic programs and collects and analyzes student performance data. The results will be used in program assessment meetings, conducted annually by the college leadership. Results from the analyses are considered for changes in curriculum, pedagogy and related academic needs. There is a high level of collaborative planning among the programs, as there are many shared courses and shared outcomes.

Graduate Program Assessment by College

Lehigh University offers over 80 different graduate programs across the five colleges. Similar to undergraduate assessment, the overall strategy of assessment sits within each college, and is guided by the Graduate Research Council (GRC). Faculty in each college actively

participate in implementing and reviewing these assessments. In 2018, a position was created in the Office of the Provost to help strengthen graduate education at Lehigh (EVIDENCE 5.025: Deputy Provost for Graduate Education). The deputy provost for graduate education role exists to aid in all pieces of graduate education, including enrollment, education and data collection/analysis. Since 2018, three different individuals have held the role, with the second individual serving as a long-term interim. Since the inception of the role, the following initiatives have launched in graduate programs at Lehigh:

1) Collection of Graduate Next Destinations (2021), aligned with the institutional priority of Holistic Student Success (see Standard II) (EVIDENCE 5.026: Next Destination Data Collection).
2) Graduate Student Experience Survey (2023), aligned with the institutional priority of Holistic Student Success (EVIDENCE 5.026: Next Destination Data Collection).
3) Office of Institutional Data Dashboards (continuous, evolving), new program-level dashboards to support program reviews align with the institutional priority of Holistic Student Success (Evidence 5.028: Sample GR Program Review Dashboard)
4) Graduate Program Reviews (reinstated, 2024), align with the institutional priority of Holistic Student Success
5) Required TA training (2024) and University TA Handbook. The five session TA training course incorporates lessons about student engagement, student assessment, course design and inclusive teaching practices (EVIDENCE 5.029: University TA Handbook).

All five colleges offer graduate programs. In 2012, the GRC identified five core competencies (i.e., learning outcomes) to be defined by graduate programs in discipline-appropriate ways. These competencies were reaffirmed by the GRC in 2024 (**Table 5**). Graduate programs use these core competencies in direct and indirect assessments to measure student achievement and inform program improvements. The self-review process also directs programs to self-assess in other domains, including: curriculum (and any gaps therein), professional development, recruitment, retention/completion rates, diversity, morale and alumni success. The assessment cycle is varied for each graduate college, with the Graduate Research Council serving as the entity that initiates and oversees the review process. The graduate core competencies guide all program development, program evaluation, and most fundamentally, serve as the student learning outcomes associated with each program offered at the graduate level.

TABLE 5 GRADUATE CORE COMPETENCIES, AS IDENTIFIED BY GRC, AND REAFFIRMED IN 2024

Knowledge	Application	Context	Communication	Leadership
Knowledge, methods and modes of thought and reasoning in the field.	Use of knowledge and methods of the field to understand and solve problems; fundamental professional responsibilities.	Development of the field over time; relationship with related fields and those with which it is applied.	Communication of ideas with peers and others.	Recognizing constructive roles of self and others; assembling, leading and working in diverse teams; mentoring; ethical awareness and action.

In Lehigh's College of Education, College of Business and College of Health, external accrediting bodies exist for subsets of programs offered. In each of these colleges, learning outcomes are regularly assessed through accreditation processes and internal program reviews, and results are used to make program improvements. For programs without external accreditation, assessment schedules are available in the evidence, and a summary of recent assessments is provided in Table 6 (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.4).

TABLE 6 SUMMARY OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS BY COLLEGE THAT HAVE UNDERGONE REVIEW IN THE LAST 10 YEARS

Graduate College	Disciplinary or Professional Accrediting Agency	Number of Masters/Specialist Programs	Number of Doctoral Programs	Number of Programs with Assessment in Last 10 Years
CAS	N/A	10	8	10 Master's, 8 Doctoral
Business	AACSB	5	1	All
Education	APA[1], NASP[2], PDE[3], MPCAC[4], BACB[5]	16	5	11 Master's/2 (note that several new programs were created in this time frame)
Engineering	N/A	25 (note MS and M.Eng.)	11	14 Master's/5 Doctoral
Health	CAHME[6], CEPH[7]	1	1	0
Interdisciplinary	N/A	1	0	0, review in 2025

1 American Psychological Association
2 National Association of School Psychologists
3 Pennsylvania Department of Education

The College of Arts and Sciences
In the College of Arts and Sciences, master's programs vary in their requirements from coursework only to research intensive (EVIDENCE 5.030: CAS Graduate Programs). As such, no general education requirements are in place for master's programs within the college. All programs are expected to outline student learning outcomes, and many use the competencies in **Table 5**, above, as their learning outcome strategy. In the upcoming year, Lehigh aims to outline measurable learning outcomes for all graduate programs in the CAS, which will guide future program review processes.

For Ph.D. programs in the CAS, all programs establish program milestones via their program handbooks (samples provided EVIDENCE 5.031: CAS Graduate Handbook; EVIDENCE 5.032: Chemistry Graduate Handbook; EVIDENCE 5.033:EES Graduate Handbook). As different fields have unique needs and structures with respect to general knowledge in the field, advanced knowledge in a subdomain and experimental/analytical/research/writing experiences, the timing and format of milestones is driven within programs.

Prior to the last Middle States self-study, self-reviews of graduate programs were conducted by English, earth and environmental sciences (EES), mathematics, political science and psychology; external reviews were conducted for English, EES and mathematics (EVIDENCE 5.034: Sample CAS Program Reviews). To ensure that all graduate programs are reviewed regularly, the university has reestablished the schedule for graduate program reviews. In CAS, the upcoming five-year schedule can be found in the evidence (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.4).

While programs will be guided to aim for quantitative analysis, such as direct assessment of measurable outcomes, where appropriate, the nature of graduate education in the CAS lends itself to a guided mentorship approach that limits a purely metric-based approach. The associate dean facilitates warranted program changes through the program modification process that involves votes by the department, college, GRC (typically at a subcommittee level) and full faculty (via a Senate subcommittee).

Assessment Strategy
All programs have rigorous requirements. The college faculty uphold robust academic progress standards in each program of study. In addition, some CAS programs mandate periodic reviews of the academic progress of all students in those programs.

Student progress, as assessed via course grades and/or other required programmatic milestones (e.g., cross-coursework portfolios, comprehensive doctoral exams and independent research studies) are regularly assessed by graduate program directors and/or special committees. At the doctoral level, faculty participate in sustained scholarly mentorships of students, as evidenced by student presentation and/or co-publication in scholarly venues (EVIDENCE 5.035: Example Citations). Faculty/student scholarly output is reviewed annually in evaluations of faculty, as well as during faculty reappointment, tenure and promotion considerations. In most programs in the CAS, doctoral students participate in mentored college teaching through Teaching Assistantships, which often provide teaching evaluations. Finally, programs, such as the Community Fellows Program, are

regularly reviewed to ensure that goals are being met and student training is maintained at a high level.

The College of Business

The College of Business is home to over 300 graduate students, as well as >20 intercollege students at the graduate level. The college program suite includes: three graduate programs leading to the MS; two graduate programs leading to the MBA; two dual degree graduate programs housed in the College of Business; one interdisciplinary program in collaboration with the College of Arts and Sciences and the Rossin College; two accelerated B.S. to MS programs; two joint degree programs (one with the College of Education, and the second with the Rossin College) and one graduate program leading to the Ph.D. in business and economics (EVIDENCE 5.037: Graduate Business Programs).

The College of Business is accredited by the AACSB (EVIDENCE 5.010: Lehigh Business AACSB Status). The most recent accreditation took place during the 2021–22 academic year, and covered program years from 2016-17 through 2020-2021. All graduate programs within the College of Business will undergo AACSB accreditation under that organization's regular timetable. The programs in Lehigh Business are also subject to ad hoc review at the university, through the process outlined by the Graduate Research Council (EVIDENCE 5.036: Graduate Program Review).

Assessment Strategy

Graduate programs in the College of Business maintain clearly stated learning outcomes that are mapped to courses, programs, and college-level goals. Faculty employ direct assessment measures, including evaluations of student work, projects, presentations, and exams, to gauge student achievement of these outcomes. Assessment results are compiled annually in evidence-driven program reports, which document the degree to which learning outcomes are met and identify opportunities for continuous improvement (EVIDENCE 5.038: 2021–2026 Archive in progress).

At the doctoral level, faculty provide sustained scholarly mentorship for Ph.D. students in economics, integrating student research, co-presentation, and co-publication as mechanisms for assessing achievement of learning outcomes (EVIDENCE 5.035: Example Citations). Assessment results at the program level inform curricular refinements, instructional strategies, and enhancements to student support, ensuring alignment with both program goals and the College's mission.

Learning outcomes are heavily influenced by AACSB, and can be found in the evidence (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.5.e). Through this structured approach, the College of Business demonstrates a systematic, evidence-based process for assessing student learning and fostering continuous improvement at both the program and course levels.

The College of Education

The College of Education is unique among the colleges at Lehigh University in that it is graduate-only and features only one department, education and human services (EVIDENCE 5.039: COE Website). Enrollment is more than 400 students per semester, with approximately 275 students pursuing master's-level degrees and more than 150 pursuing doctorates. Roughly 30 students are nondegree students or are pursuing certificates. COE is home to 24 tenure-track faculty members and approximately 6 full-time term faculty (teaching or research).

The department has multiple areas of study: behavior analysis, counseling, educational leadership, instructional technology, school psychology, special education, global education, English as a second language and general education (EVIDENCE 5.040: COE Areas of Study). Students can seek certifications, master's degrees and doctoral degrees in most of these areas. Multiple modalities are available for most programs. In 2024, the COE partnered with AllCampus, an Online Program Manager (OPM), to offer several programs fully online, including (as of 2025), M.Ed. in mental health counseling, M.Ed. in educational leadership and M.Ed. in behavior analysis. In addition, a certificate in behavior analysis is offered through AllCampus.

COE maintains stringent professional accreditation requirements for most of its programs. The majority of the academic programs prepare candidates for certification in school contexts as school counselors, teachers, school leaders (i.e., principals, superintendents or curriculum specialists) or school psychologists. These programs are certified through the Pennsylvania Department of Education and/or accredited through professional governing organizations. The COE programs and accreditation agencies can be found in the evidence (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.3).

Each program in the COE has clearly defined and mapped student learning outcomes (SLOs). For some programs, these SLOs are defined by the accreditation organization. All COE programs have core courses emphasizing competencies that practitioners must attain. Programs establish competencies through accreditation body requirements and/or PDE standards. If a program is not accredited, program faculty determine program-level competencies and review them on a regular cycle as part of a continuous improvement process. For those programs that are not accredited, the SLOs largely align with Lehigh's core competencies for graduate students, although refinement is expected within each program.

The COE undergoes regular program review processes that evaluate student achievement of SLOs through course assessments and program-level evaluation. Courses are aligned and mapped to the competencies defined by the accrediting body. Programs also employ well-articulated course sequences to scaffold student success in attaining the required competencies. All programs leading to certification or licensure have practical experiences in which students demonstrate their competence in the area of the certification or license sought. To obtain certification or licensure, students are required to complete an internship, field experiences and/or a practicum.

Students are assessed during these experiences on their content knowledge, their ability to apply that knowledge to practice in their field, their awareness of contexts and structures within a professional site, their ability to communicate appropriately with students/clients and their ability to work effectively with instructional and/or treatment teams to enhance outcomes in education and human services.

Student performance is reviewed annually by program faculty to ensure students are meeting program learning outcomes. Faculty engage in sustained scholarly mentorship of students, often documented through student presentations and/or co-publications in scholarly venues (EVIDENCE 5.035: Example Citations). Faculty review of student scholarly output occurs annually and is integrated into faculty evaluations, as well as during reappointment, tenure, and promotion considerations. Many doctoral students preparing for careers in higher education also participate in mentored college teaching experiences. The assessment

standard for both student and faculty is output- and performance-based, providing evidence of educational effectiveness and guiding continuous improvement in graduate programs.

Assessment Strategy
All programs have rigorous requirements. The college faculty uphold stringent academic progress standards, including expectations for student performance, accompanied by automatic triggering of review for students who do not make adequate academic progress (i.e., grade point below 3.0 and/or two grades below B– in a semester). Additionally, any COE faculty member or instructor can request a review (e.g., concern that a student is not making sufficient progress in meeting programmatic milestones). Some COE programs mandate periodic reviews of the academic progress of all students in those programs, and these reviews may take place without the necessity of a triggering event.

Each year, the COE surveys recent graduates, consults with professionals in the field who have worked with current or former students and collects and analyzes student performance data. These results are used in annual program assessment meetings conducted by faculty within each program (EVIDENCE 5.041: COE Rubric for Assessing Assessment). Results from these analyses are reviewed and used to inform changes in curriculum, field placements and pedagogy (EVIDENCE 5.042: COE Assessment of Assessment).

Students' learning outcomes are directly assessed via customized rubrics. Student learning outcomes are assessed through course assignments and other required programmatic milestones (e.g., cross-coursework portfolios, comprehensive doctoral examinations or independent research studies) and evaluated by course instructors and/or faculty committees. Students are provided feedback about their performance. Students must meet a minimum expectation (e.g., grade of at least a B–) set forth by the degree program and/or external review body. If students fail to meet the minimum expectation, remediation is required.

There is a high level of collaborative planning among programs in the college, principally because there are so many shared courses across programs. Programs in the COE are bound by common requirements for those seeking certification and/or licensure. The COE employs a one-department model in which all program faculty attend all college meetings, and key curricular and assessment issues are discussed regularly. The result is a common and current awareness among faculty across programs of key assessment issues; such issues are discussed and resolved across programs to create mutually acceptable solutions within the college. Student learning assessment is informed by external accreditation and certification standards, which guide program expectations and assessment practices.

All master's and doctoral programs within the COE have mission statements that are clearly focused on student learning and performance. These faculty-approved standards also align with the five Lehigh competencies for graduate programs: Content Knowledge, Content Application, Awareness of Context, Skill in Communication, and Leadership Development and Growth. The COE reviews and uses assessment results to inform decisions about curriculum, program design and instructional practices in order to improve educational effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science
At the graduate level, the Rossin College offers 32 programs (in academic year 2025–26) that

lead to the MS or M.Eng. degrees, and 11 of these disciplines also offer the Ph.D. degree. All programs are guided by a shared set of graduate student learning outcomes (**Table 5**) as identified and maintained by the Dean's Office.

Master's programs in engineering may be coursework-based or research-focused and are designed to encourage a high degree of student autonomy and choice, enabling students to craft a degree program that meets their professional goals and learning interests. As such, no general education requirements are in place for master's programs in the Rossin College. All programs are expected to outline program-specific student learning outcomes aligned with the college's common outcomes. Faculty assess student achievement of these outcomes through course assignments, project-based work, research activities, and thesis or capstone evaluations, depending on program structure. In the upcoming year, Lehigh intends to further refine and publish measurable learning outcomes for all graduate programs in the Rossin College, which will support systematic program assessment and future program review processes.

For Ph.D. programs in the Rossin College, all programs establish program milestones via their program handbooks (samples provided EVIDENCE 5.043: RCEAS Graduate Handbook; EVIDENCE 5.044: CEE Graduate Handbook; EVIDENCE 5.045: MSE Graduate Handbook; EVIDENCE 5.046: ISE Graduate Handbook). As different fields of engineering have unique needs and structures with respect to general knowledge in the field, advanced knowledge in a subdomain and experimental or analytical experiences, the timing and format of milestones are determined by the program. Milestones typically include qualifying examinations, dissertation proposals, research progress reviews, and dissertation defenses, which serve as direct measures of doctoral student learning and scholarly development.

Assessment Strategy
At the doctoral level, faculty participate in sustained scholarly mentorship of students through research supervision and dissertation advising. Further, periodic program self-studies and graduate program reviews provide an additional mechanism for evaluating program effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Self-reviews of the following graduate programs were conducted in the last five years: industrial and systems engineering doctoral and master's program suite, bioengineering doctoral and master's programs, and materials science doctoral and master's programs. In the last 10 years, several other programs were reviewed (EVIDENCE 5.047: Rossin Grad Program Review Schedule). To ensure that all graduate programs are reviewed regularly, the university has re-established the schedule for graduate program reviews. In the Rossin College, the upcoming five-year schedule can be found in the evidence (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.4).

Similar to practices in the College of Arts and Sciences, doctoral students in many Rossin College programs engage in mentored college teaching through Teaching Assistantships. These mentorship experiences are frequently reflected in student co-presentations or co-publications in scholarly venues (EVIDENCE 5.035: Example Citations), and faculty review of student scholarly output occurs annually as part of faculty evaluations.

Assessment findings from course-level evaluations, milestone reviews, and program self-studies are reviewed by faculty and used to inform curricular adjustments, program structure, and research training opportunities within the college.

College of Health
The College of Health is actively seeking accreditation for its graduate programs (EVIDENCE

5.048: COH Grad Website). The MS in Population Health program is a founding member of the Population Health Management Accreditation Program at the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) (EVIDENCE 5.049: CAHME Website). The program was among the first five programs to receive CAHME certification status in 2022.

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program is pursuing accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). As part of this process, program learning objectives are aligned with CEPH competency standards and are outlined in the evidence (EVIDENCE 5.001: SV_Assessment_Info, section AV.5.d).

Assessment Strategy
Graduate programs in the College of Health maintain clearly defined student learning outcomes that guide curriculum design and program assessment. Faculty assess student achievement of these outcomes through direct measures such as course assignments, applied projects, field or practicum experiences, and capstone or research activities. Student work is evaluated using program-aligned criteria, and students receive feedback to support their academic and professional development. At the doctoral level, faculty engage in sustained scholarly mentorship of students, often documented through student co-presentations or co-publications in scholarly venues (EVIDENCE 5.035: Example Citations). Faculty review of student scholarly output occurs annually as part of program-level assessment and is integrated into faculty evaluations, reappointment, tenure, and promotion considerations. Many doctoral students also participate in mentored college teaching experiences, providing additional opportunities to assess and support the development of teaching and research competencies. These activities collectively contribute to understanding educational effectiveness and inform program improvements, ensuring that students achieve expected learning outcomes.

Assessment findings are reviewed by program faculty to evaluate the extent to which students are meeting program learning outcomes. These results inform curricular refinements, program improvements, and continued alignment with evolving professional standards in public and population health.

V.3. Lehigh considers and uses disaggregated assessment results for all student populations for the improvement of student learning outcomes, student achievement and institutional and program-level educational effectiveness.

Lehigh University analyzes assessment results across programs and student populations to evaluate student learning outcomes and guide improvements in curriculum, instruction, and student support. Colleges regularly review program-level assessment data, including direct and indirect measures of student achievement, and analyze results across programs, cohorts, and relevant student groups to identify gaps in performance. These analyses inform targeted interventions, curricular revisions, and other program improvements that strengthen student achievement and educational effectiveness at both the program and institutional levels. The examples below illustrate how colleges across the university use disaggregated assessment results to improve student learning and support continuous improvement.

The College of Arts and Sciences
Program-level assessments across CAS use both direct and indirect measures to identify

gaps and guide improvements. Results are reviewed at the program level and, where appropriate, analyzed across student groups such as majors, course sections, and levels of academic preparation to identify areas where students may require additional support. These measures include standardized exams in chemistry (ACS accreditation), senior theses, and capstone projects. Programs that previously lacked consistent assessment practices, such as philosophy and cognitive science, are now implementing updated strategies.

Additionally, CAS and the Rossin College are collaborating to establish measurable learning outcomes for the intercollege IDEAS program. Together, these efforts demonstrate a strong commitment to leveraging disaggregated, program-specific assessment data to enhance student success, inform curricular and pedagogical improvements, and continuously strengthen both program- and institution-level educational effectiveness.

The Calculus Committee conducts regular and systematic reviews of student achievement in high-enrolling mathematics courses. The committee is primarily composed of mathematics faculty, along with faculty from programs that require the calculus sequence. Meeting at least once a year, the committee prepares detailed documentation on student success in gateway courses. In these reviews, the committee considers not only exam scores but also broader indicators, including placement levels and student performance in subsequent mathematics courses. For instance, in MATH 000, which prepares students for calculus, the committee found that students earning a C or lower were unlikely to succeed in moving directly into calculus courses (MATH 021, 051, 081) and are therefore advised to seek guidance on their academic progress and course planning.

For example, past assessment of calculus courses revealed that a significant proportion of students were not meeting key learning outcomes in several introductory-level courses. In response, the Calculus Committee implemented a series of targeted changes, including an intervention led by the Office of Student Retention. This intervention featured activities in which students reflected on their course goals, engaged in discussions about classroom belonging using written vignettes from past students, and received guidance from teaching assistants (TAs) and faculty on common challenges and strategies for success in calculus.

These efforts were complemented by increased access to study sessions during office hours and expanded support services, including tutoring, walk-in help, and structured study/homework groups. Although these changes were only recently implemented, assessments of the most recent calculus sections indicate substantial improvement, with the overwhelming majority of students now meeting or exceeding expectations for key learning outcomes. Notably, in Fall 2023, seven of the ten courses with the highest DFW (D-grade, F-grade, Withdrawal) rates were math courses; by Fall 2025, no math courses appeared among the ten highest DFW courses, demonstrating significant progress in student achievement and learning outcomes.

College of Business
Within the College of Business, faculty and program leadership regularly review assessment results across programs and student cohorts to evaluate student learning outcomes and guide program improvement. Through the college's Assurance of Learning process, core courses in graduate programs are assessed annually, with faculty collecting direct measures of student achievement and reviewing results in collaboration with program directors and the Graduate Programs Office ((Evidence 5.050: 2022 AACSB Peer Review Team Report; EVIDENCE 5.051: 2022 CIR Report). These reviews inform curricular adjustments, instructional improvements, and program enhancements. Assessment findings have led to

specific program changes—for example, the addition of MBA leveling modules in areas such as statistics, finance, and accounting after assessment results indicated gaps in students' ability to address complex business problems. Student feedback collected through course evaluations, focus groups, and other engagement opportunities further informs program development. Together, these processes ensure that assessment results are systematically reviewed and used to strengthen student learning outcomes and program effectiveness within the College of Business.

P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science
As part of ABET and AACSB assessment processes, Rossin College faculty regularly examine student learning outcomes across programs, majors, and relevant student populations, including honors students and those in interdisciplinary tracks. Analyses disaggregate results by factors such as major, program type, and academic performance, with the findings used to identify gaps in achievement, guide targeted interventions, and refine curriculum and instructional strategies.

This approach ensures that all students, regardless of program or pathway, have equitable opportunities to achieve learning outcomes. Continuous monitoring and the use of disaggregated assessment data support evidence-based decision-making at both the course and program levels, contributing to the college's broader goal of promoting student success across disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs.

College of Health
At the undergraduate level, the College of Health, being relatively new, is actively developing formal and informal assessment practices to respond to student needs and employer demand. While the size of the student body in many programs is just now becoming sufficient for anonymous and meaningful assessment, these efforts are evolving with the goal of aligning with practices in other colleges regarding timelines, consistency, and depth of analysis. As programs grow, the college plans to collect and analyze undergraduate assessment results disaggregated by major, program, and relevant student populations, providing evidence to evaluate educational effectiveness, inform curricular and pedagogical improvements, and ensure that all students achieve expected learning outcomes.

College of Education
Within the College of Education, program faculty regularly review student outcomes and program effectiveness using program-level data on admissions, retention, internship placement, graduation rates, and time to degree. Several programs publish annual "Student Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data" reports that track student progress and outcomes across cohorts, allowing faculty to monitor trends in student achievement and evaluate program effectiveness (EVIDENCE 5.052: Counseling Student Outcomes 2015–2025; EVIDENCE 5.053: School Psych Student Outcomes 2015-2025; EVIDENCE 5.054: MPCAC Student Outcomes 2019–2024). These data provide program faculty with disaggregated information on student progression and completion across cohorts and support ongoing program review and improvement. In addition, professional accreditation reporting, such as publicly available program information for the School Psychology program (EVIDENCE 5.055: NASP School Psychology Program Information 2025), provides further outcome data used to evaluate student achievement and ensure alignment with professional standards and workforce expectations.

V.4. Lehigh conducts adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of assessment services designed, delivered or assessed by third–party providers.

Study abroad options are offered through overseas institutional partners and third-party providers. Staff complete regular reviews of partners through information sharing, online meetings, conference attendance and visits to sites abroad. Students are surveyed upon return and staff review and follow-up as needed. InternationalSOS (ISOS), Lehigh's service provider for medical and security support, is a large component of Lehigh's steps to prepare students, faculty and staff for travel and for supporting any needs for travelers while abroad (see Standard IV). Staff meet regularly with ISOS both virtually and in person, and initiate debriefs on a regular basis for case review. Lehigh's International Travel Advisory Committee participates in review of all third-party providers.

In addition to oversight of study abroad partners, Lehigh conducts institutional review of third-party providers involved in the delivery and support of academic programs. For example, as previously described in Standard IV.5, the College of Education partners with AllCampus, an online program management (OPM) provider, to support several fully online programs (EVIDENCE 4.091: AllCampus OPM Contract; EVIDENCE 4.092: AllCampus OPM SOW). While this partnership is relatively new, the College will establish a structured review process to evaluate provider effectiveness. Planned assessment measures will include analysis of student enrollment and persistence, completion rates and time-to-degree outcomes, and student feedback regarding onboarding and support services. These data will be reviewed periodically to ensure that third-party services align with Lehigh's standards for academic quality, student learning, and success.

In sum, Lehigh conducts adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of assessment services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers, ensuring alignment with institutional standards and meeting the requirements of **MSCHE Standard V, Criterion 4.**

V.5. Lehigh undertakes periodic evaluation of the assessment processes that are utilized by the institution, and the results are used for the improvement of educational effectiveness.

Each college develops and assesses its own student learning outcomes assessments. For undergraduate programs at Lehigh, the external accreditation driven by AACSB and ABET and other organizations have ensured that programs in the College of Business and the P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science undergo routine, scheduled assessment activities. Assessment methods leverage direct assessment techniques, and clearly outline how course learning objectives map to program learning outcomes. For graduate programs, external accreditation for the College of Education programs (most) and the College of Health Master of Public Health ensures regular educational effectiveness assessment.

For undergraduate and graduate programs not requiring MSCHE accreditation, the committee offers recommendations in the next section to improve regular assessment practices.

These processes demonstrate that Lehigh undertakes periodic evaluation of the assessment processes that are utilized by the institution, and the results are used for the improvement of educational effectiveness, fulfilling the requirements of **MSCHE Standard V, Criterion 5.**

Conclusions and Recommendations

At the undergraduate level more comprehensive assessment should be conducted with the intercollege programs, to ensure that the goals of these programs are meeting the goals of the individual colleges that contribute to the student learning. As a first step toward that process, faculty steering committees were established in each intercollege program between fall 2024 and fall 2025; these faculty bodies will be leading periodic program reviews for the programs in collaboration with the governing colleges.

For undergraduate programs that do not undergo external accreditation outside of the MSCHE university-wide accreditation process, it was noted that there are a few programs that need to address gaps in assessment, including establishing assessment as a regular activity and providing more sustained assessment efforts. Additionally, many programs in CAS in particular rely on indirect methods of assessment, and there are gaps in some programs in providing adequate mapping of course learning outcomes to program outcomes. Furthermore, better documentation of how departments are responding to the evidence gleaned from assessment of learning outcomes is needed in some units. Greater attention to these areas will be a focus of the respective associate deans, and will help to ensure coherent progression of students through the series of courses in a program.

In graduate programs where external accreditation is not a requirement (in addition to MSCHE), the working group noted several gaps in the assessment process and records. It is noted that only three graduate programs in the Rossin College have undergone assessment in the last six years, and no programs in the CAS have been assessed. In addition, while the university has graduate competencies (Table 5), many programs lack well-defined learning outcomes that can be measured. The working group suggests that this deficiency be corrected, and SLOs crafted and published for each graduate program at Lehigh. Further, Lehigh aims to have these SLOs for graduate programs developed prior to the end of the academic year in spring 2026. These outcomes will then be used in program assessment, moving forward on a regular schedule. In addition, the working group highly recommends that program-level assessment be initiated and maintained at the university level, to ensure that graduate programs are of high quality, with appropriate student learning assessment performed at regular intervals as a part of continuous program improvement. This recommendation has already received momentum, in that graduate program review processes have been created and approved by the Graduate and Research Council, and is outlined on the Office of the Provost website.

Both the new OEIA and the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) will assist in creating and setting standards for assessment in the years to come. The CITL provides comprehensive programming that supports faculty excellence in teaching and research (see Standard III).

CHAPTER 6

STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

The institution's planning processes, resources and structures are aligned to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

As detailed in Standard I, Lehigh University's stable mission serves as a guiding framework for planning across the institution. Lehigh has articulated its aspirations through carefully developed strategic plans that translate mission and values into action. In 2016 Lehigh leadership unveiled *Path to Prominence*, a 10-year plan which envisioned a significant expansion of enrollment, faculty, facilities and academic reach.

The process of developing the institution's current strategic plan, *Inspiring the Future Makers*, was informed by *Path to Prominence* and previous strategic planning efforts. Developed through extensive consultation with faculty, staff, students, trustees and alumni, this strategy reaffirms Lehigh's mission, communicating a forward-looking vision that reflects both the enduring strengths and the emerging priorities of the institution. The overarching goals of Make it New, Make a Difference, and Make it Together guide Lehigh's decision-making surrounding the university's planning processes, resources and institutional development.

Lehigh University recently unveiled the 2025 Campus Plan (*Making the Future: A Plan for the Lehigh Campus*), a strategy to shape the future of Lehigh's campus in connection to the strategic goals. This plan provides a 30-year framework to transform the university's spaces in ways that support student success, advance research and strengthen connections to the Bethlehem and Lehigh Valley communities; see Standard I (EVIDENCE 6.003: Campus Plan Executive Summary).

Achieving the objectives outlined in *Inspiring the Future Makers* and the 2025 Campus Plan will transform the campus, guided by the maturity and strength of the university's planning processes. These processes enable faculty and staff to advance Lehigh's mission, respond effectively to emerging opportunities and challenges, and ensure that institutional resources and initiatives are closely aligned with the institutional priorities: Holistic Student Success for all Students, Enhancing Local and Global Engagement and Impact, and Innovative and Interdisciplinary Education.

VI.1: Lehigh has institutional and unit goals that are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results and are used for planning and resource allocation.

Lehigh is governed under a somewhat decentralized organizational structure, in that most administrative units and the academic colleges are independently managed. The university's governance and reporting structure, as reflected in institutional and divisional organizational charts, clearly delineates lines of authority, responsibility and accountability for planning, assessment and resource allocation (EVIDENCE 6.002: Organizational Charts). These units frequently make their own mission, goals, objectives, visions and planning documents, and the unit-level plans are aligned with the university's mission and the Lehigh Strategy through clearly articulated strategic priorities and progress measures that guide institutional planning and assessment (EVIDENCE 6.019: 2023 Strategic Plan, EVIDENCE 6.004: Strategy Dashboards). Further, these local plans consistently correspond to the

university's stated mission and goals through institutional planning, assessment and resource allocation; see Standard I.

With the units' and colleges' individual strategic plans as a backdrop, departments develop their budgets, which are then consolidated into a divisional budget. These divisional budgets are then integrated into the campus-level budget and plan. Divisional budget submissions are developed in the context of institutional priorities and require justification aligned with strategic plan goals, ensuring that resource allocation supports mission advancement and goal achievement (EVIDENCE 6.005: Annual Resource Planning Process). To operationalize alignment between institutional priorities and resource allocation, Lehigh implemented RAPTOR, a centralized financial planning system that standardizes unit-level budget development and connects resource requests directly to strategic initiatives. Documentation from the annual resource planning process reflects how assessment findings inform prioritized investments, strategic adjustments and resource reallocation in support of institutional goals. For example, enrollment trends and student success indicators have informed targeted investments in academic advising and student support staffing, illustrating how assessment results are used to guide planning decisions and allocate resources in support of institutional priorities.

Lehigh's Campus Strategic Plan Connections Council (CSPC[2]) provides an example of Lehigh's efforts to ensure institutional goals are aligned with Lehigh's strategic plan. The CSPCC meets each semester to review progress toward strategic plan implementation. (EVIDENCE: 6.001: Campus Strategic Plan Connections Council).

Institutional dashboards and curated data resources support ongoing monitoring of strategic indicators related to enrollment, student success, research productivity and operational effectiveness. These tools provide leadership with timely data to evaluate progress and guide decision-making (EVIDENCE 6.006: Resource Planning Support Dashboards). Trends identified through these assessment mechanisms inform planning discussions and resource prioritization, demonstrating a continuous feedback loop between assessment results and institutional improvement.

Collectively, these mechanisms demonstrate a documented and iterative process in which clearly stated institutional and unit goals are assessed, conclusions are drawn from performance data, and resulting priorities are incorporated into planning and resource allocation decisions, consistent with **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 1.**

VI.2: Lehigh has clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that provide for inclusive constituent participation.

Lehigh's financial planning and budgeting are aligned with the university's mission and goals. These processes are formally documented through annual resource planning guidelines, budget calendars and institutional planning frameworks that provide structure and accountability and made available to the campus community via our website (EVIDENCE 6.005: Annual Resource Planning Process; 6.007: Resource Planning Timeline; 6.008: Budget and Financial Planning Website).

Lehigh has implemented a comprehensive resource planning tool, RAPTOR (Resource Allocation Planning Tool for Operational Reporting), to strengthen institutional planning, resource allocation, and fiscal oversight. Implemented in fall 2024, RAPTOR streamlines and standardizes budget development, labor planning and forecasting processes across academic and administrative units. By integrating regularly updated data from Banner, the

university's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, RAPTOR consolidates previously decentralized practices into a unified platform, establishing a consistent and transparent framework for financial decision-making (EVIDENCE 6.009: RAPTOR System Overview).

The system enhances institutional effectiveness by aligning unit-level resource requests with institutional priorities, supporting quarterly projections and enabling multi-year financial planning. Although short-term implementation challenges, such as refining the quarterly projection process, have emerged, these are actively being addressed as part of a continuous improvement approach. RAPTOR strengthens documentation, accountability and data-informed decision-making by creating a centralized "single source of truth" for budget and planning data.

The implementation process included cross-divisional collaboration, structured training sessions and campus-wide communication to ensure broad understanding and consistent adoption of the new planning framework. Ongoing training resources and updated documentation are publicly available, further demonstrating transparency and the communication of institutional planning mechanisms (EVIDENCE 6.008: Budget and Financial Planning Website, p. #). Through RAPTOR, Lehigh enhances its capacity to assess financial performance, align resources with strategic priorities and ensure the sustainable and adequate allocation of fiscal resources in support of its mission.

As previously noted in Standard I, Organization of the Future is one of the four foundational initiatives that build essential institutional capacity identified in *Inspiring the Future Makers*, and this objective is realized through several channels (EVIDENCE 6.010: Org of the Future Initiative). Lehigh's Organization of the Future Leadership Council is one example of Lehigh's strategic planning process, comprising senior leaders and faculty governance representatives, to provide oversight and guidance on process improvement initiatives.

The Leadership Council solicits input from campus units through information conversation and through solicitation for individuals or departments to submit an "Opportunity for Improvement." This formal submission process provides faculty, staff and administrative units with a structured mechanism to propose institutional enhancements, thereby embedding inclusive participation within the planning and improvement framework (EVIDENCE 6.011: Opportunity for Improvement Submission Form). Submissions are reviewed, evaluated for feasibility and alignment with institutional priorities and incorporated into the Leadership Council's project prioritization process, ensuring that constituent input directly informs institutional improvement efforts.

Further, the Organization of the Future's Process, Operational and Systems Team (POSIT) ensures accountability for process improvement projects. Projects are documented, prioritized and tracked toward completion, and progress updates are communicated to relevant stakeholders, reinforcing transparency in institutional improvement efforts (EVIDENCE 6.010: Org of the Future Initiative, p. xx).

The Organization of the Future initiative further formalizes institutional improvement processes by documenting, prioritizing and transparently tracking projects through the Leadership Council. Projects are evaluated for alignment with institutional priorities and monitored to completion, reinforcing structured and communicated mechanisms for institutional improvement.

How Lehigh Works is a six session series designed to provide transparency into the university's operating budget and overall business model. It was piloted in spring of 2024 on

the senior leadership and then rolled out the following year. In spring 2025, four faculty, 23 staff and three students participated in this annual program, with more to participate in spring 2026. The program is broadly communicated to the campus community, and participation records reflect engagement from multiple constituent groups, reinforcing inclusive understanding of institutional planning and financial processes (EVIDENCE 6.012: How Lehigh Works).

Collectively, these mechanisms demonstrate that Lehigh's planning and improvement processes are formally documented, broadly communicated and intentionally structured to provide inclusive opportunities for faculty, staff and administrators to participate in institutional planning and process enhancement, consistent with **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 2.**

VI.3: Lehigh's planning integrates goals for institutional effectiveness and improvement, including a focus on student achievement, educational outcomes, overall institutional improvement and the results of institutional assessments.

Lehigh University's annual resource planning process coordinates activities between the Budget Committee, the board of trustees and individual colleges and units (EVIDENCE 6.005: Annual Resource Planning Process, p. 2). This structure links the Lehigh Strategy to the allocation of resources while accounting for the overall fiscal health of the institution. Administrative offices and academic units are required to review their plans, analyze current commitments and resources and identify areas for expansion or reduction in alignment with strategic priorities (EVIDENCE 6.019: 2023 Strategic Plan). New resource requests are evaluated for their potential impact on the university's mission and strategic objectives.

The planning process is operationalized through RAPTOR, which integrates ERP data, supports quarterly projections and enables multi-year forecasting. By consolidating previously decentralized practices into a unified platform, RAPTOR ensures that resource allocation decisions are evidence-based, transparent and directly linked to institutional priorities (EVIDENCE 6.013: RAPTOR Dashboards; EVIDENCE 6.014: FY27 Resource Planning Meeting Agenda).

Assessment results inform targeted investments to enhance student success and institutional effectiveness. At the graduate level, resources have been allocated to programming, recruitment, marketing and communications, and online program development. At the undergraduate admissions level, investments support remote recruitment presence in California and Texas, social media outreach, fly-in events, lead generation initiatives and on-campus recruitment efforts. These reallocations ensure that high-priority student success initiatives are expanded while lower-priority activities are streamlined or consolidated, demonstrating strategic responsiveness to institutional assessment data.

Together, these processes illustrate how Lehigh integrates assessment results into planning and resource allocation, ensuring that decisions are aligned with institutional goals, advancing student achievement and educational outcomes and promoting continuous improvement in institutional effectiveness. This approach meets the requirements of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 3.**

VI.4: Lehigh's planning for diversity, equity and inclusion is aligned with the mission and goals, maintains sufficient resources and leads to institutional improvement.

Lehigh recognizes that financial planning and budgeting aligned for diversity, equity and inclusion are critical to achieving the university's strategic goals. The Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging (OIEB; EVIDENCE 6.015: OIEB Website) regularly assesses effectiveness and contributes to continuous institutional improvement, fostering a more equitable and inclusive environment for all members of the campus community. The OIEB is supported by dedicated leadership, professional staff and institutional operating funds to implement university-wide initiatives (EVIDENCE 6.002: Organizational Charts, p. XX).

Data used to inform and assess institutional efforts related to diversity, equity and inclusion centered around belonging are publicly available on the university websites (EVIDENCE 6.004: Strategy Dashboards, Sense of Belonging section; EVIDENCE 6.016: Campus Climate Survey Dashboards). In addition, Lehigh monitors and reports demographic trends through federally reported IPEDS data, including fall enrollment data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender and other relevant student populations, as well as IPEDS human resources data reflecting faculty and staff composition (EVIDENCE 6.014: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Reports; EVIDENCE 6.018: IPEDS HR Reports 2021 to 2024).

Analysis of IPEDS fall enrollment data demonstrates measurable progress in student representation. For example, the proportion of undergraduate women increased from 46% in fall 2022 to 49% in fall 2025, while graduate women enrollment increased from 46% to 51% during the same period (EVIDENCE 6.014: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Reports). These shifts reflect the impact of strategic enrollment planning aligned with institutional goals for diversity and inclusion. IPEDS data are reviewed in conjunction with institutional dashboards and climate assessment results to assess progress in recruitment, retention and representation and to inform strategic initiatives aimed at fostering a more diverse and inclusive campus community.

Evidence of the university's planning for diversity, equity and inclusion is also demonstrated in the *Inspiring the Future Makers* strategic plan through the foundational initiative of a Lehigh for Everyone (EVIDENCE 6.019: 2023 Strategic Plan) and through information shared on the Inclusive Excellence and Belonging website (EVIDENCE 6.015: OIEB Website). Together, the strategic prioritization of a Lehigh for Everyone, described in Standard 1, dedicated institutional resources supporting the OIEB, the use of disaggregated enrollment and workforce data and the application of climate and belonging assessment results to inform programming demonstrate that Lehigh's planning for diversity, equity and inclusion is mission-aligned, adequately resourced and results in institutional improvement, consistent with **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 4.**

VI.5: Lehigh maintains a financial planning and budget process that is aligned with the institution's mission and goals, evidence-based and clearly linked to the institution's objectives and unit's strategic plan/objectives.

Lehigh maintains a comprehensive financial planning and budgeting framework that aligns institutional resources with the university's mission and strategic priorities. The annual resource planning process integrates divisional and college-level planning with institutional goals, ensuring that operating and capital resources are allocated in support of the Lehigh Strategy (EVIDENCE 6.005: Annual Resource Planning Process; EVIDENCE 6.019: 2023 Strategic Plan). The financial planning and budgeting timeline, published on the Office of Budget and Financial Planning website, outlines a structured cycle of revenue forecasting, expense planning, divisional submissions, leadership review and board oversight (EVIDENCE 6.008: Budget and Financial Planning Website, p. ## add page of the timeline).

The university's budget development process is evidence-based and informed by enrollment projections, revenue modeling, expenditure trend analysis and institutional performance indicators. Budget books, publicly available on the university's website, provide detailed documentation of revenue sources, expense allocations and multi-year financial planning assumptions (EVIDENCE 6.020: Budget Books FY23 to FY26). Resource Planning Support Dashboards provide leadership with key performance indicators, including enrollment trends and headcounts, which inform both operating and long-term financial decisions (EVIDENCE 6.006: Resource Planning Support Dashboards).

Capital planning is similarly aligned with institutional priorities. The FY26 Capital Budget reflects investments in facilities, infrastructure and strategic initiatives necessary to support academic excellence and institutional growth (EVIDENCE 6.021: FY26 Approved Capital Projects Budget).

In addition to capital infrastructure investments, Lehigh's financial planning has supported the creation of multiple interdisciplinary research centers. In 2025, Lehigh announced the establishment of three new research centers, including centers focused on community health, energy systems and interdisciplinary innovation, reflecting strategic investments in research capacity and academic excellence (EVIDENCE 6.022: 2025 New Research Centers). These centers strengthen the university's research enterprise while providing high-impact experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students, supporting student achievement and professional preparation. Funded through strategic operating resources (EVIDENCE 6.023: FY26 New Research Center Budgets) and integrated into unit and institutional planning frameworks, the centers demonstrate how Lehigh aligns investments with its research mission, enhances institutional impact and advances both academic excellence and student outcomes.

The creation and continued development of the College of Health (COH), launched in fall 2020 following the *Path to Prominence* vision, required coordinated operating and capital investments. The construction of the Health, Science and Technology (HST) Building represents a strategic capital investment aligned with the university's long-term academic objectives and research priorities (EVIDENCE 6.024: HST Building Website). The COH Strategic Plan guides ongoing resource allocation decisions, serving as a baseline for annual updates to planning, assessment and improvement (EVIDENCE 6.025: COH Strategic Plan).

Undergraduate enrollment planning is a key component of the university's financial model, as net tuition revenue represents a significant portion of institutional revenue. Enrollment goals include modest growth of the undergraduate entering classes until Lehigh achieves 1,600 per year. To sustain a high quality academic experience for all students, Lehigh is investing in additional undergraduate housing to meet the anticipated demand. Additionally, Lehigh is investing in faculty hires and attending to the university's health and wellness offerings, as well as academic services to support the changing needs of the student body. The Office of Admissions partners with University Communications and Public Affairs, the colleges, the Office of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) and other key stakeholders to strategically plan, execute and assess recruitment initiatives, including signature events like Open House and Lehigh Fest, while crafting targeted marketing and communications to support undergraduate enrollment goals (EVIDENCE 6.026: UG Enrollment Model). These enrollment-driven projections are incorporated into annual and multi-year financial planning to sustain academic quality and student experience while supporting institutional objectives.

Through this structured, evidence-based financial planning and budgeting process, Lehigh ensures that institutional and unit resources are strategically allocated to support academic and research priorities, enrollment growth and student success, fully meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 5.**

VI.6: Lehigh's fiscal and human resources as well as physical and technical infrastructure are adequate to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Lehigh's financial planning and budget process links resource allocation to assessment and to strategic planning by requiring academic and administrative units to describe and demonstrate need. The annual activity helps the university administration ensure that fiscal and human resources, as well as physical and technical infrastructure, remain adequately funded to support ongoing and expected operations. Lehigh employs a multi-year budget model for both the operating budget and the capital project budget. The operating component integrates the university's various funding sources (for example, tuition, fees, room, board, endowment, research grants and gifts) and costs (compensation, financial aid, operations and maintenance and debt service). The capital project component of the budget similarly outlines the sources of projects (reserves, plant preservation, debt and gifts) and the uses of the funds (construction and renovation, land improvements, etc.). During this process, the vice president of finance and administration and the Office of Budget and Financial Planning work with the president and provost to identify and fund institutional priorities. Along with Lehigh's senior leadership, the Office of Budget and Financial Planning works with the Office of Facilities Services and Campus Planning to review the capital project list (EVIDENCE 6.021: FY26 Approved Capital Projects Budget).

Between fall 2021 and fall 2024, the university has experienced a consistent expansion of human capacity to accommodate institutional growth, with the total full-time faculty and staff increasing from 1,748 to 1,944 (EVIDENCE 6.018: IPEDS HR Reports 2021 to 2024). During this period, the number of core instructional staff (full-time faculty) increased steadily from 555 to 593. At the same time, the university made targeted investments in administrative and technical capacity, with managerial positions growing from 183 to 216; computer, engineering and science occupations rising from 199 to 240; and student and academic affairs roles expanding from 77 to 94, reflecting deliberate investments to support enrollment growth, research activity and student success initiatives. Between FY21 and FY24, core revenues fluctuated, peaking at $851.8 million in FY21 due to investment returns, dipping to $297.6 million in FY22 and recovering to $606.4 million by FY24, while total core expenses rose steadily from $344.1 million to $460.8 million, ensuring sustained funding for institutional priorities (EVIDENCE 6.027: IPEDS Finance Reports FY21–FY24). Instruction remained the largest expenditure, though its share of the budget declined slightly from 43% to 40%, while Research increased from 13% to 15%, and Academic Support and Student Services stabilized at 11%, reflecting alignment of fiscal resources with operational demands.

In an effort to provide continuous improvement to the services Lehigh provides to enrich the work life of, and retain, employees, Lehigh invited a peer review panel to visit campus to listen and learn how Lehigh could enhance the delivery of HR services and ensure the services were aligned with best practices. A peer review of Human Resources functions was conducted in February 2026. The final report, expected in summer 2026, will inform ongoing enhancements to HR service delivery and will be made available as evidence upon completion.

Lehigh has strengthened its technical infrastructure to support operations, teaching, research and student services across all delivery modes. Through the Future Ready initiative,

the university is transitioning its ERP and Student Information System to a cloud-based SaaS (software as a service) platform, enhancing scalability, security and reporting (EVIDENCE 6.028: Banner SaaS Transition). Classroom technologies and instructional support systems are continuously being upgraded with modern digital learning environments, collaboration tools and improved network infrastructure. Ongoing IT support, cybersecurity and instructional technology services ensure reliable access to critical systems for in-person, online and hybrid programs providing the technical capacity necessary to support teaching, research and administrative operations across all modalities (EVIDENCE 6.029: LTS Classroom Upgrades; EVIDENCE 6.030: LTS Annual Reports).

Lehigh is also committed to becoming an organization of the future, strengthening operational and technological infrastructure to support its academic and administrative mission. This commitment is demonstrated through completed projects that enhance institutional capacity, including the launch of RAPTOR, simplification of the faculty Professional Activity Report (annual performance review system for faculty), creation of a campus-wide Policy Repository, streamlining graduate student reimbursements, and deployment of a unified communications platform (ZoomOne) (EVIDENCE 6.010: Org of the Future Initiative, p. xx; 6.062: Policy Repository). Current initiatives leverage generative AI to improve operational efficiency, including enhancements to the contract review process, creation of a conversational AI to expand access to shareable institutional data and a tool to enhance research visibility (EVIDENCE 6.010: Org of the Future Initiative, p. xx). These projects are prioritized by the Leadership Council and transparently tracked toward completion, ensuring that these investments provide tangible support for teaching, research, student learning and administrative operations.

Discussions about the strategic priorities and investments in capital projects have been informed by the Space Planning Committee and the Campus Plan(see Standard I) and are vetted by the Resource Planning Council prior to the budget request process. As an example of a strategic priority, Transform Mountaintop Campus (noted in Standard I) is one of the six key initiatives identified in *Inspiring the Future Makers* that advances Lehigh's academic, research and community-facing priorities (EVIDENCE 6.019: 2023 Strategic Plan). The vision is to turn this campus into a dynamic, mixed-use destination for interdisciplinary research, innovation and industry partnerships ensuring that strategic campus initiatives strengthen the adequacy of space and facilities for teaching, research and student services (EVIDENCE 6.003: Campus Plan Executive Summary).

These strategic investments in human, fiscal and technical resources ensure that students have access to robust learning, success and research opportunities across all programs and modalities, while confirming that Lehigh's fiscal, human and physical infrastructure adequately supports operations wherever and however programs are delivered, as required by **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 6**.

VI.7: Lehigh possesses documented financial resources, funding base and plans for financial development, including those from any related entities adequate to support its educational purposes and programs to ensure financial stability.

Lehigh possesses documented financial resources, a diversified funding base and well-defined plans for financial development adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure long-term financial stability.

Fundraising is a central component of the University's financial development strategy. In 2018, Lehigh launched GO: The Campaign for Lehigh to strengthen its ability to attract

high-achieving students, expand facilities and academic programs and support innovative faculty research. The campaign exceeded its initial $1 billion goal and has expanded through the GO Beyond: The Campaign for Future Makers phase with a target of $1.25 billion in support of the Lehigh Strategy. Philanthropic investments fund scholarships and financial aid, student experience initiatives, research, capital projects and faculty support. Annual giving increased by 29% in 2025 compared with 2024 (EVIDENCE 6.031: DAR Charts). Targeted fundraising outcomes further demonstrate mission alignment. The Ellen and Vincent Forlenza '75 Endowed Chair in Health Innovation and Technology strengthens faculty recruitment and retention in the College of Health (Evidence 6.032: DAR Fundraising, p. 26). The Soaring Together Scholarship Program has supported more than 50 students with demonstrated financial need (Evidence 6.032: DAR Fundraising, p. 9), reinforcing access and student success.

In addition to philanthropic support, the university has implemented a real estate strategy to monetize properties not central to its academic mission. A recent property sale to a community health partner generated financial resources while supporting local community engagement. This strategy will continue with advisory support in 2026.

Lehigh's annual resource planning process includes discussions with primary revenue generating areas, including undergraduate admissions, the Office of Financial Aid, DAR and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. There are also discussions with those areas that drive the primary expenditures, including faculty/staff salaries and employee benefits. These discussions assist in understanding the potential constraints that could impact additional allocation of resources.

External rating agencies continue to affirm the strength of the university's fiscal health through their review processes. Both S&P Global Ratings and Moody's Investors Service have issued written affirmations of Lehigh's bond ratings, reflecting the university's strong financial profile, prudent fiscal management, healthy liquidity and stable operating performance. In their most recent reports, S&P affirmed a rating of AA- with a stable outlook, and Moody's affirmed a rating of Aa3 with a stable outlook (EVIDENCE 6.033: S&P Rating Reports; EVIDENCE 6.034: Moody's Rating Report). These independent assessments demonstrate market confidence in the university's financial position and its capacity to meet long-term obligations while sustaining its academic mission.

As of the end of FY25, Lehigh's endowment exceeds $1.9 billion and serves as a foundational source of long-term financial stability. The endowment supports scholarships, faculty positions, academic programs and strategic initiatives (Evidence 6.032: DAR Fundraising) through a disciplined intergenerational investment strategy designed to preserve purchasing power while generating predictable annual distributions. The university's spending policy provides a sustainable payout that balances current operational needs with long-term growth, ensuring that future generations of students benefit equitably from endowed resources. Recent investment performance has further strengthened the endowment's market value and its capacity to support the university's mission. Detailed information regarding endowment performance, spending distributions and overall financial position is included in the FY25 Audited Financial Statements (Evidence 6.035: FY25 Audited Financial Statements).

Collectively, diversified revenue streams, sustained philanthropic support, disciplined investment practices, strategic asset management, integrated resource planning and strong external bond ratings demonstrate that Lehigh maintains sufficient financial resources and

development plans to support its educational mission and ensure ongoing financial stability. Accordingly, the university meets the requirements of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 7.**

VI.8: Lehigh maintains a record of responsible financial management, including preparing a multi-year budget and an annual independent audit confirming financial viability and proper internal financial controls, with evidence of corrective measures taken to address any material findings cited in the audit or an accompanying management letter.

Lehigh University maintains a strong record of responsible financial management, supported by a structured budgeting and planning process that aligns institutional resources with strategic priorities and institutional goals (EVIDENCE 6.005: Annual Resource Planning Process).

Although annual operating budgets are formally adopted each fiscal year, the university engages in forward-looking financial modeling to inform long-term decision-making. A 10-year cash flow forecast evaluates projected liquidity, debt capacity, capital commitments and long-term sustainability under varying economic conditions (EVIDENCE 6.036: 10-Year Cash Forecast). These projections are used by senior leadership to assess financial resilience and support strategic investment decisions.

To further enhance multi-year financial planning and scenario modeling capabilities, the University is currently implementing the forecasting features of the financial planning platform (RAPTOR). This system will strengthen integrated multi-year forecasting, improve visibility into revenue and expense assumptions, and support more robust long-term financial modeling. The implementation reflects Lehigh's commitment to continuous improvement in financial planning infrastructure.

An annual independent financial audit is conducted by a qualified external auditor, confirming the institution's financial viability and the effectiveness of internal financial controls. The external auditor for fiscal years 2022 and 2023 was KPMG LLP, and Grant Thornton LLP has served in this role effective fiscal year 2024 (EVIDENCE 6.037: FY22–FY25 Audited Financial Statements). For FY22 through FY25, the audits did not cite any material findings or instances of non-compliance that would have a material adverse effect on the financial statements (EVIDENCE 6.038: FY22–FY25 Signed Management Letters). Lehigh remains committed to timely corrective actions in response to any audit findings or management letter recommendations.

Baker Tilly serves as Lehigh's internal auditors, providing an independent assessment of institutional risk, including fiscal compliance and internal controls. Together, these processes demonstrate that Lehigh maintains a consistent record of responsible financial management, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 8**.

VI.9: Lehigh maintains well-defined, inclusive decision-making processes and clear assignment of responsibility and accountability for achieving institutional and unit effectiveness.

Lehigh maintains structured and inclusive decision-making processes with clearly defined roles and responsibilities that support accountability at both the institutional and unit levels. Decision-making authority and responsibility are distributed across the board of trustees, the president, senior leadership and the Faculty Senate, ensuring participation from key institutional constituencies and alignment with the university's mission and strategic

priorities (Evidence 6.039: University Bylaws; 6.040: Faculty Senate Bylaws). In addition, input from department leaders, staff and relevant stakeholders is regularly solicited to ensure operational decisions reflect both institutional priorities and unit-level perspectives.

Organizational charts at the institutional, divisional and governance levels clearly document reporting relationships, authority and areas of responsibility, providing transparency and accountability for decision-making and the achievement of institutional and unit goals (Evidence 6.041: Board of Trustees Governance and Committee Structure; 6.042: Faculty Senate Organizational Chart and Governance Role; 6.043: Institutional Organization Charts).

The annual resource planning process outlines the comprehensive fiscal cycle and administrative hierarchy used to manage the university's financial health while incorporating unit-level input (EVIDENCE 6.005: Annual Resource Planning Process). This process begins in the fall with preliminary modeling and strategic guidance, followed by several months of collaborative planning where departmental leaders submit funding requests. Central leadership, including the Budget Committee and senior leaders, evaluates these proposals to ensure alignment with institutional priorities before final approval by the board of trustees. Throughout the spring, administrators finalize salary and expense allocations to ensure all accounts are verified prior to the new fiscal year commencing in July. Quarterly financial forecasting serves as a critical tool during this period to adjust expectations based on real-time economic data. A sample of the meeting schedule for FY27 is provided as evidence (EVIDENCE 6.044: FY27 Resource Planning Meeting Schedule and Agenda.pdf).

These structured processes ensure that individual units can align their plans with institutional goals while maintaining accountability for operational and academic outcomes. For example, institutional support expenditures, while the second-largest core expenditure, are carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure effective allocation of personnel and resources, reflecting both strategic priorities and unit-level responsibility. Between FY21 and FY24, the institutional support budget grew by $21 million, driven primarily by personnel costs, including salaries and wages totaling $44.5 million in FY24 (EVIDENCE 6.027: IPEDS Finance Reports FY21–FY24).

Through these well-defined and inclusive decision-making structures, Lehigh clearly assigns responsibility and accountability for institutional and unit effectiveness, ensuring decisions are evidence-based, transparent, and aligned with the university's mission and strategic priorities. These processes demonstrate compliance with **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 9.**

VI.10: Lehigh's comprehensive planning for facilities, infrastructure and technology includes consideration of sustainability and deferred maintenance and is linked to the strategic and financial planning process.

Lehigh recognizes that the suitability, sustainability, and functionality of campus infrastructure are critical to achieving strategic goals and supporting student learning, research experiences, and faculty work. Lehigh's board of trustees recently endorsed *Making the Future*, a comprehensive campus plan for Lehigh's 1,600-acre footprint (EVIDENCE 6.045: Campus Plan Report). The planning process included input from over 1,400 stakeholders and incorporated programmatic, cultural, sustainability and operational considerations. Recommendations address energy use, active conservation, forest management, deferred maintenance and building upgrades to provide an interconnected, mission-aligned campus experience.

The university conducts regular evaluations to ensure infrastructure meets current and future needs. Campus buildings are assessed through the Facility Condition Index (FCI) and the VFA Requirement by Building reports, which provide cost estimates, condition assessments and prioritization for capital improvements (EVIDENCE 6.046: Facilities Condition Reports; 6.047: VFA Requirement by Building Report). Utilities are monitored through GIS (Geographic information System) mapping and guided by the Central Utility Master Plan (2020) and Electric Master Plan (2023), ensuring reliable support for all academic, research and student services (EVIDENCE 6.048: 2020 Central Utility Master Plan; 6.049: 2023 Electric Master Plan). The Exterior Data WebViewer (2022) further enables visualization of building conditions and infrastructure for informed planning and resource allocation (EVIDENCE 6.050: Exterior Data WebViewer Report). All reports were shared with, and referenced by, the campus planning consultants.

In sum, Lehigh's planning for facilities, infrastructure and technology is comprehensive, considers sustainability and deferred maintenance and is linked to the strategic and financial planning process, fulfilling the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 10.**

VI.11: Lehigh maintains compliance with its program responsibilities under existing federal Title IV and other state laws and regulations, including any audits of financial aid programs required by federal and state regulations.

Lehigh fulfills its obligations under Title IV and other relevant federal and state regulations. The Office of Financial Aid administers federal student aid programs in accordance with federal regulations, maintains required policies and procedures and ensures accurate and timely submission of all required reports to the U.S. Department of Education and applicable state agencies. Responsibility for compliance with Title IV and related federal and state regulations rests with the Director of Financial Aid. The University regularly reviews policies and procedures to ensure continued alignment with evolving regulatory requirements.

Lehigh undergoes regular independent audits to verify compliance. For fiscal years 2021 through 2024, auditors (KPMG and Grant Thornton) reviewed the university's compliance with the OMB Compliance Supplement, including the Student Financial Assistance Cluster (Evidence 6.051: Single Audits FY21–FY24). In each of these years, the auditors issued unmodified opinions, concluding that the university complied, in all material respects, with the applicable compliance requirements. During this period, Lehigh consistently qualified as a low–risk auditee. The university has not been subject to any recent U.S. Department of Education program reviews within the past two decades, reflecting a sustained record of compliance and low regulatory risk. The university is also subject to periodic state–level oversight, including audits by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA).

Lehigh maintains full participation status in Title IV programs as confirmed by its Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (ECAR) issued by the U.S. Department of Education (Evidence 6.052: ECAR). The university's accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education is affirmed through its Statement of Accreditation Status (Evidence 6.053: MSCHE Statement of Accreditation Status), further demonstrating institutional compliance with federal recognition requirements tied to Title IV participation. Additionally, Lehigh holds a current Program Participation Agreement (PPA) with the U.S. Department of Education (Evidence 6.054: Program Participation Agreement). Lehigh is not subject to Heightened Cash Monitoring (HCM), the federal designation requiring additional oversight

of Title IV fund disbursement, reflecting the university's strong administrative and financial standing.

Financial responsibility under Title IV standards is demonstrated through Lehigh's financial responsibility composite scores. Over the last four available fiscal years, the university's composite scores were 2.2 (FY20), 3.0 (FY21), 2.5 (FY22) and 3.0 (FY23), each exceeding the federal threshold of 1.5 required for full financial responsibility (Evidence 6.062 Financial Responsibility Composite Scores FY20–FY23). These sustained high scores confirm the university's financial strength, prudent fiscal management and capacity to meet its obligations and support long-term institutional stability.

Lehigh further satisfies federal and state transparency and disclosure obligations through publicly accessible consumer information and reporting, including compliance with Pennsylvania's College Affordability and Transparency Act (Act 69 of 2024) (Evidence 6.055: College Affordability Website). Required disclosures related to financial aid, student outcomes, campus safety and institutional policies are maintained and updated in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Collectively, the university's administrative oversight, clean independent audit opinions, low-risk auditee status, ECAR certification, strong financial responsibility composite scores and comprehensive public disclosures demonstrate that Lehigh meets its Title IV program responsibilities under federal regulation 34 CFR 602.16(a)(1)(x). Therefore, Lehigh maintains compliance with its program responsibilities under existing federal Title IV and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations, fulfilling the requirements of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 11.**

VI.12 Lehigh employs strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources required to support the institution's mission and goals.

Lehigh regularly measures and assesses the appropriate allocation of the university's resources through data-informed strategies that align with mission-based planning, ensuring optimal support for institutional priorities and continuous improvement. The university's annual budgeting and resource planning processes leverage RAPTOR as a central decision-making platform and continuous improvement tool. RAPTOR dashboards and reporting tools allow units and leadership to monitor resource use over time, identify areas for improvement and implement adjustments, supporting continuous institutional improvement.

The budgeting and resource planning process integrates mission-based planning, enrollment projections, academic program needs and comparative benchmarking to ensure that resources are allocated effectively across academic, administrative and student support units. Resource use is regularly assessed using institution-wide tools and processes such as comparative benchmarking, space utilization analysis, instructional cost and productivity analytics, and financial trend monitoring. Strategic planning dashboards and the annual budget cycle provide forums for reviewing this information, ensuring resources are deployed efficiently and effectively across the institution (EVIDENCE 6.013: RAPTOR Dashboards; 6.056: Annual Budget Planning cycle; 6.057: Strategic Plan Dashboard).

A primary example of resource utilization analysis is the university's ability to reduce annual electricity usage by 4% over the past few years while adding 426,000 square feet of new

building space (EVIDENCE 6.058: 2024 Facilities Sustainable Actions). Additionally, the university conducts an annual space audit every July, providing a snapshot of facilities inventory, including building, department and room usage data (EVIDENCE 6.059: 2023–2024 Space Audit). These findings inform high-impact funding decisions, such as focusing renovation and support on the three buildings generating 54% of research expenditures, and reallocating four small, inefficient buildings to better uses (EVIDENCE 6.060: Lab Utilization Study, p. 8).

Through these strategies and tools, Lehigh ensures resource allocation supports student learning, research activity and faculty productivity, while continuously improving efficiency and effectiveness.

As demonstrated in the examples above, Lehigh employs strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources required to support the institution's mission and goals, meeting the requirements of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 12.**

VI.13: Lehigh undertakes periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes and availability of resources.

Lehigh has established a robust framework for periodically assessing the effectiveness of institutional planning, resource allocation and the availability of resources. The RPC was recently established to enhance transparency and fiscal literacy across the university leadership. The council, convening six to eight times per academic year, serves as a forum for university leadership to review, discuss and recommend on matters related to the operating and capital budget. While not decision-makers, council members help evaluate policies, review proposed and ongoing resource allocations and provide insights that improve transparency, fiscal literacy and alignment with institutional priorities.

The council's work is informed by multiple data sources, including quarterly and annual financial forecasts, RAPTOR dashboards and annual space and facilities audits, which provide comprehensive insights into the utilization of physical, human and fiscal resources across academic, administrative and research units. For example, space audits and lab utilization studies have identified high-impact research clusters and underutilized facilities, leading to strategic reallocation of resources to enhance efficiency and support institutional goals (EVIDENCE 6.059: 2023-2024 Space Audit; EVIDENCE 6.060: Lab Utilization Study; EVIDENCE 6.013: RAPTOR Dashboards; EVIDENCE 6.061: Third Quarter Forecasting).

Periodic assessment also extends to operational outcomes. Recommendations from the RPC and related reviews have informed adjustments in staffing practices, capital projects and program investments, demonstrating a cycle of continuous improvement and renewal. Strategic planning dashboards and annual budget cycle reports provide additional tools for evaluating progress toward goals, ensuring that resource allocation decisions are evidence-based, aligned with the Lehigh Strategy and responsive to emerging needs.

These activities collectively demonstrate that Lehigh consistently measures and evaluates the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation and institutional renewal processes, meeting the requirements of **MSCHE Standard VI, Criterion 13.**

Conclusions and Recommendations
The institution's planning processes, resources and structures are aligned to fulfill its

mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Recommendation 1 – Expand on the workflow of the resource planning process
The resource planning process should be strategic, transparent and consistent. This includes two-way discussions about institutional goals and priorities. Requests for new resources are submitted systematically. These requests are reviewed and discussed during resource planning meetings. Following these discussions, allocations are finalized and communicated to the various departments. Having a systematic approach with a workflow approval capability allows the requester of funds to understand where their request is in the process.

Recommendation 2 – Integrate one-year operating budgets with three- to five-year budgets and long-term planning
Historically, Lehigh has budgeted departments on an annual basis. Incorporating three- to five-year budgets and long-term planning with annual operational budgets will better support resource planning. Understanding the institutional long-term priorities and assumptions will provide departments with the opportunity to implement similar priorities into departmental budgets. Capturing departmental plans into an aggregate institutional perspective will allow for alignment.

Recommendation 3 – Document for the standardization of capital projects
Capital expenditures are funds spent in a given year that the institution expects to provide long-term value. These expenditures are typically large and span over multiple years; therefore, they can have a significant impact on cash. Examples include new buildings, facility renovations, IT infrastructure, major equipment and land acquisitions. These capital investments are critical to achieving strategic plan goals, as well as recruiting in today's competitive environment. Implications of these investments include the following: condition of campus facilities affects recruitment of students, faculty productivity is reduced by current state of research labs, and classroom space quality and quantity affects teaching mission. Having an organized and standard system to identify these costs will allow for better alignment with strategic initiatives; the expectation is that Lehigh's budget system will support this goal.

Recommendation 4 – Ensure use of donor intended funds
Endowments are the institution's most stable source of income and should be spent before other institutional funds, when possible. It should become more evident that the spending of endowments and gifts is aligned with the donor's expectations. The tracking of this spend is an important element of stewardship that should not be overlooked.

CHAPTER 7

STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with a related entity, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Lehigh University is governed and administered in a manner that enables it to realize its stated mission and goals and to effectively serve the institution, its students and the other constituencies it serves. The university has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Within this governance framework, institutional leadership and governing bodies articulate and uphold shared priorities that guide decision-making and clarify institutional direction. Among these are a commitment to holistic student success for all students and to advance interdisciplinarity and innovation in education. These priorities reflect institutional values and guide leadership decision-making, organizational structures and administrative accountability, consistent with MSCHE Standard VII.

Lehigh University is a nonprofit corporation created by and operating under a Charter of Incorporation granted by the commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the university's founder, Asa Packer (EVIDENCE 7.001: Charter of Incorporation). The Charter establishes the board of trustees, which is accountable to the commonwealth for adherence to the university's educational mission, as described in the university's Bylaws: "to provide outstanding educational opportunities for students at the university level without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, disability or veteran status" (EVIDENCE 7.002: University Bylaws, section 1.2, p. 1).

The university's Bylaws, section 2.2, articulate various powers and responsibilities of the board of trustees, of which the first is to determine and define the mission and goals of the university, and to periodically assess institutional performance in light of the mission and goals. The Bylaws further state, in section 2.7 (Standard of Care), that each trustee stands in a fiduciary relation to the university and will perform his/her duties in good faith, in a manner he/she reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the university, and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, skill and diligence, as a person of ordinary prudence would use under similar circumstances.

The Charter, Bylaws, and other institutional documents cited in this self-study demonstrate that Lehigh's board, executives, staff, faculty and students have established processes and procedures that promote the highest level of good governance, including fiduciary responsibility, administrative accountability and academic achievement. Lehigh's practices demonstrate adherence to them. Together, this clearly and consistently fulfills MSCHE Standard VII.

VII.1: Lehigh's clearly articulated and transparent governance structure outlines roles, responsibilities and accountability for inclusive decision-making by each constituency, including the institution's legally constituted governing body, administration, faculty, staff and students.

Lehigh University's governance is clearly articulated and transparent, outlining roles, responsibilities and accountability for decision-making by each constituency, including the institution's legally constituted governing body, administration, faculty, staff and students. The board of trustees, as established in the university's Charter and Bylaws, is the legally responsible governing body for the university and its affiliated entities. The board holds ultimate authority over institutional policies, strategic priorities, finances and academic programs, and may delegate approval authority to the president and senior leadership for operational management and academic administration.

The university's Charter, amended on December 15, 2022 by resolution and effective March 1, 2023, provides for a board of trustees in which all trustees are voting members of the university as a nonprofit corporation. While the board of trustees has the legal authority and responsibility to oversee, direct and govern the university that also includes an executive committee, the university Bylaws provide that the board may include up to 35 members.

The officers of the board of trustees are identified in the Bylaws, as are the officers of the university administration. These include the president, two or more vice presidents, including the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs and the vice president for finance and administration, and such other officers as the board of trustees may designate from time to time. The board of trustees elects the officers of the board and the board chair at its annual meeting with the university general counsel and secretary of the board supporting the board as needed or requested. The President's Office and the secretary handle the administrative aspects of the meetings, including preparation of the agenda, minutes, board communications and other notices in accordance with the Bylaws.

All trustees have voting authority on the committees on which they serve. Under Article VI of the Bylaws, the board of trustees relies on the following 10 standing committees: Academic Affairs; Audit; Campus Planning and Operations; Nominations and Trusteeship; Inclusive Excellence; Executive; External Engagement; Finance; Investment; and Student Affairs. A full list of committees and their charters is included in the university Bylaws (EVIDENCE 7.002: University Bylaws). The chair of the board, in consultation with the president, makes assignments primarily based on the needs of committees, taking into account the trustees' expertise, experience and interests. Committee chairs are also assigned by the board chair, in consultation with the president, often with involvement by the current committee chair. The board requires each committee to appoint a vice chair to support leadership continuity and succession planning.

University Leadership
Lehigh University's senior leadership team consists of senior academic and administrative officers, including college deans, vice presidents and vice provosts, who provide leadership and oversight for the institution's academic, financial, operational and strategic functions. Working collaboratively with the president, this group is responsible for implementing institutional policies, advancing strategic priorities, and ensuring effective and ethical administration in support of the university's mission (Evidence 7.017: University Administration).

The university maintains clearly defined structures at both the institutional and divisional levels to support governance, leadership and operational accountability. The institutional chart shows the board of trustees, president and senior leadership, while divisional and unit charts illustrate internal reporting lines and leadership responsibilities within academic and

administrative areas. Together, these diagrams provide transparent evidence of authority, oversight and alignment across the university (EVIDENCE 7.018: Organizational Charts).

Board Accountability and Shared Governance
Although the board of trustees is the ultimate authority with legal governance responsibility, the overall governance of the campus should be understood as a collaborative, consultative process, often involving staff, students and faculty. Article VII of the Bylaws articulates the roles and responsibilities of the faculty, stating:

> The faculty works with the university administration in the task of formulating policies and procedures that promote the academic and research missions of the university, in particular policies pertaining to the admission, registration, instruction and discipline of students; the appointment, promotion, tenure and dismissal of faculty; the assurance of academic freedom; and the furtherance of scholarship and research. The faculty may be called upon for committee and advisory service related to the academic, research and disciplinary life of the university (EVIDENCE 7.002: University Bylaws, p. 15).

The governance role of the faculty is not without bounds, even in the areas of academic affairs, in that the Bylaws state that "all policies and procedures of the university, including those pertaining to the faculty which may be contained in the separate *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty* (R&P), are subject to the approval of the board" (p. 15). The Bylaws then articulate that trustees may delegate approval authority to the president and university administration, and note that "Faculty shall be ultimately responsible to the President through lines of authority established for the administration of the academic affairs of the University" (p. 15).

Such delegation is routine. Further delegation can be seen in the *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty*, wherein revisions to Section 3 — which is the section on academic curricula and policies — do not require approval beyond the faculty (EVIDENCE 7.003: Rules and Procedures of the Faculty).

In sum, the history of the Lehigh board of trustees has been one of respect for academic administration, faculty governance and academic freedom. Notably, in 2016, the board removed itself from a role it had held in certain faculty tenure and promotion cases which continues to this day. Prior to this change, in cases where the tenure or promotion recommendation of the department and college committees were aligned (in such cases, called "the faculty recommendation"), and the provost's recommendation was at odds with the faculty recommendation, the Academic Affairs Committee of the board of trustees was called to hear presentations both from faculty representatives who spoke for the faculty recommendation and from the provost, and then render a decision. Though this had occurred only very rarely in Lehigh's history, the board determined that the tenure and promotion process should not include this step. Subsequently, the faculty revised the *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty*, creating a hearing process in these cases that involved the provost but not the trustees. Thus, while the board still reviews tenure and promotion recommendations, it was the trustees, and not the faculty, who initiated the effort to eliminate this role in tenure decisions.

Faculty Senate
Prior to 2018, faculty governance operated through a Faculty Steering Committee composed of the chairs of college- and university-elected faculty committees. This committee oversaw

updates to the *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty*, which establish policies related to curriculum, faculty review, promotion and tenure (EVIDENCE 7.003: Rules and Procedures of the Faculty).

Proposals to establish a Faculty Senate were brought to the faculty in 1998 and 2007; both votes were close but unsuccessful. In 2017, faculty members again advanced a proposal to create a Faculty Senate. The proposal was discussed through the faculty governance process, including three town hall meetings open to the faculty. The board of trustees was not involved in these discussions, reflecting the faculty's primary authority in matters of faculty governance.

In December 2017, the faculty voted to approve the creation of the Faculty Senate. The senate is composed of up to 5% of the faculty, with a maximum of 33 elected members. Senators are elected by their respective colleges for four-year terms. Each college has at least three representatives, and no single college may hold more than 45% of the total seats, ensuring balanced representation across the institution.

The inaugural faculty senators began their terms in fall 2018. As described on its website (EVIDENCE 7.004: Faculty Senate Website), the Faculty Senate serves as the representative voice of the faculty in university governance and facilitates communication between faculty, administration and the broader campus community. The senate engages in shared governance and formal consultation on institutional policy and operations, including academic and research policy, curriculum and procedures, hiring, promotion and tenure, academic freedom, budget and admissions, and matters affecting campus life and inclusion.

Important accomplishments of the Faculty Senate since its inception include the development and implementation of two new categories of term faculty (teaching-track and research-track faculty); the passage of a Faculty Code of Ethics; and many enhancements to R&P. The senate passed bylaws in 2025, codifying rules regarding meetings, voting and more (EVIDENCE 7.005: Faculty Code of Ethics; EVIDENCE 7.006: Faculty Senate Bylaws). One area of ongoing improvement is that the Faculty Senate would like other units to consult with it earlier and more frequently when considering academic or administrative changes. Both the senate and the administration are making efforts to refine this consultation process.

Student Government
There are two governance organizations for Lehigh students. The Student Senate is the undergraduate student government. Seventy senators represent a range of constituencies and serve on various Student Senate committees. The Student Senate Bylaws and other information are available on the Student Senate website (Evidence 7.007: Student Senate Bylaws; Evidence 7.024: Student Senate Website). The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) is governed by a constitution (Evidence 7.008: Graduate Student Senate Constitution; Evidence 7.025: Graduate Student Senate Website) that articulates the core values and procedures adopted by the GSS, as well as objectives that direct the organization.

Lehigh fully discloses and reports upon these legally constituted governance structures. As described above, the university's governing body, the board of trustees, is responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for ensuring that the institution's mission is being carried out, which fulfills MSCHE Requirement of Affiliation 14. Moreover, Lehigh's clearly articulated and transparent governance structure meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 1.**

VII.2a: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that serves the public interest, ensures that the university clearly states and fulfills its mission and goals, has fiduciary responsibility for the institution and is ultimately accountable for the academic quality, planning and fiscal well-being of the institution.

As noted in section 2.7 of the university's Bylaws, "Each trustee of the university shall stand in a fiduciary relation to the university" (p. 4), and the Bylaws outline the applicable standard of care. Trustees are bound by the duties of care and loyalty, consistent with Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation law. The duty of care requires trustees to act in good faith, in the best interests of the university and with the level of prudence and diligence that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise. This standard includes the responsibility of a trustee to use his or her independent and informed judgment, and is often referred to as the "business judgment rule."

In carrying out these fiduciary responsibilities, the board of trustees serves the public interest and is ultimately accountable for the academic quality, strategic planning and fiscal well-being of the university. The duty of loyalty is stated in the Bylaws, which requires a trustee to bring to the board all material facts concerning a potential or real conflict of interest and to refrain from voting or participating in board deliberations of a matter in which the trustee has a conflict of interest. This duty is also stated and implemented through the university's Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy (EVIDENCE 7.009: Conflict of Interest Policy, section 2.9). Trustee disclosures are typically made through the annual conflict of interest form. Lehigh professional staff review the reported conflicts to determine if any business disclosures are arms-length transactions, and report to the Audit Committee of the board and the full board of trustees in order to ensure the board is fully informed and aware of all possible actual conflicts and appearances of conflicts of the results of these reviews.

Through its work as a full board and through its committees, trustees oversee and support academic programs, admissions, institutional planning, financial sustainability and progress toward strategic priorities. In fulfilling these responsibilities, the board of trustees serves the public interest and maintains ultimate accountability for the university's mission, academic quality, strategic direction and fiscal health. Accordingly, Lehigh meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(a).**

VII.2b: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that has sufficient diversity, independence and expertise to ensure the integrity of the university. Members must have primary responsibility to the accredited institution, meet regularly and not allow political, financial, relationship with a related entity, or other undue influences to interfere with their governing responsibilities.

The board's Committee on Nominations and Trusteeship (CNT), in accordance with section 6.5 of the university Bylaws, recommends board composition and organizational structure and develops practices to recruit, orient, educate and assess trustees (Evidence 7.010: Board Membership). Through its nominations process, the board intentionally seeks diversity of professional expertise, background and perspective to support effective governance. Moreover, the board develops strategies to promote stability and ease of transition on and off the board, including succession planning for board members and senior leadership, and for the administration, as well. Finally, as noted, the duty to avoid conflicts of interest is also stated and implemented through the university's COI Policy, described in section 2.9 of the Bylaws. The board meets regularly in accordance with the university Bylaws and established governance practices.

As a private institution and a membership corporation, Lehigh's board of trustees is a self-perpetuating board, meaning vacancies are filled by the board itself by nomination and vote of the board members. This board structure promotes continuity in the pursuit of its founder's mission, preserves independence from governmental control and ensures perpetual corporate existence. As fiduciaries of the institution, trustees have primary responsibility to the university and act in its best interests in carrying out their governance duties.

Lehigh's private status secures a measure of independence, but it is important to note that Lehigh, like nearly all American universities and colleges, receives substantial federal and state funding for its missions of education and research. This governmental support includes regulatory requirements and accountabilities concerning not only the use of such funds, but general requirements such as equal opportunity and nondiscrimination, annual disclosures of institutional policies and data, auditing and record-keeping and appropriate use of funded or tax-exempt resources.

Collectively, these structures and safeguards ensure that the board maintains independence, expertise, diversity of perspective, regular engagement and freedom from undue influence. Accordingly, Lehigh meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(b).**

VII.2c: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that ensures that neither the governing body nor its individual members interfere in the day-to-day operations of the institution.

The Board of Trustees Handbook (EVIDENCE 7.011: Trustee Handbook, p. 3) and the Board of Trustees Introduction Book (p. 11) articulate the role of a trustee at Lehigh University. Trustees serve as fiduciaries empowered by law to govern the university as a nonprofit corporation, ensuring its mission, values and strategic goals are fulfilled while maintaining long-term viability and relevance. While trustees provide oversight, set the tone and project the image of the university, contribute to long-term planning, act as ambassadors, exercise care in decision-making and avoid conflicts of interest, they are not involved in the day-to-day operations of the university. This clear separation between governance and management ensures that trustees guide strategy and uphold fiduciary responsibilities without interfering in operational decisions.

As a private institution created under a charter from the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the board is accountable for adherence to the university's educational mission and applicable laws governing nonprofit entities, and trustees have primary responsibility to the institution in carrying out their governance duties. Collectively, these structures ensure that neither the governing body nor individual members interfere in daily operations, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(c).**

VII.2d–e: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that oversees at the policy level the quality of teaching and learning, the approval of degree programs and the awarding of degrees, the establishment of personnel policies and procedures, the approval of policies and bylaws and the assurance of strong fiscal management. Furthermore, the board of trustees plays a basic policy-making role in financial affairs to ensure integrity and strong financial management. This may include a timely review of

audited financial statements or/or other documents related to the fiscal viability of the institution.

As stated in the Bylaws, the trustees hold broad responsibilities in guiding the university. These include ensuring adequate short- and long-term planning to achieve institutional goals; approving major changes to educational programs; establishing faculty appointment, promotion, tenure and dismissal policies; overseeing the budget and endowment; authorizing major property and construction decisions; and approving gifts, bequests and borrowing (EVIDENCE 7.002: University Bylaws, p.2). This list illustrates the scope of the board's authority and its role in maintaining the university's mission, strategic direction and long-term viability, demonstrating the board's ability to provide policy-level oversight consistent with MSCHE expectations.

In addition, the board of trustees exercises oversight through several committees, whose specific functions are included in the Bylaws (EVIDENCE 7.002: University Bylaws, pp. 11–15). The Academic Affairs Committee advises the board on all aspects of the university's academic programs and activities. The Finance Committee oversees financial and investment performance, develops financial policies, coordinates programs affecting the university's fiscal affairs and ensures sound financial planning. The Audit Committee recommends an independent auditor annually, reviews audited financial statements and ensures the university's financial condition is reported to the board; its responsibilities are detailed in the Committee Charter, which may be amended or supplemented by the board as needed. The Campus Planning and Operations Committee oversees campus policies and practices, the condition of physical assets, master planning, facilities development and operations, capital project planning and construction, and strategic initiatives, including fundraising and alumni relations, to support the university's short- and long-term goals.

Representative board minutes from the past four years, including full board and committee meetings, provide high-level summaries of deliberations and decisions across these committees, demonstrating the board's active oversight of academic programs, financial management and campus planning and illustrating the implementation of policy-level governance (Evidence 7.026: Sample BOT Meeting Books 2020-2025).

Collectively, these structures and evidence illustrate that Lehigh's board of trustees meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criteria 2(d) and 2(e).**

VII.2f: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that appoints and regularly evaluates the performance of the chief executive officer, the university president.

As described in section 3.7 of the Bylaws, the president is formally the chief executive officer of the university and the official advisor to and executive agent of the board and its executive committee. As educational and administrative head of the university, the president exercises "general superintendence over all the affairs of the institution"(Evidence 7.002: University Bylaws, p. 8).

Lehigh's board of trustees appoints the president and regularly evaluates the president's performance through its Compensation Subcommittee (EVIDENCE 7.027: Compensation Subcommittee Charter). The subcommittee is responsible for guiding and directing policies and procedures for reviewing the performance and determining the compensation of the president, as well as other senior administrative officers. It conducts an annual review of the president's performance, ensures that compensation is reasonable and in compliance with

applicable legal requirements for a nonprofit, and makes recommendations to the full board regarding performance evaluation and compensation. To maintain independence and avoid conflicts of interest, subcommittee members recuse themselves from any review or determination involving individuals with whom they have a personal or professional conflict.

By the end of March each year, the president meets first with the board chair and then with the Compensation Subcommittee for a discussion of major achievements of the prior year, current activities and major goals for the coming year, with particular focus on the areas of prime engagement for the president. Written summaries of these meetings prepared by the president, the board chair and the Compensation Subcommittee chair, as well as any materials presented at these meetings, are distributed to the Compensation Subcommittee members. At the spring meeting of the Compensation Subcommittee, the president's compensation is reviewed in the context of benchmark data. The final merit increase is set, and the president is notified shortly thereafter with an effective date of July 1.

Through this structured process, the board fulfills its responsibility to oversee and evaluate the chief executive officer who is the president, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(f).**

VII.2g: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that is informed in all its operations by principles of good practice in board governance.

New and current board members are invited to an annual trustee orientation program, which includes discussion of roles and responsibilities of trustees and specifically addresses oversight versus interference issues (Evidence 7.013: Trustee Orientation Program). These programs are ordinarily planned for October of each academic year. On the rare occasions when individual trustees have moved toward management versus oversight roles, both the board chair and university general counsel address the matter directly with those individuals or hold a review of 'board governance' and the 'duties and responsibilities' of a trustee session with trustees at a board meeting. In addition, the triennial board self-evaluation is an example of the tools employed by the CNT trustees of principles of good practice in board governance (Evidence 7.014: Triennial Board Self-Evaluation).

Lehigh's board of trustees is informed in all its operations by principles of good practice in board governance, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(g).**

VII.2h–i: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted body that is not chaired by an institutional or system representative to avoid conflicts of interest. Furthermore, the board of trustees establishes and complies with a written conflict of interest policy designed to ensure impartiality of the governing body by addressing matters such as payment for services, contractual relationships, employment, and family, financial or other interests that could pose or be perceived as conflicts of interest. A majority of members have no employment, family, ownership or other personal financial interest in the institution.

In accordance with Article II, Section 2.1 of the university Bylaws, the president, as a member of the university administration, may not serve as chairperson of the board of trustees. This ensures that the board's leadership is independent of the university's executive administration, providing a clear separation between governance and operational management. By having a chairperson who is not an institutional representative, the board maintains objective oversight and fulfills the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, 2(h)**

regarding independent governance and accountability (EVIDENCE 7.002: University Bylaws, p1).

The university's COI Policy (EVIDENCE 7.009: Conflict of Interest Policy, p.1), as adopted by the board in 2002 and amended in 2021, recognizes that Lehigh employees "must conduct all of their activities in a manner that will withstand the sharpest scrutiny."

The COI Policy, as described in section 2.9 of the Bylaws, requires that trustees are annually provided with the university's Conflict of Interest Policy and are required to complete the annual conflict of interest questionnaire (Evidence 7.002: University Bylaws, p.5; EVIDENCE 7.015: Trustee Conflict of Interest Questionnaire). Questionnaire responses are shared with the trustee Audit Committee and the board of trustees. The audit committee takes appropriate action in the event of material conflicts. Conflicts of interest fall into two broad categories: the leverage of position for personal benefit, especially financial; and parallel roles that create issues of institutional loyalty. If a member stands to benefit from a decision of the Lehigh board, even if it is a somewhat indirect benefit or a benefit with the best of mutual motives, that member informs the president and the chair of the board. After this disclosure, the member recuses from both deliberation and voting.

State and federal statutes, and the COI Policy, require that the university's board inquire into the material facts of a proposed transaction between the university and a trustee, officer, their immediate families or an entity in which they have a significant relationship. It is the responsibility of the trustee or officer and university management to bring all material facts promptly and completely to the Audit Committee and the board of trustees. After completing a review, the board must decide whether the transaction is fair, and not a deviation of normal business practices or procedures, and that the individual is not being unreasonably compensated or rewarded. The Audit Committee and the board of trustees' review of the material facts and resulting decision must be documented through a formal resolution contained within the minutes of the meeting. The Executive Committee may act on behalf of the board in this area.

No trustees are remunerated by the institution. A majority of the institution's governing body's members have no employment, family, ownership or other personal financial interest in the institution. As described, the board of trustees adheres to a COI Policy that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of board members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the university. These examples demonstrate Lehigh's fulfillment of MSCHE Requirement of Affiliation 14. Moreover, compliance with the COI Policy ensures impartiality of the governing body by addressing matters such as payment for services, contractual relationships, employment, and family, financial or other interests that could pose or be perceived as conflicts of interest, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(i).**

VII.2j: Lehigh's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that supports the president in maintaining the autonomy of the institution.

Under the university Bylaws section 3.7.1, the president brings such matters to the attention of the board as are appropriate to keep the board fully informed in meeting its policy-making responsibilities. The president reports to the board regarding the appointment of faculty and officers of the administration. Furthermore, the president shall have power, on behalf of the university, to perform all acts and execute all documents to

make effective the actions of the board or its executive committee. The president and the vice president for finance and administration present an annual report, in appropriate detail, to the board.

In addition, the president and members of the senior leadership team keep the board of trustees apprised of federal and state activities to advocate on behalf of the university. In such matters, the president and designated members of staff are empowered to engage in these actions to advocate for the best interests of the university.

Lehigh's board of trustees supports the president in maintaining the autonomy of the institution, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(j).**

VII.2k: Lehigh University's board of trustees is a legally constituted governing body that makes freely available to the Commission accurate, fair and complete information on all aspects of the institution and its operations and ensures the institution describes itself in comparable and consistent terms to all of its accrediting and regulatory agencies.

Lehigh's Office of Institutional Data (OID) and Office of Institutional Research (OIR) maintain and share official data on a wide variety of topics related to the university and its operations, including timely and accurate reporting to IPEDS, Common Data Set and other external reporting agencies. Lehigh's Institutional Data Center hosts current and archival information about the university. Publicly available information includes the University Profile and the Common Data Set, as well as data on student admissions, enrollment, graduation and retention, along with faculty and staff data and survey results (Evidence 7.038: Institutional Data Center Website). Lehigh University takes pride in transparency and provides open, public access to these data. The Financial Aid Office ensures accurate reporting on student financial aid programs, and the university complies with federal regulations such as the Clery Act, which requires reporting on campus safety and crime statistics. For these reasons, Lehigh meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 2(k).**

VII.3a: Lehigh has a president who is appointed by, evaluated by and reports to the governing body and does not chair the governing body.

As discussed in criterion VII.2f above, section 2.2 of the university's Bylaws grants the board of trustees the authority to appoint the president and assess their performance. Consistent with this authority, the board publicly confirmed its appointment of Joseph J. Helble '82 as Lehigh's 15th president (Evidence 7.028: Helble Appointed President Announcement), demonstrating both the board's active role in presidential selection and the transparency of this governance process. Section 3.6.1 specifies that the board chair "presides, with right to vote," ensuring that the president does not serve as chair of the board (EVIDENCE 7.002: University Bylaws, p. 6), thereby maintaining clear separation between governance and operational leadership.

The board evaluates the president's performance through the Compensation Subcommittee**,** which conducts an annual review, ensures compliance with legal requirements, and makes recommendations regarding performance and compensation to the full board (EVIDENCE 7.027: Compensation Subcommittee Charter).

Through these structures, Lehigh's president is appointed by, evaluated by, and reports to the board of trustees, while not chairing the governing body, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 3(a)** and Requirement of Affiliation 14.

VII.3b: Lehigh's president has appropriate credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the organization.

Joseph J. Helble, Lehigh's 15th president, is an internationally renowned chemical engineer and highly respected leader in higher education. Dr. Helble became president of Lehigh University on August 16, 2021, having previously served as provost as well as dean of the Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth College. In his current role as president of Lehigh University, he is responsible for the overall leadership, strategic direction, financial and operational management, working with external partners; federal, state and local governments; the board of trustees; and the campus community to ensure a world–class education for both undergraduate and graduate students. Dr. Helble received his B.S. in chemical engineering from Lehigh University in 1982 and a Ph.D. in chemical engineering with a minor in Spanish from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1987 (EVIDENCE 7.016: President Helble CV).

Lehigh's president has appropriate credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the organization, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 3(b).**

VII.3c: Lehigh's president has the authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, including developing and implementing institutional plans, staffing the organization, identifying and allocating resources and directing the institution toward attaining the goals and objectives set forth in its mission.

The president's duties are outlined in the university Bylaws, section 3.7.1, which provide that the president shall "exercise a general superintendence over all the affairs of the institution" (p. 8). President Helble has done this and has the authority and autonomy to do so. One area in which this exercise of duty is evident is the engagement, collaboration and open dialogue with the campus community, the board of trustees, Lehigh alumni, the city of Bethlehem and external partners in the strategic planning process, *Our Future, Our Lehigh* and the launch and implementation of the ambitious ten–year *Inspiring the Future Makers* strategic plan in June 2023. Following 18 months of review, planning and understanding of the previous university strategic plan and the development of the new strategic plan, the board of trustees unanimously endorsed the plan at the May 2023 board of trustees meeting (Evidence 7.029: May 2023 BOT Meeting Book).

President Helble reports to the board of trustees, with members of the Cabinet serving at his direction (Evidence 7.017: University Administration, Cabinet members). He proposes the university's annual budget to the board, which is then implemented under his leadership and monitored by the administration and professional staff. Through these responsibilities, the president directs the institution toward achieving its mission, implementing strategic plans and allocating resources effectively, demonstrating fulfillment of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 3(c).**

VII.3d: Lehigh's president has the assistance of qualified administrators, sufficient in number, to enable the president to discharge his or her duties effectively and is responsible for establishing procedures for assessing the organization's efficiency and effectiveness.

Lehigh's president is able to shape his leadership team to meet the needs of the institution, and President Helble has chosen to have a similar number of direct reports as previous

presidents. In order to assess the Cabinet, the president requests and reviews annual written goals from his Cabinet members, including goals for the following year, assessments from the previous and current year and how those goals support the foundational initiatives of the strategic plan overall. The president meets weekly with his Cabinet and bimonthly with the larger senior leadership team, which includes other key university administrators and department heads. These meetings allow him to gather input from both groups and maintain a holistic overview of the university. The results of these meetings include collaboration, focus and synchronization, as well keeping the Cabinet and the larger senior leadership team focused on the strategic plan and continuing to move the university forward.

Lehigh's president has the assistance of qualified administrators (Evidence 7.017: University Administration), sufficient in number, to enable the president to discharge his duties effectively, and is responsible for establishing procedures for assessing the organization's efficiency and effectiveness, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 3(d).**

VII.4a and 4b: Lehigh has an administration demonstrating an organizational structure that is clearly documented and that clearly defines reporting relationships; furthermore, the administration possesses an appropriate size and diverse representation with relevant experience to assist the president in fulfilling his or her roles and responsibilities.

Biographical information for members of President Helble's senior leadership team is included in the provided evidence (EVIDENCE 7.017: University Administration), and a detailed organization chart illustrating the multiple layers of the Lehigh administration is provided separately (EVIDENCE 7.018: Organizational Charts).

In addition to the individuals and groups listed on the organization chart, a number of other groups act as advocates for faculty and staff, serving also to advise the president and other senior leaders. These groups include the Faculty Senate, the Employee Relations Advisory Committee (ERAC) and the department chairs, as well as elected faculty committees, such as the Educational Policy Committee (responsible for the study of the university curriculum, long-range academic plans and undergraduate academic rules and regulations) and the Graduate and Research Committee (which considers policies and procedures related to graduate education and research).

This administration clearly meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 4(a) and Criterion 4(b).**

VII.4c: Lehigh has an administration possessing members with credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the organization and their functional roles.

Each member of the university administration possesses professional experience and credentials consistent with their responsibilities, including advanced degrees, prior administrative leadership and relevant functional expertise (EVIDENCE 7.017: University Administration). Members of President Helble's Cabinet include Nathan Urban, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs (who becomes the lead administrator in the absence or disability of the president); Christine Cook, vice president for finance and administration; and several additional members. The chair and vice chair of the Faculty Senate are also invited to participate in senior leadership meetings.

This senior team clearly meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 4(c).**

VII.4d: Lehigh has an administration possessing the skills, time, support, technology and information systems expertise required to perform their duties.

Members of Lehigh's administration bring to their positions a high level of skill and experience. Serving in full-time positions, each is supported by appropriately sized staff ensuring they can fulfill their responsibilities effectively. This is evidenced by staffing data (EVIDENCE 7.030: IPEDS HR Reports 2021 to 2024), which shows headcounts of faculty and staff over the past four years; the trend indicates that administrative support has remained stable and aligned with the university's needs, providing leaders with the capacity to carry out their duties. While most administrators and faculty members could benefit from more hours in the day, the responsibilities assigned to university leaders are commensurate with those at peer institutions.

Members of the university administration are served in their positions by all arms of the university, but rely particularly on several key offices beyond their own for support. One is the Office of Institutional Data, which is the university's comprehensive source for collecting and disseminating reliable and valid institutional data in a responsive, timely and ethical manner for the university leadership and board of trustees. OID provides both information and analysis upon request and is developing the capability through the future implementation of an integrated data system that will enable faculty and staff to access and utilize data to make effective and informed decisions. Lehigh's Library and Technology Services (LTS) also provides leadership, expertise and support to the institutional leadership as well as to faculty, students and staff. Other staff members who focus on data, analytics and technology serve in additional offices on campus (e.g., within Finance and Administration, Academic Affairs, Admissions, Athletics, Strategic Planning and Initiatives, and other divisions), and these staff members collaborate with LTS to support institutional needs.

The *Library and Technology Services Annual Report 2023–24* highlights LTS efforts to strengthen support for research and scholarship by expanding open–access publishing initiatives and implementing a unified search capability that integrates access to e-journals, e-books and research databases. The report also notes enhancements to the institutional digital repository and expansion of digital archival resources, demonstrating the administration's technology expertise and commitment to providing robust information systems and services (EVIDENCE 7.031: LTS Annual Report 2023-2024, p.4). Through the Future Ready initiative, the university's transition to a cloud–based ERP and Student Information System enhances administrative reporting, data analysis and operational efficiency, providing leaders with tools to manage resources and monitor institutional effectiveness; see Standard VI (EVIDENCE 7.032: Banner SaaS Transition).

Together, these and other support systems ensure that Lehigh meets the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 4(d).**

VII.4e: Lehigh has an administration demonstrating regular engagement with faculty and students in advancing the institution's goals and objectives.

President Helble, Provost Urban and other senior leaders meet with faculty, staff and students throughout the academic year in order to discuss the university's strategic and operational plans, as well as listen to the ideas, requests and concerns of these groups to

better facilitate meaningful dialogue and understanding (Evidence 7.033: Examples of campus convening).

President Helble and Provost Urban are frequently invited to attend sessions of the Faculty Senate and the Dean's Advisory Councils of the five colleges throughout the academic year. Along with other senior leaders, they also attend and host events with the Employee Relations Advisory Committee representing staff concerns and input. They host campus-wide community conversations and strategic plan and campus master plan updates, in tandem with the university's senior leaders, as a means of gathering input from the campus community on a wide array of focus areas, including the university's *Inspiring the Future Makers* strategic plan. In addition, they attend student, faculty and staff events focused on the Lehigh community and the university's commitment to inclusive excellence, reinforcing leadership accountability for creating an equitable educational environment that supports student success, ensuring all groups feel valued and fully able to participate in the Lehigh experience.

In order to better understand student initiatives as well as student concerns about academics and the campus community as a whole, President Helble and Provost Urban attend meetings of both the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Senates, athletic teams and a wide array of student groups. President Helble regularly hosts dinners at the President's House for students, including but not limited to those representing campus clubs and organizations, student leaders and athletics. He also invites members of the campus community to join him for a morning run on Tuesday each week. These informal settings have proven to be ideal for promoting useful dialogue with students, understanding their viewpoints and informing leadership decision-making related to student learning, engagement and success and implementing positive change across the campus community.

Following a December 2025 editorial in *The Brown and White* that called for greater student engagement in the implementation of the *Inspiring the Future Makers* strategic plan, the university strengthened student participation in strategic governance (Evidence 7.034: BrownAndWhite_December2025). A newly formed Student Strategy Advisory Committee, composed of undergraduate student leaders appointed through a nomination process involving senior administrators, now convenes bimonthly during the academic year and serves as a high-level advisory body to the vice president for strategic planning & initiatives. In parallel, the Graduate Student Senate is finalizing the creation of a Strategic Planning Committee to provide comparable engagement and ensure that graduate student perspectives are integrated into ongoing institutional progress. These structures formalize student participation in strategic governance and demonstrate the institution's commitment to incorporating stakeholder feedback into decision-making processes.

Lehigh's administration demonstrates regular engagement with faculty and students in advancing the institution's goals and objectives, including institutional priorities related to student success and educational innovation, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 4(e).**

VII.4f: Lehigh has an administration demonstrating systematic procedures for evaluating administrative units and for using assessment data to enhance operations.

As noted previously in Standard VI, Lehigh is governed under a somewhat decentralized organizational structure, in that most administrative units and the academic colleges are independently managed. Despite the challenge of explicitly aligning local objectives with

institutional planning, assessment and resource allocation, local plans nevertheless consistently correspond to the university's stated mission and goals and advancing the *Inspiring the Future Makers* strategy. In all cases, however, the university's performance management system is focused on individual performance as well as strong management of individual units. Further details regarding assessment can be found on Lehigh's HR website (EVIDENCE 7.019: HR Performance Management).

Lehigh University systematically gathers feedback from its campus community to inform administrative decision-making and assess institutional effectiveness. Key surveys include the Campus Climate Survey, administered biennially collects student, faculty and staff perspectives on campus climate, diversity and inclusion; the annual Senior Survey, which gathers graduating undergraduate students' feedback on their academic and campus experiences; and the annual Graduate Student Experience Survey, which assesses graduate students' perceptions of academic programs and campus support. These surveys provide evidence of the administration's engagement with stakeholders, responsiveness to feedback and use of data to support continuous improvement in institutional operations and governance (EVIDENCE 7.035: Campus Climate Survey; EVIDENCE 7.036: Senior Survey; EVIDENCE 7.037: Graduate Student Experience Survey). Lehigh's leaders employ systematic procedures for evaluating administrative units and for using assessment data to enhance operations, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 4(f).**

The following examples demonstrate some of the ways that Lehigh leadership and trustees access data and analysis.

Inspiring the Future Makers Dashboard - Lehigh University created a dashboard of key metrics tied to its 10-year strategic plan, *Inspiring the Future Makers*. The dashboard includes select metrics that highlight success across the three goals of the *Inspiring the Future Makers* plan: Make it New, Make a Difference, and Make it Together. Measures include sponsored research levels, graduation rates, student ROI, student retention rates and belonging survey data (EVIDENCE 7.020: Strategy Dashboard).

Lehigh University Annual Indicator Report – Lehigh University creates an annual indicator report each year. Compiled each fall, the indicator report includes sections that cover graduate and undergraduate admissions, alumni relations, research, facilities, campus engagement, athletics and brand metrics. The indicator report is shared with the board of trustees and Lehigh University leadership (EVIDENCE 7.021: LU Annual Indicator Report).

Benchmarking Studies – Lehigh University has identified a number of institutions as aspirational and comparison peers (EVIDENCE 7.023: Lehigh Peer Groups). The university uses these peer institutions as benchmarks to inform leadership and administrative decision-making and to understand its relative position in areas such as admissions practices, enrollment management, resource utilization, faculty and staff compensation, international presence, research funding and philanthropic activities. While these studies are conducted on an as-needed basis in response to strategic or operational questions, the data gathered through such studies are immensely helpful in identifying gaps in performance, resource utilizations and business outcomes.

For example, the university regularly (approximately every two years) conducts salary benchmarking studies against peer institutions. In academic years 2022-2023 and 2025-2025, this study was used to provide salary increases to faculty members whose

salaries were identified as lagging behind colleagues in the same department and rank in peer institutions.

Due to the importance of data and analytics as strategic assets in promoting organizational excellence and individual accountability, data and systems are core to two of the 10 foundational initiatives in Lehigh's strategic plan (An Organization of the Future and Decision Making Informed by Qualitative and Quantitative Data and Analysis) (EVIDENCE 7.022: 2023 Strategic Plan).

VII.5: Lehigh's board of trustees undertakes a periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership and administration.

The Committee on Nominations and Trusteeship makes recommendations for the most effective composition and organization of the board and develops practices, strategies and policies that attract, orient, train, organize and assess the performance of trustees, ensuring that the board attracts, retains and develops highly qualified and committed members. CNT reviews and makes recommendations to the board with regard to trustee governance matters and governing documents, such as the Charter and Bylaws. Responsibilities of this committee include the following: design of board composition and development of trustee candidate attributes; assessment of trustee performance and conduct of triennial board self-assessments; identification and cultivation of new trustee candidates; consultation with the Lehigh University Alumni Association regarding the identification of possible candidates for trustee nomination; management of the new trustee orientation program as well as programs for continued trustee education; monitoring board member term limits and overseeing succession planning through timely identification of future board leadership at the subcommittee, committee and board officer levels; and reviewing the university governing documents and making recommendations as appropriate to the board.

Besides focusing on board composition, the CNT and the executive committee review and discuss the following: board governance matters to assess board structure at both the macro and committee/subcommittee levels; the effective and efficient use of board meetings; decision-making and responsiveness and the implementation of the university Bylaws.

In addition, the board of trustees as a whole reviews its governance effectiveness through a triennial self evaluation. This process, administered by the Committee on Nominations and Trusteeship, serves both to assess the board's effectiveness in fulfilling its fiduciary and leadership responsibilities and to provide trustees with guidance on principles of good governance (EVIDENCE 7.014: Triennial Board Self-Evaluation).

In 2017, the Lehigh board of trustees executive committee and the CNT established a board governance working group to review the board's organizational structure and practices to determine whether these promote effective board governance, proper fiduciary oversight and the effectiveness of committee/subcommittee work.

Based on the working groups' findings and after much discussion within the board of trustees, the board consensus was that the university Charter and Bylaws should be amended to afford all trustees voting status. After five years of discussion and deliberation, the Charter and the Bylaws were amended on December 15, 2022 with an effective date of March 1, 2023.

In addition to evaluating governance, the board of trustees periodically assesses the effectiveness of university leadership and administration. As noted in Section 2.f, the president is evaluated by the board through established performance review processes, which provide feedback on leadership effectiveness and alignment with institutional priorities. The board also monitors administrative performance through institutional dashboards, annual indicator reports and other data-driven metrics to ensure that leadership actions advance the university's mission and strategic goals (EVIDENCE 7.027: Compensation Subcommittee Charter; EVIDENCE 7.021: LU Annual Indicator Report; EVIDENCE 7.020: Strategy Dashboards).

Lehigh conducts systematic evaluations of its senior leadership to ensure effectiveness in advancing the university's mission and strategic goals. The president annually evaluates his direct reports, including the provost and vice presidents, through a structured process. Each Cabinet member provides a brief self-reflection reviewing progress made in the previous year, accomplishments in supporting the university's strategic priorities, and goals for the upcoming year. Feedback is also solicited from the chair of the board of trustees and trustees who oversee relevant board committees. These inputs form the basis for individual meetings between the president and each Cabinet member to discuss performance, goals and professional development. This structured evaluation occurs each spring as part of Lehigh's annual merit review process, with additional ongoing feedback provided through regular one-on-one meetings throughout the year.

Deans participate in an annual review process with the provost that assesses progress against prior-year goals in areas such as enrollment, student retention, faculty hiring, research and fundraising. They also report on achievements in areas not captured by the previous year's goals and outline new goals for the coming year, emphasizing alignment with the university's academic objectives and strategic priorities. Where goals are not fully met, discussions examine contributing internal and external factors, and plans are requested to adjust the trajectory. In addition to annual reviews, a comprehensive dean review occurs typically in the latter half of a dean's five-year term. This process involves soliciting feedback from the college faculty, staff and key external stakeholders, with a committee summarizing findings for the provost. The results of this review inform in-depth discussions between the provost and dean regarding areas of strength, opportunities for improvement and future goals.

Through these structured evaluation processes for both the president's direct reports and deans, Lehigh ensures that its administration is held accountable, receives constructive feedback and is positioned to advance the institution's mission effectively.

Lehigh University undertakes a periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership and administration, meeting the expectations of **MSCHE Standard VII, Criterion 5.**